



2012

MINUTES

PART I  
JOURNAL

**220th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**



## Errata 2010

The following error on Page 8 of the *Minutes of the 219th General Assembly (2010)* is called to the attention of users of that volume:

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

“Moderator Bolbach recognized Sharon Stanley, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions, for a report from the committee. The assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 16-02 (approved), 16-04 (disapproved), 16-05 (approved), 16-07 (approved), 16-09 (approved), 16-13 (approved). Moderator Stanley introduced Item 16-10, approval of Stephen A. Hayner as president of Columbia Theological Seminary. Item 16-10 was approved. At Stanley’s request, Moderator Bolbach recognized Stephen A. Hayner. Hayner addressed the assembly briefly. Moderator Stanley introduced Item 16-14, approval of Paul T. Roberts as president and dean of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary. Item 16-14 was approved. At Stanley’s request, Moderator Bolbach recognized Paul T. Roberts. Roberts addressed the assembly briefly. Moderator Stanley introduced Item 16-15, approval of Michael Jinkins as president of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Item 16-15 was approved. At Stanley’s request, Moderator Bolbach recognized Michael Jinkins. Jinkins addressed the assembly briefly. Item 16-08 was approved. Item 16-06 was approved with amendment and with comment. Item 16-03 was disapproved. At Stanley’s request, Moderator Bolbach recognized Dawn DeVries [and Neal D. Presa, chair] ~~[moderator]~~, General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism[, to present Item 16-11]. Item 16-11 was approved.”





**MINUTES**

**220th GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**2012  
PART I  
JOURNAL**

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## OFFICERS

*Two Hundred and Twentieth General Assembly (2012)*  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### *Moderator*

THE REVEREND NEAL D. PRESA

### *Vice-Moderator*

THE REVEREND TOM M. TRINIDAD

### *Stated Clerk*

THE REVEREND GRADYE PARSONS

### *Associate Stated Clerks*

RULING ELDER LOYDA PUIG AJA  
THE REVEREND ANDREW D. BLACK  
THE REVEREND KERRY CLEMENTS  
THE REVEREND TOM HAY  
RULING ELDER FREDERICK J. HEUSER JR.  
THE REVEREND JILL HUDSON  
THE REVEREND MARCIA MYERS  
THE REVEREND ROBINA WINBUSH

### *Assistant Stated Clerks*

THE REVEREND MOLLY CASTEEL  
DEBORAH DAVIES  
RULING ELDER C. LAURIE GRIFFITH  
THE REVEREND JOYCE LIEBERMAN  
RULING ELDER JEWEL MCRAE  
RULING ELDER MARTHA MILLER  
KAY MOORE  
RULING ELDER CHRIS NICHOLAS  
RULING ELDER KERRY RICE  
RULING ELDER VALERIE SMALL  
KRIS VALERIUS  
THE REVEREND SHARON YOUNGS

## **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Changes made by the 220th General Assembly (2012) to overtures, commissioners' resolutions, communications, recommendations, and resolutions of General Assembly entities appear as text enclosed in brackets. Bracketed text that is underlined was added by the assembly to the original text; bracketed text that is stricken was original text deleted by the assembly. Bracketed text with a gray screen background indicates changes made by plenary.

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

## **SECTION ONE**

### **Proceedings of the 220th General Assembly (2012) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Including Reports of Assembly Committees**

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

<http://www.pcusa.org/ga220>

Many of the reports of the General Assembly and the minutes can be found on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site. In the Fall of 2012, the Web site will be updated with two reports as approved by the assembly. This report can be found at the following address:

<http://oga.pcusa.org/documents-resources/list/publication/>

- World of Hurt, Word of Life: “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction, Item 11-09, p. 1055
- Human Rights Update 2012, Item 14-04, p. 1314



**THE JOURNAL OF THE  
220TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2012)**

Saturday, June 30, 2012, 3:00 P.M.

**BUSINESS MEETING I**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was convened by Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator, 219th General Assembly (2010), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Preceding this first business meeting, the assembly convened in Hall C with a service of opening worship. The preacher for the service was Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator, 219th General Assembly (2010).

ENROLLMENT AND QUORUM

Moderator Bolbach recognized Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, who advised the Moderator that Standing Rule D.2. permitted the roll to be established by registration. Stated Clerk Parsons recommended that the roll of the 220th General Assembly (2012) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register. Based on preregistration with General Assembly Meeting Service, there would be present at this assembly:

688	commissioners from 173 presbyteries
155	young adult advisory delegates
24	theological student advisory delegates
8	missionary advisory delegates
14	ecumenical advisory delegates

The assembly approved that the roll of the 220th General Assembly (2012) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register. Stated Clerk Parsons then informed the Moderator that G-3.0503 of the *Book of Order* establishes that the “quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred commissioners, fifty of whom shall be ruling elders and fifty teaching elders, representing presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.”

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

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The roll of the General Assembly can be found on page 1711 of the electronic version.

SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

Stated Clerk Parsons announced that, in accordance with Standing Rule B.3., corresponding members were designated and present at the General Assembly. The list of corresponding members can be found on page 1718 of the electronic version.

Moderator Bolbach welcomed the corresponding members.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

The report of the Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA) of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh was presented by Sheldon Sorge, pastor to the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, and Eric Dennis, chair of the Pittsburgh Committee on Local Arrangements.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Moderator Bolbach recognized Catherine Purves, moderator of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), who described the process by which the GANC places names in nomination and the procedure for making nominations from the floor.

REPORT ON BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Moderator Bolbach called upon Joey Bailey, Deputy Executive Director of Shared Services, General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), who described the process to be used in identifying items with budget implications and how that process can inform decisions made during the assembly.

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 2012

Moderator Bolbach called upon Landon Whitsitt, Vice-Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010), to assume the chair.

#### COMMISSIONER ORIENTATION

Vice-Moderator Whitsitt and Stated Clerk Parsons led the commissioners through a period of orientation.

#### COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR THE ASSEMBLY

Vice-Moderator Whitsitt called on Stated Clerk Parsons to recommend a committee structure for the assembly.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) voted to approve Item 00-03 (approved). (See p. 95.)

#### REPORT OF ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRAL

Vice-Moderator Whitsitt recognized Eustacia Moffet Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, for a report from the committee, assisted by Tom Harmon, vice-moderator of the committee.

The assembly approved Item 01-01, the proposed docket. The assembly removed the final response to referral Items II.B.2. (2010 Referral: Item 18-12; moved to become Item 20-13) and II.H.21. (2010 Referral: Item 09-06; moved to become Item 16-10) and then approved Item 01-02, as amended.

The assembly approved Item 01-04.

The assembly approved Item 01-03 with amendment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### Assembly Committee on Business Referral

##### **Item 01-01. Proposed Docket of the General Assembly**

**That the recommendation is approved. (See p. 99.)**

##### **Item 01-02. Referrals in Progress and Final Responses to Referrals**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. (See p. 101.)**

**Amendment: Lifted Responses II.B.2. (2010 Referral: Item 18-12) and II.H.21. (2010 Referral: Item 09-06).**

##### **Item 01-03. Referrals of Business**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. (See p. 142.)**

##### **Item 01-04. Suspend Standing Rule A.2.a.**

**That the recommendation is approved. (See p. 151)**

Vice-Moderator Whitsitt explained the procedure for the election of a Moderator.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Parsons made several announcements, including a reminder that the deadline for business to be submitted to the assembly was 1:30 p.m., Sunday, July 1st.

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Vice-Moderator Whitsitt called upon Cameron Highsmith, theological student advisory delegate from San Francisco Theological Seminary, who offered the closing prayer for this meeting of the General Assembly.

#### RECESS

The assembly recessed at 5:12 p.m.

**BUSINESS MEETING II**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator, 219th General Assembly (2010), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Kara Copeland, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Florida, and Brandt Shields, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of John Calvin, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

The assembly viewed a brief video highlighting the development of a worshipping community.

**ECUMENICAL GREETING**

Debbie Braaksma, the PC(USA) area coordinator for Africa, introduced the Reverend Tseliso Simeon Masemene, who brought greetings to the assembly from the Presbyterian Church in East Africa.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Moderator recognized Eric Dennis and Susan Blank from the Committee on Local Arrangements who presented gifts to Moderator Cynthia Bolbach and Vice-Moderator Landon Whitsitt.

**VOTING PROCEDURES**

Moderator Bolbach recognized the Stated Clerk for a test of the voting system.

**ELECTION OF THE MODERATOR**

Moderator Bolbach called for the election of the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as required by *Book of Order*, G-3.0501, and Standing Rule H.

The Stated Clerk described the procedure for the election.

Moderator Bolbach announced that four candidates had declared their intention to stand for election. There were no additional nominations from the floor. The most recent past Moderator present, Bruce Reyes-Chow, Moderator, 218th General Assembly (2008), met with the candidates backstage and led them in prayer.

Four candidates were placed in nomination. Robert Austell, Presbytery of Charlotte, was nominated by Kate Murphy of the Presbytery of Charlotte; Randy Branson, Presbytery of Palo Duro, was nominated by Mary D'Alessio of the Presbytery of Palo Duro; Susan Krummel, Presbytery of Great Rivers, was nominated by Gary Davis of the Presbytery of Great Rivers; and Neal D. Presa, Presbytery of Elizabeth, was nominated by Tara McCabe of the Presbytery of National Capital.

Each candidate was afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for five minutes. Stated Clerk Parsons explained the use of the speaker-recognition system. The candidates then responded to questions from the floor. At the expiration of the time allotted for this process, the candidates were escorted from the hall by former Moderator Reyes-Chow. Stated Clerk Parsons explained the electronic voting procedures.

Neal D. Presa was elected Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the fourth ballot, receiving a total of 338 votes. Of the total votes cast Krummel received 158, Austell received 144, and Branson received 13.

Moderator Bolbach declared that Neal D. Presa was duly elected to the office of Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012).

**RECOGNITION OF FORMER MODERATORS**

Moderator Bolbach welcomed the following former moderators to the platform:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>G.A.</u>	<u>Church</u>
Herbert D. Valentine	1991	203rd	PC(USA)
David L. Dobler	1993	205th	PC(USA)
Robert W. Bohl	1994	206th	PC(USA)
Marj Carpenter	1995	207th	PC(USA)

SUNDAY, JULY 1, 2012

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>G.A.</u>	<u>Church</u>
John M. Buchanan	1996	208th	PC(USA)
Patricia G. Brown	1997	209th	PC(USA)
Freda A. Gardner	1999	211th	PC(USA)
Syngman Rhee	2000	212th	PC(USA)
Jack Rogers	2001	213th	PC(USA)
Fahed Abu-Akel	2002	214th	PC(USA)
Susan R. Andrews	2003	215th	PC(USA)
Rick Ufford-Chase	2004	216th	PC(USA)
Bruce Reyes-Chow	2008	218th	PC(USA)

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

#### INSTALLATION OF NEWLY ELECTED MODERATOR

Retiring Moderator Cynthia Bolbach and retiring Vice-Moderator Landon Whitsitt installed Neal D. Presa to the office of Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012). Retiring Moderator Bolbach presented Moderator Presa with the moderatorial stole, and with Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators since 1983.

Daniel and Andrew Presa led the assembly in Scripture and prayer for the Moderator.

Moderator Presa addressed the assembly briefly.

#### SPECIAL PRESENTATION FROM THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Presa recognized Eric Dennis, chair of the Committee on Local Arrangements, who presented a gavel to newly elected Moderator Presa.

#### PRESENTATIONS TO RETIRING MODERATOR AND VICE-MODERATOR

Moderator Presa recognized Stated Clerk Parsons for a special presentation. Stated Clerk Parsons presented retiring Moderator Cynthia Bolbach with a replica of the Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators since 1983. Stated Clerk Parsons also presented a chalice and paten to retiring Moderator Bolbach and retiring Vice-Moderator Whitsitt.

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator Presa offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

#### RECESS

The assembly recessed at 9:50 p.m.

Sunday, July 1, 2012, 10:00 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants worshiped in local churches throughout the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

Sunday, July 1, 2012, 2:00 P.M.

#### **BUSINESS MEETING III**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Moderator Neal Presa, in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Moderator Presa recognized the Reverend Michael Sharpe, ecumenical guest from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, who opened the meeting with prayer.

#### **1001 WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES**

The assembly viewed a brief video highlighting the development of a worshipping community.



## ECUMENICAL GREETING

Mienda Uriarte, the PC(USA) area coordinator for Asia, introduced Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza, who brought greetings to the assembly from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

## CONFIRMATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE VICE-MODERATOR

Moderator Neal D. Presa introduced Tara Spuhler McCabe, teaching elder commissioner from the Presbytery of National Capital, whom he has chosen for Vice-Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012). The assembly voted to confirm McCabe as Vice-Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012). Tara Spuhler McCabe was installed into the position of Vice-Moderator by Moderator Presa and Associate Stated Clerk Tom Hay.

## REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK NOMINATION COMMITTEE

In accordance with Standing Rule H., Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons yielded the clerk's chair to Tom Hay, Associate Stated Clerk. Moderator Presa recognized Dennis Hughes, moderator, Stated Clerk Nomination Committee, to present the report of the committee. The committee chose Gradye Parsons as the nominee for election. There being no additional nominees, according to Standing Rule H., the assembly moved toward the election. After addressing the assembly, Gradye Parsons was elected Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, receiving a unanimous vote (Item 00-01, p. 85).

Moderator Presa declared that Gradye Parsons was duly elected to the office of Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons was accompanied to the platform by family members and friends. Moderator Presa led a service of installation. Dennis Hughes, Vince Thomas, and Darby Witherspoon participated in leading the service. Kathy Parsons led the assembly in prayer. Leah Johnson presented the Stated Clerk with binoculars and a stole. Parsons addressed the assembly, promising to always offer the assembly his very best.

## ECUMENICAL GREETING

Amgad Beblawi, the PC(USA) area coordinator for Europe, introduced the Reverend Fadi Dagher, ecumenical advisory delegate, who brought greetings to the assembly from the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon.

## BOARD OF PENSIONS DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY

Moderator Presa recognized Deborah Bruce, from Research Services Department, and Andy Browne, corporate secretary for the Board of Pensions, for a report on their recently concluded demographic study.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL REPORT

Moderator Presa called upon Vice-Moderator Tara Spuhler McCabe to assume the chair.

Vice-Moderator McCabe recognized Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), to talk about GAMC's work. Valentine introduced Michael Kruse, chairperson of the GAMC, who discussed the *1001 Worshiping Communities* initiative. Roger Dermody, GAMC Deputy Executive Director, discussed the *For Such a Time as This* pastoral residency program and the *New Beginnings* and *Engaged* programs. Rhaskell Hunter, director, Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women, GAMC, discussed leadership benefits for racial ethnic members.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECESS

Vice-Moderator McCabe recognized Associate Stated Clerk Hay for announcements.

After prayer offered by Sarah Henken, missionary advisory delegate, who serves in the Andean Region, the assembly recessed at 4:00 p.m. to reconvene at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 4.

Sunday, July 1, 2012, 7:30 P.M.

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

Monday, July 2, 2012, 7:00 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for the General Assembly Breakfast with speaker Brian D. McLaren.

Monday, July 2, 2012, 9:30 A.M.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 9:30 a.m. until noon; from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and from 7:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 3, 2012, 8:30 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for morning worship. Margaret Aymer was the preacher.

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

Wednesday, July 4, 2012, 8:30 A.M.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for the Ecumenical Service of Worship. The Reverend Jerry Pillay, moderator of the newly formed World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and general secretary of the Uniting Presbyterian Church of South Africa, was the preacher.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, July 4, 2012, 2:00 P.M.

#### **BUSINESS MEETING IV**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Rear Admiral Mark L. Tidd, chaplain, United States Navy, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

#### **RESIGNATION OF VICE-MODERATOR**

Vice-Moderator Tara Spuhler McCabe read Philippians 2:2–8, spoke of her concerns for the assembly, and announced her decision to resign as Vice-Moderator.

Moderator Presa received the Vice-Moderator's stole, gave background to her action, and led the assembly in prayer.

Moderator Presa announced that he would present Tom Trinidad, teaching elder from the Presbytery of Pueblo, to be confirmed in Business Meeting V.

#### **DISSENT**

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the resignation of the Vice-Moderator: Wendy M. Doidge, Presbytery of Newton; Craig T. Barth, Presbytery of Newton; and Judith Kolwicz, Presbytery of Newton.

#### **1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting the Bare Bulb Coffee ministry was shown.

#### **ECUMENICAL GREETING**

The Reverend Donald J. McCoid brought greetings from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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

Eustacia Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, was recognized. Tom Harmon, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, presented Item 02-02 (schedule). The assembly approved Item 02-02. Moderator Marshall reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures examined the minutes of the General Assembly from the time of its convening on Saturday afternoon, June 30, through the end of business on Tuesday, July 3, and found them in order.

#### **Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures**

**The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends the following, including the order of committee reports, as an adjustment to the docket:**

**Wednesday, July 4:**

8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service  
 10:00 a.m. Committees Roundtable Discussions  
 Lunch Break  
 2:00 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 4**  
 • Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
 • Ecumenical Greeting  
 • Stated Clerk's Orientation II  
 • Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)  
 • Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)  
 • Assembly Committee Reports  
     Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (9)  
     Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3)  
     Assembly Committee on Confessions of the Church (18)  
 Announcements  
 5:30 p.m. Closing Prayer  
 Recess  
 Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 5**  
 • Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
 • Ecumenical Greeting  
     Commissioning of New Missionaries  
 • Assembly Committee Reports  
     Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Ed. (17)  
 Announcements  
 Closing Prayer  
 Recess

**Thursday, July 5:**

8:30 a.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 6**  
 • Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
 • Ecumenical Greeting  
 • Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)  
 • Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)  
     Memorial Minute for Silas Kessler, Moderator of the 175th General Assembly,  
 UPCUSA  
 • Assembly Committee Reports  
     Assembly Committee on Review of GA Permanent Committees (19)  
     Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review (5)  
     Assembly Committee on Church Polity (6)  
 10:00 a.m.  
 11:15 a.m. Worship  
 Recess  
 Lunch Break  
 1:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 7**  
 • Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
 • Ecumenical Greeting  
 • Assembly Committee Reports  
     Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (11)  
     Memorial Minute for William Lytle, Moderator of the 190<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
 UPCUSA  
 • Assembly Committee Reports  
     Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundation, & Pres. Pub. Corp. (20)  
 3:00 p.m. Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues (15)  
 Announcements  
 Closing Prayer  
 5:30 p.m. Recess  
 Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 8**  
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
• Assembly Committee Reports  
Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Friday, July 6:**

8:30 a.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 9**  
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)  
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)  
• GANC Report  
• Moderator Bolback's nominations to GANC (00-04)  
• Assembly Committee Reports  
Assembly Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies (4)  
Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues (12)

10:00 a.m.

11:15 a.m.

Worship  
Recess

1:30 p.m.

Group Lunch  
Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 10**

• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
Memorial Minute for Howard Rice, Moderator of the 191<sup>st</sup> General Assembly  
UPCUSA

1:50 p.m.

3:30 p.m.

• Assembly Committee Reports  
Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues (13)  
Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP (16)  
Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry (7)  
Assembly Committee on Review of Authoritative Interpretations (8)

6:00 p.m.

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess  
Group Dinner

7:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 11**  
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
• Assembly Committee Reports  
Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (14)  
Assembly Committee on Health Issues (21)  
Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Saturday, July 7**

9:00 a.m.

Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 12**  
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures  
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)  
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)  
• Introduction of Presbytery of Detroit Committee on Local Arrangements

11:00 a.m.

Closing Worship in Plenary

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

Moderator Presa recognized Lynn Bova, moderator, Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Moderator Bova presented a per capita apportionment of \$6.80 for 2013 and \$6.98 for 2014 and announced that the total financial implications of actions recommended by assembly committees amounts to: \$600 for 2012; \$356,048 for 2013; and \$240,457 for 2014. On Saturday morning, the committee will present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2013 and 2014.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Presa recognized Sam Evans, moderator, Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Evans reported the total financial implications of actions under considerations by the assembly for the mission budgets were: \$949,179 for 2013, and \$855,311 for 2014.

NOMINATIONS INFORMATION

Stated Clerk Parsons was recognized and reported a floor nomination to Item 00-02, p. 86, Item A, Advisory Committee on the Constitution. General Assembly Nominating Committee nominee Daryl Fisher-Ogden was challenged by a commissioner nomination for Katherine J. Runyeon. Parsons also reported additional nominations for the report. They are Thomas Fleming and Nancy Ramsay, general assembly commissioners, nominated to the General Assembly Mission Council.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Moderator Presa recognized Jane Dempsey Douglass, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations for a report from the committee. The consent agenda was approved: Items 09-02 (approved), 09-04 (approved), 09-05 (approved), 09-06 (approved), and 09-09 (received report as written).

The assembly approved Item 09-01 (approve).

Gifts from the committee in recognition of their churches' anniversaries were presented to the Reverend Francisco Vicente Marrero Gutiérrez, the general secretary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Reverend Miguel Fernando Estrada Salvador from the Evangelical National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala. Moderator Presa also presented gifts.

Item 09-03 (approve) was presented and approved. Moderator Presa recognized Natasha Klukach, who presented greetings from the World Council of Churches.

Items 09-07 and 09-08 were presented and approved.

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

**Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations**

**Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.**

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 09-01. On Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Mission Partnership Between the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba—From the Presidency of Santa Fe.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 767.]**

**\*Item 09-02. Invitation of Churches to Send Ecumenical Advisory Delegates to the 221th General Assembly (2014)—GACEIR.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 769.]**

**Item 09-03. Review of the World Council of Churches—GACEIR.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 769–70.]**

**\*Item 09-04. On Participation in the Eighth Round of Reformed/Catholic Dialogue—GACEIR.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 778.]**

**\*Item 09-05. Delegates to Church World Service and National Council of Churches—GACEIR.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 779.]

**\*Item 09-06. Delegates to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches—GACEIR.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 780.]

**Item 09-07. Recommendations Regarding Covenant to Adopt the Lund Principle—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations—GACEIR**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 780.]

**Item 09-08. Commissioners' Resolution. On a Green Church Ecumenical Network.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 782.]

**\*Item 09-09. 2008 Referral: Item 07-04. Recommendation 2.b. Instructing the OGA and GAMC to Convene Tables to Create Processes and Procedures for the Orderly Exchange of Ministers and the Orderly Transfer of Churches—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 513).**

The Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations received the report as written. The task was completed in December 2011. [See p. 783.]

## II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 09-A. Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.

That the minutes are approved with comment:

Comment: The first use of acronyms should be spelled out in first reference of the entity.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Lynn Bova, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report from the committee. The assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 03-03 (approved), 03-05 (approved), 03-06 (approved), 03-07 (approved), 03-09 (approved), 03-10 (approved), 03-15 (approved with comment), 03-11 (approved), 03-04 (approved), 03-08 (approved), 03-13 (Recommendations 1, 4, and 5 approved; Recommendations 2 and 3 approved with amendment), and 03-14 (approved).

Vice-Moderator Claire Rhodes presented Item 03-01, which the assembly approved with amendment.

Moderator Bova presented Item 03-02, which the assembly disapproved with comment to refer to the Committee on the Office of General Assembly.

Moderator Bova presented Item 03-12. Recommendations 1, 2.a., 3, and 5 were approved. Items 03-A and 03-B were presented for information.

The report was arrested. The committee will conclude its report at Business Meeting XII with a recommendation on the financial implications of actions taken at this assembly.

### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CONFESSIONS OF THE CHURCH

Moderator Presa recognized Todd Jones, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Confessions of the Church, for a report from the committee. Moderator Jones introduced Vice-Moderator Nicholas Yoda and presented Item 18-02, which was approved with amendment.

Vice-Moderator Yoda presented Item 18-03 and introduced the Reverend Dr. David Stubbs from the Special Committee on the Heidelberg Confession to give an overview of the timeline and process of the work of the special committee. The assembly approved Item 18-03 with amendment.

Moderator Jones presented Item 18-01. A minority report was introduced. The minority report was perfected. The main motion was perfected. Moderator Presa put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated. The assembly approved Item 18-01 with amendment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Confessions of the Church. A summary of the report is as follows:

### Assembly Committee on Confessions of the Church

#### Consent Agenda

Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.

#### Financial Implications

Items with financial implications are indicated by a dollar sign (\$).

#### I. For Plenary Action

**\$Item 18-01. On Amending *The Book of Confessions* to Include the Confession of Belhar—From the Presbytery of National Capital.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1527.]

Amend the recommendation by adding a second paragraph to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[That the special committee formed to study the Confession of Belhar be granted a budget for education across the church about the confession, in addition to its committee budget for direct expenses.]”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$36,250, (2014) \$21,535 (Per Capita—OGA)]

**Item 18-02. On Setting Aside Time to Study *The Book of Confessions* in Preparation for a Celebration in 2016—From the Presbytery of the Cascades.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1530.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of the Cascades overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to encourage every presbytery [and congregation] to set aside time to study *The Book of Confessions* in preparation for the grand celebration in 2016.”

**Item 18-03. Report of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to the 220th General Assembly (2012).**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1530.]

Amend Recommendations 1–2 as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Approve the proposed new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism, with accompanying Scriptural references [immediately following each question and answer], as amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, and direct the Stated Clerk to send the proposed amended Heidelberg Catechism to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes by July 2013.

“2. Dismiss the Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism [with thanks].”

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Moderator Presa recognized George Hunsberger, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, who introduced Vice-Moderator Mary Lou McMillin to present Item 17-A, honoring the Reverend Dr. John B. Trotti with the Award for Excellence in Theological Education. The report was arrested.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Parsons reported to the assembly that the amount of the offering taken at the Ecumenical Worship service was \$4,834.18, to be given to the Partnership Fund and the Theological Educational Support Fund for Women in the South of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Parsons also explained the process for dealing with the resignation of the Vice-Moderator.

Moderator Presa recognized the Reverend Dr. Jeffrey Japinga of the Reformed Church in America, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:13 p.m. to reconvene at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, July 4, 2012, 7:00 P.M.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Simone Adams, a theological student advisory delegate from Columbia Theological Seminary, led the assembly in the convening liturgy and prayer.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Commissioner Eustacia Marshall, Moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, moved that fifteen minutes be docketed for a speak-out period. By voice vote, the assembly disapproved the proposed docket change.

ECUMENICAL GREETINGS

Maria Arroyo, the PC(USA) area coordinator for Latin America, introduced the Reverend Juan Bautista Rodas Flores, who brought greetings to the assembly from the Presbyterian Church of Honduras.

COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

John Wilkinson, moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, was invited to make a statement on behalf of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly in response to the recent resignation of the former Vice-Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), Tara Spuhler McCabe.

CONFIRMATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE VICE-MODERATOR

Moderator Presa introduced Tom Trinidad, teaching elder commissioner from the Presbytery of Pueblo, whom he had chosen to be Vice-Moderator for the 220th General Assembly (2012). The assembly voted to confirm Trinidad as Vice-Moderator. Moderator Presa and Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons installed Tom Trinidad into the office of Vice-Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012).

COMMISSIONING OF NEW MISSIONARIES

Hunter Farrell, World Mission director for the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), presided over the commissioning of new missionaries. The young adult volunteers who would serve for the year of 2012 were introduced. Linda Valentine also introduced regional liaisons who would serve throughout the global communities. The Reverend Dr. Victor Chilenje, ecumenical delegate from the Synod of Zambia, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, responded to the commissioning.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON  
THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Moderator Presa recognized George R. Hunsberger, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education, to resume the report from the committee. The consent agenda was approved: Items 17-04 (approved), 17-05 (approved), and 17-07 (approved).

Upon motion from the floor, the assembly voted to limit commissioner's comments and speeches to no more than two minutes.

Moderator Hunsberger introduced Item 17-01. Item 17-01 was disapproved with comment. Moderator Hunsberger introduced Item 17-02. Item 17-02 was approved with an alternate resolution. Hunsberger introduced Item 17-08. Item 17-08 was approved with comment. Hunsberger introduced Item 17-03. Item 17-03 was approved as amended.

Moderator Presa recognized Mary Lou McMillin, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education. McMillin introduced Item 17-06 to approve presidents of theological seminaries. At McMillin's request, the Moderator recognized Frank M. Yamada, the president of McCormick Theological Seminary. Yama-



da addressed the assembly briefly. The Moderator next recognized James McDonald, President of San Francisco Theological Seminary. McDonald briefly addressed the assembly. Item 17-06 was approved. At McMillin's request, the Moderator recognized Brian Blount, Union Presbyterian Seminary. Blount spoke to the assembly briefly. At McMillian's request, the Moderator next recognized Robert Bohl, chair, Princeton Theological Seminary. Bohl spoke to the assembly briefly. A video, *Theological Commons* was also presented to the assembly. The assembly approved Item 17-C.

Vice-Moderator McMillin concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education. A summary of the report is as follows:

### **Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education**

#### **Consent Agenda**

Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.

#### **Financial Implications**

There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

#### **I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 17-01. On Undertaking a Parenting Initiative Called the "Institute for Effective Parental Leadership"—From the Presbytery of Long Island.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 1495.]

**Comment:** The Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education commends the Presbytery of Long Island for its commitment to addressing parenting issues with at-risk families. The General Assembly also wishes to encourage the Presbytery of Long Island to contact the Presbyteries of Heartland, San Francisco, New York City, and Chicago, and to proceed with this hopeful and much needed ministry.

**Item 17-02. On Amending the "Setting of the Service" of Ordination and Installation for Teaching Elders (W-4.4002)—From the Presbytery of New Castle.**

In response to Item 17-02, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following alternate recommendation: [See pp. 1496–97.]

The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Amend W-4.4002 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"The service of ordination and installation, or commissioning, may take place during the Service for the Lord's Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503). Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the proclamation of the Word. The service of *ordination or installation of a ~~pastor or associate pastor~~ teaching elder* shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery."

**Item 17-03. Covenant Between the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and Auburn Theological Seminary—COTE.**

That the recommendation is approved as amended. [See p. 1499.]

Amend Section IV. Parties to the Covenant as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

"The parties to this covenant, Auburn Theological Seminary, governed by its board of directors, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), operating as a [~~governing body~~] [council], are distinct entities. They are independent, neither being controlled by the other."

**\*Item 17-04. New Trustees Elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions—COTE.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1504–05.]

**\*Item 17-05. Permission for Theological Institutions to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—COTE.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1506.]

**Item 17-06. Approve Presidents of Theological Seminaries—COTE.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1506.]

**\*Item 17-07. Nominees to the Mountain Retreat Association Board of Directors—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1507.]

**Item 17-08. Approve List of Colleges, Universities, and Secondary Schools—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved with comment. [See p. 1507.]

**Comment: Just as we attempt to be clear on the nature and scope of our church's relationship with seminaries and covenant partner schools, it is important that we attempt to be similarly clear on the nature and scope of our church's relationship with Presbyterian affiliated colleges, universities, and secondary schools. We would, therefore, request the General Assembly Mission Council, in consultation with the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities, to consider developing a more precise and succinct definition of exactly what it means to be considered "Presbyterian affiliated."**

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 17-A. Award for Excellence in Theological Education—COTE. [See p. 1508.]

Item 17-B. Minutes, Committee on Theological Education.

Item 17-C. Celebrate Bicentennial Celebrations of Union Presbyterian Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary—COTE. [See p. 1508.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Parsons reminded the assembly of the invitation to the Fourth of July evening fireworks at the convention center for commissioners, spouses, family, and invited guests.

The Reverend Peter Nimmo, from The Church of Scotland, led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 8:50 p.m.

Thursday, July 5, 2012, 8:30 A.M.

**BUSINESS MEETING V**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Tom Trinidad, Vice-Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Emily Morrell, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Holston, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

The assembly viewed a brief video highlighting the development of a worshipping community.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Tom Harmon, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, who presented a motion to allow for fifteen minutes of Speak Out after lunch. The motion was approved.

GREETINGS FROM NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SYNAGOGUES

Rabbi Gil Rosenthal from the National Council of Synagogues brought greetings to the assembly.

ECUMENICAL GREETING

Dr. Nagali Srinivasa from the Sri Venkateswara Temple brought greetings to the assembly.

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

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Lynn Bova, moderator, Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Moderator Bova announced that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly amount to: \$0 for 2012; \$36,250 for 2013, representing an increase in \$.02 per capita; and \$21,535 for 2014, representing \$.01 increase to per capita. Implications of pending actions recommended by assembly committees amount to: \$600 for 2012; \$319,798 for 2013, representing \$.16 increase to per capita; and \$218,922 for 2014, representing \$.12 increase to per capita. On Saturday morning, the committee is scheduled to present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2013 and 2014.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Marci Glass, vice-moderator, Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Glass reported the total financial implications of actions taken so far by the assembly amount to \$0 for 2013 and \$0 for 2014. Items still under consideration by the assembly for the mission budget totaled \$949,179 for 2013; and \$855,311 for 2014.

MEMORIAL MOMENT FOR SILAS KESSLER,  
MODERATOR OF THE 175TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1963), UPCUSA

Bob Houser presented a memorial moment for former Moderator Silas Kessler:

The Reverend Silas G. Kessler, the senior former General Assembly Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), died November 15 at the age of 100 in Hastings, Nebraska. Kessler was Moderator of the 1963 General Assembly of the former United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA). Born in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 29, 1911, Dr. Kessler followed his father into the ministry, earning his Doctor of Divinity from the University of Dubuque (Iowa) in 1934. Kessler graduated from the University of Dubuque and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. He served pastorates in Farmington, Iowa, and Fullerton, Nebraska, and then in 1940 was called to be pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, where he served until his retirement in 1976. After retiring in 1976, Silas went on to serve as an interim pastor for fifteen additional churches. During his tenure in Hastings, Kessler also served as president of the Nebraska Council of Churches, as a member of the board of trustees at Hastings College for fifty years, as a member of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation Board, and as the first elected moderator of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. For his remarkable service to the college, he was inducted into the Pro Rege Society in 1997 and received the President's Award in 1998. But it was his humble spirit and inspired preaching that left the strongest impressions on current First Presbyterian pastor William Nottage-Tacey. When one thinks of Silas Kessler words like integrity, scholar, statesmanship, wit and wisdom, faithfulness, dignity, humility, warmth, compassion, pastoral professionalism, immediately come to mind. Some time ago a phrase from a Eugene Petersen book seemed to me so apt in summing up Si's life "... a long obedience in the same direction."

Taking his service to the community and the larger world, Silas was also a member of the Kiwanis for more than thirty-five years, a member of the Salvation Army board, and a member of the board for the Hastings Literacy Program. Taking his ministry into the world, Silas preached an inaugural sermon for the establishment of Presbyterian Church of Chili, led a conference of Coptic pastors for a week in Egypt, and attended a summer institute at Mansfield, Oxford, and St. Andrews, Scotland. One of the most memorable experiences for Silas was participating as guest minister for two Sundays in a church in Beirut and spending a week in the Holy Land.

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

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Kirk Dorn, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Permanent Committees, for a report from the committee, which included informational items, reviews, and approval of committee minutes. The assembly approved Item 19-Report (Recommendations 1-2), Report 1: Report on Review of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution; Item 19-Report (Recommendations 1-2), Report 2: Report on Review of the Advisory Committee on Litigation; and Item 19-Report (1 recommendation), Report 3: Report on the Review of the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Permanent Committees. A summary of the report is as follows:

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

**Consent Agenda**

**Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.**

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Report 1: Report on Review of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution [See p. 1587.]**

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

- 1. Commends the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) for its work, accomplishments, and insights gained in providing a self-study.**
- 2. Recommends that the following report on the Review of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution be received.**

**Report on the Review of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

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

*Mission:* Created with the reunion of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1983, the ACC serves and supports the church's mission by providing the General Assembly advice in matters of interpretation and amendment of the Constitution of the PC(USA) and assisting the General Assembly to make choices about the interpretation and amendment of the Constitution, and more particularly, the *Book of Order*, with an understanding of the context of their choices and the consequences of proposed actions. To perform this function, the ACC prepares advice to commissioners at each assembly as to each item of business seeking an interpretation or amendment of the *Book of Order*.

*Membership:* The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) is composed of nine voting members, who are required by the current Manual of the General Assembly to be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is a member ex officio without vote.

*Process:* The Advisory Committee on the Constitution provided a self-study based on their work for the years 2005–2011. The General Assembly Committee to Review Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study, examined the survey results, and interviewed members of the ACC.

*Findings:*

**A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership**

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

The ACC counsel to the General Assembly is expressed in a manner that is clear and understandable to the General Assembly commissioners and any audience present at the General Assembly committee meeting. Most importantly, the ACC strives to be neutral in political tone and does not advocate a position of any entity or group of the PC(USA). The ACC recognizes that its neutrality may be misinterpreted as advocacy in some cases.

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

The ACC is faithful to its mission as set forth in its mandate from the assembly. There is an obvious connection between the quality and credentials of the persons selected for service in the ACC and the nature and degree of steadfast personal dedication of the ACC's membership.

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

The work of the ACC is narrowly focused and advisory in nature and does not overlap the work of other committees or agencies of the General Assembly.

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

Yes. The 120-day deadline for new business before the General Assembly prompts a timely but thorough and comprehensive response.

## B. Effectiveness of Service

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

Yes. They have a very detailed and sufficient manual.

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

Yes. The ACC goes through biennial self-evaluations. Accountability and communication issues are being investigated by the ACC. The structure of how the ACC performs is a subject for periodic review.

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

The ACC's advice is evident in most pieces of business brought before the General Assembly. The communication of the advice of the ACC is the responsibility of the Office of the General Assembly.

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

Yes. The recommendations of the ACC to the various General Assemblies regarding overtures, requests, and referrals continue to be read. The ACC offers a website, [www.pcusa.org/acc](http://www.pcusa.org/acc).

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

The ACC consistently evaluates constitutional matters before the General Assembly with neutrality. It takes great pains to give careful and constructive critique to proposals.

**Report 2: Report on Review of the Advisory Committee on Litigation [See p. 1617.]****The Committee on the Review of GA Permanent Committees:**

**1. Commends the Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) for its work and accomplishments, and for the very interesting report to our committee.**

**2. Recommends that the following report on the Review of the Advisory Committee on Litigation is received.**

**Report on the Review of the Advisory Committee on Litigation**

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

*Mission:* The mission of the Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) is to advise the Stated Clerk regarding participation in litigation related to matters of civil and religious liberty, relations between church and state, and any other matters related to the mission and interest of the church.

*Membership:* The Advisory Committee on Litigation is made up of six elected persons who are members of a PC(USA) council. Ordinarily attorneys-at-law, these persons are experienced in legal fields that relate to issues that may be the subject of legal proceedings in which the church is, or may become, interested.

*Process:* The ACL provided a self-study and summary based on their work since 2008. The General Assembly Committee to Review Permanent Committees reviewed the self-study (which includes an evaluation by the ACL's only "client," the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA)) and interviewed the moderator of the ACL.

*Findings:*

## A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

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

The ACL serves to advise the Stated Clerk on the complicated connection between the social witness of the General Assembly and the secular judicial process. The committee has fulfilled their charge faithfully and has carried it out well in their detailed and nuanced advice to the Stated Clerk.

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

The ACL has consistently advised the Stated Clerk based on the seventeen criteria in the Criteria for Evaluation established by the General Assembly. The members of the committee are ready at a moment's notice to review complicated cases, briefs, and social policy within a relatively short time frame and honestly discuss the effects of any particular amicus witness.

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

The ACL has received for its review several potential amicus opportunities for social witness from other agencies or committees of the PC(USA) and seems to take seriously the difficult work of other agencies and committees.

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

The assembly has not issued directives or requests to the ACL. The committee uses all of the social policy given by the General Assembly in its evaluation of potential amicus briefs in particular cases.

#### B. Effectiveness of Services

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

The committee has followed its established criteria and has always been available to advise the Stated Clerk either by e-mail, conference call, or face-to-face meeting, often evaluating highly complicated issues. These evaluations often happen with little advance notice and the Stated Clerk is grateful to the members of the committee for their attention to highly complex issues within a short time frame.

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

The committee gives to the assembly a regular assessment of the judicial cases in which the amicus briefs were filed.

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

The committee's primary role is to advise the Stated Clerk only, so the committee itself does not have a major interpretive role to the church. However, the Office of the General Assembly has established a website so that the church can be aware of the committee's procedures and the briefs filed by the Stated Clerk.

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

The ACL makes regular and effective use of technology in its work.

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

The committee holds a face-to-face meeting every two to three years in which it reviews the General Assembly social witness and current issues before the judicial system to advise the Stated Clerk on opportunities to judicially make witness. This has led to giving priority in briefs to issues of First Amendment Establishment and Free Exercise clause interpretations, human rights, and justice for immigrants.

#### **Report 3: Report on the Review of the General Assembly Committee on Representation [See p. 1568.]**

**The Committee on the Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees recommends that the following report on the Review of the General Assembly Committee on Representation is received.**

#### **Report on the Review of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR)**

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

*Mission:* The mission of the GACOR is to promote and review the PC(USA)'s commitment to inclusiveness; and advocate for full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life for all persons or groups within its membership, as outlined in F-1.0403. The GACOR continues to assist the church, with particular concern at the national level, to seek new openness, to unity in diversity, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*Membership:* Serving on the GACOR at the time of the report are fourteen elected persons from the sixteen synods.

*Process:* The GACOR provided a self-study based on their work for the past three years as well as a thorough power-point presentation. The General Assembly Committee to Review Permanent Committees thoroughly reviewed the self-study and interviewed several members along with the Reverend Molly Casteel who staffs the GACOR.

*Findings:*

A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

1. Does the GACOR, as it was created by the church, serve and support the church's mission in a particular area?

Yes. The GACOR serves and supports the church's mission in conformity with its mandate. We want to encourage GACOR to continue and expand communications of their valuable work. We also encourage them to continue exploring how to define theological diversity. Given the *Book of Order* and the GACOR mandate, we would like clear communication on how they interpret that mandate to a greater level of specificity.

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

Yes. The GACOR does exhibit a constant faithfulness to and fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA) in conformity with its mandate. We especially appreciate their work in diversity employment as well as committee appointments. We concur with their goal of better interaction and cooperation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee.

3. Does the basic process of the GACOR demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in the *Book of Order*?

Yes, but clearer and measurable goals for their work would be valuable.

4. Does the GACOR exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which GACOR acts?

Yes. The work with the General Assembly and synods has been useful and needs to be continued. We hope that their work with synods will help the synods raise diversity awareness and implementation at the presbytery level.

B. Effectiveness of Services

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

Yes. The GACOR is hard at work defining a process for completing its expanded diversity criteria, specifically in the area of theological expression and other developing areas of inclusion needs.

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

This self-study was wide-ranging and the GACOR presentation was valuable. We encourage GACOR to structure their self-study around the questions that our committee must evaluate.

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

The GACOR communicates with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC); enters into dialogue with and engages in cooperative processes with synods, the General Assembly Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), and the General Assembly Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), and racial/ethnic caucuses in order to identify and expand leadership opportunities. Information is also communicated through the General Assembly Committee on Representation website, [www.pcusa.org/cor](http://www.pcusa.org/cor).

4. Does the GACOR utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mandate?

Yes, the GACOR demonstrated to the review committee some utilization of current and emerging technologies to fulfill its mandate such as creating materials in different languages (e.g. English, Spanish, Korean) and accessibility, and by providing information and resources through the General Assembly Committee on Representation website.

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

Yes, they have a good understanding of their historical perspective. We encourage them to do more forward thinking as the church of the 21st century unfolds. In particular, we encourage them to raise awareness of the new marginalized and disempowered groups. The GACOR demonstrates a commitment to continue their work in innovative ways.

## II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

THURSDAY, JULY 5, 2012

Item 19-A. Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation

That the minutes are approved.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MID COUNCILS REVIEW

Moderator Presa assumed the chair and recognized Larry Hayward, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review, for a report from the committee. Moderator Hayward introduced Ariel Mink, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review, who presented the consent agenda. The assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 05-11 (approved with amendment), 05-15 (approved with amendment), 05-16 (approved with amendment), 05-17 (approved), 05-18 (approved), and 05-19 (approved).

Hayward introduced Item 05-12 and moved approval of an alternate resolution to Recommendations 1.–4. The assembly approved a motion to refer Recommendations 1.–4:

[Refer Recommendations 1.–4. of the Mid Council Commission report to a task force to further discuss, refine, and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations that consider the composition and organization of the mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church. The Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) will name the task force. It will be composed of an equal number of persons from the Mid Council Commission, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and commissioners to the 220th General Assembly (2012). The optimal size of such a task force is twelve-to-fifteen persons. The Office of the General Assembly, including the coordinator of the Mid Council Relations, will provide staff support to the task force.]

Item 05-12 (Recommendation 5) was approved with amendment. Item 05-12 (Recommendation 6) was disapproved with comment.

Item 05-12 (Recommendation 7) was approved with amendment, including a floor amendment to add the following: [We commend the narrative of the Mid Council Commission report to the church and ask that a study guide be created for that purpose.]

Item 05-12 (Recommendation 8) was approved with amendment.

Vice-Moderator Mink introduced Items 05-13 and 05-14 that had been referred to the committee. Item 05-13 was approved with amendment and Item 05-14 was approved.

A motion was made regarding Item 05-12: to combine all task forces created in the actions concerning the Mid Council Commission Report into one task force. The assembly acted to postpone consideration of this motion this until Business Meeting IX (Friday morning) at 8:30 a.m.

Hayward presented the remaining items for action: Item 05-03 (disapproved), Item 05-04 (disapproved), Item 05-05 (disapproved), Item 05-06 (disapproved), Item 05-07 (disapproved), Item 05-01 (disapproved), Item 05-08 (disapproved), and Item 05-09 (disapproved).

The assembly voted to answer Item 05-02 with the action taken on Item 05-12 (Recommendations 1–4). The assembly voted to answer Item 05-10 with the action taken on Item 05-12 (Recommendation 6).

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### **Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review**

##### **Consent Agenda**

**Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.**

##### **Financial Implications**

**There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.**

##### **I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 05-01. On Amending G-3.0301, G-3.0403c., and G-3.0502e. to Enable Flexible Boundaries within or Beyond the Bounds of an Existing Presbytery—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 253.]**



**Item 05-02. On Creating a Committee on Synod Boundaries—From the Presbytery of St. Andrew.**

That the recommendation is answered by action on Item 05-12 (Recommendations 1–4). [See pp. 255, 274.]

**Item 05-03. On Amending G-5.05a Regarding a Session’s Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 257.]

**Item 05-04. On Amending G-5.0401 Regarding a Union Presbytery’s Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 260.]

**Item 05-05. On Adding G-3.0301d to Clarify the Right of Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 262.]

**Item 05-06. On Amending G-5.05a, Joint Congregational Witness—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 266.]

**Item 05-07. On Amending G-5.0401, Conflicting Mandatory Provisions between Constitutional Standards of Union Presbyteries—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 267.]

**Item 05-08. On Amending G-3.0403c. and G-3.0502e. to Bring Flexibility to the Ways Presbyteries Relate to Each Other—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 268.]

**Item 05-09. On Extending the Mid Council Commission or Establishing a Successor Administrative Commission—From the Presbytery of San Diego.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 271.]

**Item 05-10. On Delaying Actions Regarding the Creation of Non-Geographic Presbyteries Until at Least 2016—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.**

That the recommendation is answered by action on Item 05-12 (Recommendation 6). [See p. 273.]

**\* Item 05-11. On Transferring the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley to the Presbytery of Geneva—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 274.]

**“The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the dismissal of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley and the transfer of the church membership to the Presbytery of Geneva and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the Synod.”**

**\$Item 05-12. Mid Council Report to the 220th General Assembly—From the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils.**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) referred Item 05-12 (Recommendations 1.–4.): [See pp. 274–76.]

[Refer Recommendations 1.–4. of the Mid Council Commission report to a task force to further discuss, refine, and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations that consider the composition and organization of the mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church. The Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) will name the task force. It will be composed of an equal number of persons from the Mid Council Commission, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and commissioners to the 220th General Assembly

(2012). The optimal size of such a task force is twelve-to-fifteen persons. The Office of the General Assembly, including the coordinator of the Mid Council Relations, will provide staff support to the task force.

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$33,520, (2014) \$20,190—Per Capita]

That Item 05-12 (Recommendation 5.) is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 276.]

“5. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a commission to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk to do the following:

“a. By direction of the 220th General Assembly (2012), or upon a majority affirmative vote of the affected presbytery or presbyteries or a majority affirmative vote of the presbyteries in the affected synod or synods, the commission is authorized to act [and work in cooperation with the Committee on Synod Boundaries] as the General Assembly to

“i. organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing; and

“ii. approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries by synods.

“b. Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)~~[-and to the 222nd General Assembly (2016)]~~ all actions taken on its behalf.

“c. ~~[To cease existence and transfer all authority to the regional administrative commissions as soon as the regional administrative commissions have been constituted.]”~~

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$19,070, (2014) \$22,440—Per Capita]

That Item 05-12 (Recommendation 6.) is disapproved with comment. [See p. 276.]

Comment: That the commission be thanked and commended for its work on the report. That the congregations be encouraged to engage in collaborative missional endeavors, irrespective of their locations within particular presbytery geographic boundaries.

That Item 05-12 (Recommendation 7.) is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 277.]

“[Direct the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to appoint] [Establish] a task force to review the nature and function of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly, specifically with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context [to report back to the 221st General Assembly.] [We commend the narrative of the Mid Council Commission report to the church and ask that a study guide be created for that purpose.]”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$15,050, (2014) \$9,855—Per Capita]

That Item 05-12 (Recommendation 8.) is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 277.]

“In light of what we have heard in our conversation with the church identifying a critical condition concerning lack of confidence in the substance and direction of racial ethnic ministry, we recommend

“a. ~~[that]~~ [Instructing] the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) ~~[be empowered]~~ to appoint a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force exclusively to review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA), reporting its findings for implementation to the 221st General Assembly (2014); and

“b. that this task force be comprised of representatives from

“—racial ethnic church leadership;

“—racial ethnic caucus leadership;

“—the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC);

“—presbytery leadership; and

“—the General Assembly Committee on Representation

“[—a representative from Racial/Ethnic Women’s Ministries:]

“c. [~~that this task force be independent from the OGA task force in Recommendation 3. above; and~~]

“d. that this task force be charged specifically to address the issue [and the lack] of language access, sensitivity, and resourcing (particularly as relates to the Spanish and Korean languages) within the existing frame of council operation, as well as within the context of any [~~regional administrative structure that might emerge as a result of the repurposing of synods~~] [any councils.]”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$15,050, (2014) \$9,855—Per Capita]

**Item 05-13. On Amending the *Book of Order* Regarding Synod Functions—OGA.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 341–43.]

Amend Recommendations 8. and 9. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“8. Shall D-6.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic]

“ ‘A remedial case is initiated by the filing of a complaint with the stated clerk of the council ~~or shared council~~ having jurisdiction. [If a different clerk has been designated to process judicial cases for a shared judicial commission, the stated clerk having jurisdiction shall immediately transmit the complaint to the clerk.]’

“9. Shall D-6.0202a(1)–(6) be amended as follows:

“ ‘(1) a teaching elder or a ruling elder enrolled as a member of a presbytery concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that period of enrollment, against the presbytery, with the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~];

“ ‘(2) a commissioner to a synod, concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that commissioner’s period of enrollment, against the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~], with the General Assembly;

“ ‘(3) a session against the presbytery, with the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~];

“ ‘(4) a presbytery against the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~], with the General Assembly;

“ ‘(5) any council against any other council of the same level, with the council immediately higher than the council complained against and to which the latter council is subject;

“ ‘(6) a person who is an employee of a presbytery, a synod ~~or cooperating synod~~, or an entity of a presbytery or synod, claiming to have sustained injury or damage to person or property by the council or entity, against the presbytery, with the synod, or against the synod ~~or cooperating synod~~, with the General Assembly.’ ”

**Item 05-14. Interpretation of G-3.0403c—From the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly—ACC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 344–45.]

**\* Item 05-15. On Transferring the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, from the Presbytery of Charlotte to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina—From the Presbytery of Charlotte.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 346.]

“The Presbytery of Charlotte overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the dismissal of the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, from the Presbytery of Charlotte and the transfer of the church membership to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina [and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the synod.]”

**\* Item 05-16. On Transferring Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, California, from the Presbytery of Sacramento to the Presbytery of Stockton—From the Synod of the Pacific.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See p. 347.]

**“The Synod of the Pacific overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to concur with the request that the Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, California, (PIN 11401) be transferred to Stockton Presbytery from Sacramento Presbytery [and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the synod.]”**

[Note: It is understood the effective date will be upon favorable action of the General Assembly.]

**\* Item 05-17. On Transferring Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Elizabeth to the Presbytery of Eastern Korean—From the Synod of Northeast.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 348.]

**\* Item 05-18. On Transferring Four Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 348.]

**\* Item 05-19. On Transferring Two Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 348–49.]

## **II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 05-A. Minutes, Synod of Alaska-Northwest.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-B. Minutes, Synod of the Covenant.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-C. Minutes, Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-D. Minutes, Synod of Lincoln Trails.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-E. Minutes, Synod of Living Waters.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-F. Minutes, Synod of Mid-America.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-G. Minutes, Synod of Mid-Atlantic.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-H. Minutes, Synod of the Northeast.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-I. Minutes, Synod of the Pacific.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-J. Minutes, Synod of Puerto Rico.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-K. Minutes, Synod of the Rocky Mountains.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-L. Minutes, Synod of South Atlantic.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-M. Minutes, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-N. Minutes, Synod of the Southwest.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-O. Minutes, Synod of the Sun.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 05-P. Minutes, Synod of the Trinity.

That the minutes are approved.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons reminded the assembly what a speak-out entails.

#### SERVICE OF DAILY WORSHIP

The Reverend James Kim, teacher elder, Little Church on the Prairie, Lakewood, Washington, was the preacher.

The assembly recessed at 12:00 p.m. to reconvene at 1:30 pm.

Thursday, July 5, 2012, 1:30 P.M.

#### **BUSINESS MEETING VII**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The Reverend Miguel Fernando Estrada Salvador, from the Evangelical National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

#### SPEAK-OUT

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

#### **1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting New Faith Presbyterian was shown.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Commissioner Eustacia Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee. Moderator Marshall moved the approval of the afternoon docket. The assembly approved the docket.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

Moderator Presa recognized Emily Anderson, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity, for a report from the committee. There was no consent agenda. Item 06-08 was disapproved.

The assembly took the following actions: Item 06-01 was disapproved, Item 06-14 was disapproved. In response to Item 06-02 an alternate resolution was approved. Item 06-04 was approved. Item 06-16 was answered by action taken on Item 06-04. The assembly approved answering Item 06-16 by action on 06-04. The assembly approved answering Item 06-10 with an alternate resolution. Item 06-11 was disapproved with comment. Items 06-06 and 06-07 were disapproved. Item 06-09 was approved with amendment and with comment. The assembly voted to answer Item 06-03 by the action taken on Item 06-09. Item 06-12 was disapproved. Item 06-18 was approved with amendment. Item 06-19 was approved. The assembly voted to answer Items 06-13 and 06-17 by the action taken on Item 06-08.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Church Polity**

**Consent Agenda**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda.**

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 06-01. On Amending F-1.01, God's Mission—From the Presbytery of Utah.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 571.]**

**Item 06-02. On Amending D-10.0101–.0102 to Clarify the Duties of an Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Detroit.**

**In response to Item 06-02, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following recommendation: [See p. 572.]**

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Shall D-10.0202 be amended by adding a new section “a.” and re-lettering current “a.”–“k.” as “b.”–“l.” The new section is to read as follows:**

**“[a. review the statement of alleged offense to determine whether it alleges any facts that, if true, constitute an offense as defined in D-2.0203b. If no offense as defined in D-2.0203b is alleged, the investigating committee shall end its inquiry and report that to the clerk of the body. If an offense as defined in D-2.0203 is alleged, it shall proceed to the steps below.]”**

**Item 06-03. On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of National Capital.**

**That the recommendation be answered by the action taken on Item 06-09. [See p. 574.]**

**Item 06-04. On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of Saint Andrew.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 578.]**

**Item 06-05. [Item 06-05 became Item 20-11. There is no Item 06-05.]**

**Item 06-06. On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 579.]**

**Item 06-07. On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 582.]

**Item 06-08. On Amending F-1.0403, Unity in Diversity—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 585.]

**Item 06-09. On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment and with comment. [See p. 590.]

**Amendment:**

Amend by deleting Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Shall D-10.0106, regarding Administrative Leave, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

“When a written statement of an alleged offense of sexual abuse toward any person ~~under the age of eighteen, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent,~~ has been received against a teaching elder, the stated clerk receiving the allegation shall immediately communicate the allegation to the permanent judicial commission. [The rest of the paragraph remains unchanged.]”

[“2. Shall ~~G-2.0904~~ be amended as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]

[“~~The Presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it. In the case of alleged sexual abuse having been received by the stated clerk against any teaching elder, the presbytery may amend the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister and the session, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.~~”]

**Comment:** Every presbytery needs to adopt an adequate comprehensive administrative leave policy with a list of types of allegations that trigger an immediate leave as an explicit agreement between the teaching elder, congregation, and presbytery.

**Item 06-10. On Amending G-1.0503 Regarding Business at Congregational Meetings—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.**

In response to Item 06-10, that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following recommendation: [See pp. 591–92.]

The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Amend G-1.0503 by adding a new item f. to read as follows:

“f. *Approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness (G-5.05).*”

**Item 06-11. On Amending G-2.0401 Regarding the Congregational Nominating Committee—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 594.]

**Comment:** With the knowledge that each congregation is empowered to do its own work, we encourage each congregation to determine its own best practice.

**Item 06-12. On Amending G-1.04 to “Add Special Consideration for Membership for Families Serving Yoked Churches”—From the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 596.]

**Item 06-13. On Amending F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 to Eliminate the List of Those Whom We Refuse to Discriminate Against—From the Presbytery of Western New York.**

That the recommendation is answered by action taken on Item 06-08. [See p. 599.]

**Item 06-14. On Amending G-1.0101, The Mission of the Congregation—From the Presbytery of Grace.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 604.]

**Item 06-15. On Amending G-1.0303, G-2.0507, and G-3.0301, on Pastoral Membership—From the Presbytery of Grace.**

This item was withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace on June 9, 2012.

**Item 06-16. On Amending G-3.0301, Composition and Responsibilities—From the Presbytery of North Puget Sound.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 06-04. [See p. 607.]

**Item 06-17. On Amending F-1.0403 “Unity in Diversity” and G-2.0401 “Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons” to Ensure Participation—From the Presbytery of Grace.**

That the recommendation is answered by action taken on Item 06-08. [See p. 608.]

**Item 06-18. On Amending D-3.0101b(2)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly—COGA**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 612.]

Amend the second paragraph of Item 06-18 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“(2) A teaching elder engaged in work within the *geographic* bounds of a presbytery other than the presbytery of membership, whether that work is under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or not, does, by engaging in that work, submit to the jurisdiction of that presbytery for the purposes of discipline. Should disciplinary process be initiated against a teaching elder under this provision, the presbytery of membership shall be notified. *The presbytery within whose bounds the teaching elder is engaged in work may, [at its discretion, either] [alternatively, chose to] cede jurisdiction to the presbytery of membership, or choose to cooperate with the presbytery of membership in any disciplinary inquiry, alternative form of resolution, or trial. This paragraph shall apply even if the provisions of G-3.0306 concerning permission to labor outside or within the bounds have not been followed.* This paragraph shall not apply if the teaching elder is working in an approved, a validated ministry under the provisions of G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a in other service of this church such as a staff member of a [~~mid or higher~~] council [beyond the session], or of an organization related to one of these councils; or in an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a joint congregational witness church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, an interdenominational agency; or as a partner in mission in connection with a church outside the United States of America.”

**Item 06-19. Amending G-3.0104—From the Manager, Polity Guidance and Training—ACC**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 614.]

#### ECUMENICAL GREETING

Moderator Presa recognized Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed from the Islamic Society of North America brought greetings to the assembly.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

Moderator Presa recognized Nancy Ramsay, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues, for a report from the committee. The assembly approved the following consent agenda items: Items 11-04 (approved as amended), 11-08 (approved as amended), 11-12 (approved as amended), 11-15 (approved), 11-16 (approved), 11-17 (approved as amended), 11-18 (approved), 11-19 (approved as amended), 11-21 (approved as amended). Item 11-11 was approved. Moderator Ramsay recognized David Adamson, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice, to present a portion of the business. Item 11-03 was approved with amendment. Item 11-07 was approved with amendment. Item 11-05 was approved with amendment. Moderator Nancy Ramsay presented the remainder of the report. Item 11-09 was approved. Item 11-14 was approved. Item 11-02 was approved with amendment. The assembly voted to refer Item 11-20. Item 11-01 was approved with amendment. Item 11-10 was approved. Item 11-06 was approved with amendment. Item 11-22 was approved with amendment. Item 11-23 was disapproved.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice. A summary of the report is as follows:



## Consent Agenda

Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk.

### Financial Implications

There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.

#### I. For Plenary Action

##### Item 11-01. On Economic Justice in These Troubled Times—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1031.]

1. Amend the first paragraph of Item 11-01 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“~~The Presbytery of Atlanta overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012)~~~~[, noting the frustration expressed in ‘Occupy Wall Street’ and similar public demonstrations,]~~ to do the following:

2. Amend Item 11-01 by adding a new Recommendation 4 to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[4. Uphold the human value of the participation in decision making of all those affected by the decisions and authorize the Office of the General Assembly, Office of Public Witness, individual Presbyterians, and councils, to support legislation, ballot initiatives, constitutional amendments, and other means to prevent unlimited money from corporations, unions, individuals, and other entities from distorting electoral campaigns and to restore legal boundaries between business corporations and human persons endowed with free speech and other constitutional rights.]”

##### Item 11-02. On Calling for an End to Poverty Zone Development and for the Advocacy of Fair Development—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1032–33.]

Amend Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a letter to the prominent national developers General Growth Properties and the Cordish Company, the mayor of Baltimore city, and the governor of Maryland, calling for ~~[an end to Poverty Zone Development and urging the adoption of]~~ ~~[F][f]air [D][d]evelopment that respects human rights ([W][w]ork with [D][d]ignity, the [R][r]ight to [H][h]ealth [C][c]are and [E][e]ducation), maximizes public benefits, and fosters sustainability.”~~

##### Item 11-03. On Endorsing “A Fifty Year Farm Bill”—From the Presbytery of Heartland.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1035–36.]

1. Amend Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Acknowledge the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, and 216th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is ~~[an essential]~~ [a vital] part of the Christian faith.”

2. Add a new Recommendation 3 to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), including the Office of Public Witness, to orient their advocacy and programs concerning agriculture and food supply in accordance with the following principles and goals: renewability, sustainability, resilience, minimized carbon emissions, participatory research and decision-making, revitalized rural communities, strong local food economies, security of food supply, ethical treatment of animals, and fair and dignified treatment of persons working throughout the food chain.]”

**\*Item 11-04. On Strengthening Connections with Racial Ethnic Churches—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1039–40.]

1. Amend Recommendations 1–2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Invite every session to communicate with ~~[the session of]~~ at least one [other] racial ethnic Presbyterian congregation [or fellowship] in 2013 for the purposes of: learning more about that congregation’s history and culture, increasing racial and cultural sensitivity in the whole church, engaging in mutual prayer for one another, and nurturing the connectional nature of our church.

“2. Request that the ~~[General Assembly Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns]~~ [appropriate PC(USA) entities, including General Assembly Committee on Representation and Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women,] prepare information to facilitate these connections, including an invitation letter, a list of all the racial ethnic congregations in the PC(USA), and a list of suggestions to facilitate this connecting.”

2. Amend Recommendation 4 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through.]

“4. Request that the councils and leadership teams of the ~~[176]~~ presbyteries facilitate and reinforce this invitation to our sessions and report to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns a list of the sessions accepting this invitation and their activities in this regard, as a part of the annual presbytery year-end miscellaneous information form, and that the Office of General Assembly collect and transmit this information to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.”

**Item 11-05. On Calling for an End to the Practice of Corporal Punishment in Homes, Schools, and Child Care Facilities—From the Presbytery of Grace.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1041–42.]

1. Amend Recommendations 1.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“a. encourages its members to adopt discipline methods [at home, in schools, pediatric facilities, and institutions (e.g. hospitals, orphanages, clinics, state institutions) and child-care facilities] that do not include corporal punishment of ~~[their]~~ children, and”

2. Amend Recommendation 2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls upon all states to enact [licensing] laws prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and day and residential childcare facilities.”

3. Add new Recommendations 3.–4. to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[3. Direct the appropriate General Assembly committees to provide limited bibliography of resources presenting alternative effective methods of discipline to corporal punishment.]”

“[4. That the following supporting documentation be posted online, hosted by the Child Advocacy or other appropriate office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):

“[Selected Bibliographic documentation:

“[Berlin, Lisa J., Patrick S. Malone, Catherine Ayoub, Jean M. Ispa, Mark A. Fine, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Christy Brady-Smith and Yu Bai. Correlates and Consequences of Spanking and Verbal Punishment for Low-Income White, African American, and Mexican American Toddlers. *Child Development* , Vol. 80, No. 5 (Sep.–Oct., 2009), pp. 1403–20.

“[Ellison, Christopher G. and Darren E. Sherkat. Conservative Protestantism and Support for Corporal Punishment. *American Sociological Review* , Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1993), pp. 131–44.

“[Gregory, James F. The Crime of Punishment: Racial and Gender Disparities in the Use of Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 454–62.

“[Gregory, Robert. Is Corporal Punishment Degrading? *The North American Review* , Vol. 153, No. 421 (Dec., 1891), pp. 693–703.

“[Grogan-Kaylor, Andrew and Melanie D. Otis. The Predictors of Parental Use of Corporal Punishment. *Family Relations*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Jan., 2007), pp. 80–91.

“[James P. Jewett. The Fight against Corporal Punishment in American Schools. *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Autumn, 1952), pp. 1–10.

“[Rodriguez, Christina M. Parental Discipline and Abuse Potential Affects on Child Depression, Anxiety, and Attributions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Nov., 2003), pp. 809–17.

“[Simons, Ronald L., Kuei-Hsiu Lin, Leslie C. Gordon, Gene H. Brody and Rand D. Conger. Community Differences in the Association between Parenting Practices and Child Conduct Problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (May, 2002), pp. 331–45.

“[Turner, Heather and David Finkelhor. Corporal Punishment as a Stressor among Youth. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1996), pp. 155–66.

“[Vandenbosch, Sue. Political Culture and Corporal Punishment in Public Schools. *Publius*, Vol. 21, No. 2, State Political Subcultures: Further Research (Spring, 1991), pp. 117–21.

“[Walsh, Wendy. Spankers and Nonspankers: Where They Get Information on Spanking. *Family Relations*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Jan., 2002), pp. 81–88.]”

**Item 11-06. On Instructing MRTI to Report to GAMC on the Corporate Practices of Publicly Traded Corporations That Operate For-Profit Prisons—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1044.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to

“[1. [i] [I]nstruct the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to [have MRTI report to the General Assembly Mission Council on] [report on the feasibility of affecting] the corporate practices of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the GEO Group, and any other publicly traded corporation that directly manages or operates for-profit prisons and/or detention centers [in light of the General Assembly’s 2003 Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons. The findings of the MRTI report to the GAMC may include recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014) regarding the potential placement of specific corporations on the list of proscribed investments to be honored by Presbyterian agencies. The proscription list already includes areas of concern such as tobacco, alcohol, and gambling.] [While PC(USA) funds are not currently invested in these companies, we encourage the General Assembly Mission Council to prevent future investment and, as it deems appropriate, encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies.]”

“[2. Encourage education within local congregations about for-profit prisons and the local and national implications of investment in these corporations, using existing materials and networks including, but not limited to, the General Assembly’s 2003 Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons.]”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$1,330, (2014) \$665—GAMC—Unrestricted]

**Item 11-07. On Support of the United States Environmental Protection Agency—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1049–50.]

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

“1. Recognize the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, 216th, 218th, and 219th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008, and 2010) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is [an essential part of] [vital to] the Christian faith.

“2. Direct the [~~Executive Director~~] [Stated Clerk and appropriate offices] of the General Assembly Mission Council to support the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by affirming the agency’s [~~authority to take action~~] [mandates and goals] to protect public health and the environment and by advocating for adequate funding for EPA.

“3. Recognize the PC(USA)’s support of landmark environmental legislation such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act (whose 40th anniversary is in 2012), the Safe Drinking Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Endangered Species Act, which affirm the national mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).”

“4. Direct the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) and the Office of Public Witness to urge Congress to restore the EPA’s full oversight authority under the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts (which are currently restricted) as they relate to the waters of the United States.”

“5. Direct the Office of Environmental Ministries of the General Assembly Mission Council to identify resources addressing legal and environmental issues with regard to extraction of natural gas in order to educate Presbyterians and protect the environments in which they live, worship and locate their camps and conference centers.”

\*\$Item 11-08. A Resolution on Racism, Incarceration, and Restoration—ACREC.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1053.]

1. Amend Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Direct that a study be prepared and shared with the church for action at every level [~~showing~~] [investigating whether there is] the connection between ‘the war on drugs’ and incarceration as a way of social management.”

2. Amend Recommendations 5–6 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“5. Direct the Office of Public Witness to advocate to Congress for fair application of existing laws and [~~the reduction or elimination of penalties for~~] [reasonable sentencing of] drug possession and nonviolent offenses that [~~clearly~~] have a disproportionate and adverse impact on the racial ethnic community[~~s~~] [and] families[~~, and individuals~~].”

“6. Direct that the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to develop a [web page and] paper on God and compassion for prisoners and ex-offenders that addresses our role in helping implement God’s community as a place that is open for all and embraces all with forgiveness and love. [The web page and paper should list recommended resources from Presbyterians engaged in such ministry to be available to the whole church.”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$5,010.00, (2014) \$5,010 GAMC Unrestricted; (2013) \$1,500.00 (2014) \$500.00 Per Capita—GAMC]

\$Item 11-09. World of Hurt, Word of Life: “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction”—ACSWP.

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1055–61.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$20,635, (2014) \$12,015—Per Capita—GAMC]

Item 11-10. A Resolution on Workers’ Rights and Income Inequality—ACREC.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1082.]

Item 11-11. A Resolution to Recognize the Call to Prophetic Witness in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—ACREC.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1084.]

\*\$Item 11-12. A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters—ACWC.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1085.]

Amend Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Direct that the [~~coordinator of Women’s Leadership Development in the~~] Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area of the General Assembly Mission Council continue [~~her~~] [its] work with the program, Deborah’s Daughters, for the next two years and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$6,380, (2014) \$8,065—GAMC—Unrestricted]

Item 11-13. A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—ACWC.

Item 11-13 became Item 10-20. There is no Item 11-13.

Item 11-14. A Resolution Commending Study of the 2011–2012 *Horizons* Bible Study and the Accra Confession—ACWC.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. .1088]

\*Item 11-15. A Resolution to Encourage Participation in the Words Matter Project—ACWC.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1089.]

\*\$Item 11-16. A Resolution to Ensure Implementation of Updated and Detailed Safe Child Policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—ACWC.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1090.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$5,700—GAMC—Unrestricted]

\*\$Item 11-17. Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer—From the Climate for Change Task Force.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1091–93.]

1. Amend Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs GACOR to review and [~~revise~~] [recommend revision to the] affirmative action goals for employment and purchasing (Supplier Diversity Program) [to the General Assembly] on a regular and recurring basis, in accordance with their responsibilities in the Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) and the *Book of Order*, G-3.0103.

“a. [Text remains unchanged.]

“b. The GACOR, in consultation with the [six General Assembly-related agencies (Board of Pensions, General Assembly Mission Council, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation) and the] [~~related~~] General Assembly advocacy committees, ACREC and ACWC, shall recommend new churchwide goals to the General Assembly in a six-year cycle, beginning in 2014.

“c. [Text remains unchanged.]

“d. [Text remains unchanged.]

“e [Text remains unchanged.]

“f [Text remains unchanged.]

“g. [Text remains unchanged.]”

2. Amend Recommendation 9 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“9. The 220th General Assembly (2012) urges synods and presbyteries to adopt affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency policies and practices consistent with the General Assembly, to promote the denomination’s [continuous work and] commitment to [~~become~~] [be] a diverse, inclusive, antiracist and culturally proficient church.<sup>[†]</sup>

“[~~1. Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community, 211th General Assembly (1999).~~ <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-vision-community/>”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$4,420—Per Capita—GAMC; (2013) \$2,890—Per Capita—OGA]

**\*Item 11-18. A Resolution on Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault—ACWC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1114.]

**\*Item 11-19. On Advocating for Trade Reform and Accountability—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1115.]

Amend the first paragraph and Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to address the ~~[American]~~ Free Trade Agreements that affect immigration and economic development, particularly the United States’ role in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), through the following measures:

“1. Encourage PC(USA) members, congregations, and presbyteries to advocate for corrective measures to mitigate trade imbalances, unemployment trends, and market distortions related to NAFTA, the current recession, and to longer term patterns of inequality and underdevelopment, such as:

“• The Trade Reform, Accountability, Development, and Employment (TRADE) Act, designed to enhance the lives of farmers and factory workers, to free poor children to attend school, and to help lift people out of poverty.

“• Revisions to trade agreements that often privilege corporations over citizens and protective agencies of government, and other measures to challenge both governmental and corporate dangers of corruption or collusion.

“• Similar mitigating measures and trade reforms that would relate to many areas of the world such as Central and South America~~],~~ and Jordan~~], and Peru].~~

“• Appropriate investigation of violations of land, water, labor rights, and tax-shelters by corporations taking advantage of World Trade Organization and free trade agreement provisions.”

**\$Item 11-20. A Statement on the Housing and Mortgage Crisis—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.**

That the recommendation is referred to Mission Responsibility Through Investment to report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014). [See pp. 1118–19.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$13,420.00, (2014) \$6,420.00 Per Capita—GAMC]

**\*Item 11-21. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Appointing Two Seasons of Prayer to Seek the Will of Almighty God in This Year’s Election.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1122.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at its meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, appoints two seasons of prayer. The first on Saturday morning, July 7, 2012, before the assembly adjourns, and the second on Sunday morning, November 4, 2012, in our churches across the nation. ~~[These] [The]~~ purpose of these seasons of prayer will be to seek the will of Almighty God in this year’s election, and to ask the Almighty God to lead the political parties of our nation to seek the ~~[peace, unity, and purity of our nation and world, not their own individual political ideologies]~~ [common good of the nation and the world].”

**Item 11-22. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Prolonged Solitary Confinement in U.S. Prisons.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1123.]

Amend Recommendations 2–3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Joins in the call of U.S. faith leaders to urge the president to sign [and the senate to ratify] the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture in order to reduce risk of torture and abuse in U.S. prisons.

“3. Urges presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to participate ~~[in the efforts of the]~~ [with the Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network, and presbyteries may also wish to participate in the work of PHEWA, on the] National Religious Campaign Against Torture to significantly limit the use of solitary confinement.”

**Item 11-23. Commissioners' Resolution. On Alternate Giving Options for Union Members.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 1124.]**

## DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Items 11-05 of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues: Justin L. Marple, Presbytery of Western New York.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Items 11-09 of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues: Dale Deist, Presbytery of Shenango.

MEMORIAL MOMENT FOR WILLIAM LYTLE,  
MODERATOR OF THE 190TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1978), UPCUSA

Moderator Presa recognized Vice-Moderator Tom Trinidad to assume the chair. Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Teaching Elder Dan Fultz, from the Presbytery of Mission, for a memorial moment for Bill Lytle:

The Reverend Dr. William P. Lytle  
July 3, 1923–May 27, 2011  
Moderator of the General Assembly  
of the former United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America  
(the “northern stream”) in 1978.

William P. “Bill” Lytle was a man in whom there was no guile. He was the same, robed for preaching, holding the hand of a mourning friend, watching a tense ballgame, on the racquetball court (Bill was just a little bit competitive) or fiercely, but gently, advocating for unpopular justice issues. He wore the mantle of office as preacher, teacher, church leader, and moderator with grace and dignity, never abusing the powers of the office. He tackled the toughest issues of his day, never engaging in attacks against any person, while challenging each in regard to their positions or actions. After a particularly disappointing effort, Bill was asked how he managed to deal with the frustration. He replied, “My job is to keep the faith, not to be successful.”

He was a child of the manse, raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Lytle attended the College of Wooster and Princeton Seminary, and was ordained as minister of the Word and Sacrament in 1947. For fourteen years, he was a circuit preacher for Presbyterian Home Missions in rural areas of New Mexico. Lytle fondly referred to this formative ministry as the “Cowboy Campfire Church.”

Lytle then directed the Ozarks Area Missions at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Ark., for eleven years. He served on the Arkansas State Prison Board during his time in the state and was instrumental in improvements to what was a then a draconian prison system.

After itinerating in Mexico, Bill was called as pastor of Madison Square Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, Texas, a congregation with a history of involvement in the greater community. He pastored there for seventeen years until his “retirement.”

Bill and his late wife, Faith, are credited with founding the first local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity within the United States. Habitat for Humanity in San Antonio released a statement upon his death, which credited the Lytle’s with the 700 homes it had built so far. “Along with his wife, Faith, Bill brought the idea of partnership housing to San Antonio,” it said. “There are more than 700 hardworking families in need who owe their lives in their Habitat homes not only to the volunteers and supporters who helped build them, but to the Lytle’s for putting their faith into action.” Their model for fair, affordable housing has been adopted by hundreds of Habitat for Humanity affiliates across the nation.

Bill’s service to the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its predecessors was wide and constant. He served on the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations (COEMAR) for sixteen years, chaired the GAMC and the Administrative Commission on Cuba. Bill was a counselor to numerous missionaries and mentored many pastors. His wisdom was often sought when a reconciling influence was needed in times of crisis or strife. He was a strong advocate for reunion of the PCUS and the UPCUSA. Bill was awarded honorary doctoral degrees from Wooster College, Ohio, Tusculum College, Tennessee, and the University of the Ozarks, Arkansas.

His vision went far beyond the walls of the Presbyterian church. He spelled out his credo late in life, when, in unpublished notes he said, “Maybe the time has come for religious people to use this more inclusive term [People of the Way]. We still can declare and be proud of our roots, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, Hindu, but at the same time we can declare our oneness in God’s family. ‘People of the Way’ is a term big enough to include every religion and no religion. It could well be the unifying term that the world needs.”

Bill never took the easy road, but when one was led to follow him into the briar patch, he always made the journey an adventure of grace—enjoyable and worthwhile. His engagement of injustice was many-faceted.

On the one hand, he and others trained at the Saul Alinsky Institute, and, aligned with the San Antonio Archdiocese and other community organizations, organized Communities for Public Service, to confront the established city government over the lack of infrastructure in the poorer sections of the city.

On the other hand, learning from his Mennonite brethren, he was an active member and advocate for the Fellowship of Reconciliation from 1969 until his death. Those who were blessed to know and serve in ministry with Bill will always remember him as one of the most kind, caring, humble and sincere persons they have known. Bill was preceded in death by his wife of 58 years, Faith Williamson Lytle. He is survived by his beloved wife, Renate Frick Lytle, two sons, Paul and David, and two daughters, Ruth and Aimee, and numerous grandchildren.

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

Vice-Moderator Tom Trinidad recognized Doug Megill, moderator of the Assembly Committee on the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, for a report from the committee. The consent agenda was moved. Item 20-12 was removed from the consent agenda. The assembly approved the following consent agenda items: Items 20-03 (approved as amended), 20-04 (disapproved with comment), 20-05 (approved as amended), 20-07 (approved as amended), 20-10 (approved as amended and with comment), 20-13 (approved), 20-14 (approved). Items 20-09 and 20-08 were approved. Item 20-02 was disapproved. Item 20-12 was approved.

Moderator Megill recognized Emily Proctor, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, to continue the report. Item 20-11 was disapproved with comment. Item 20-06 was approved with comment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Consent Agenda**

**Consent agenda items are marked with an asterisk (“\*”).**

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 20-01. Withdrawn by the Presbytery of San Diego on May 22, 2012.**

**Item 20-02. On Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Medical Benefits Plan That Will Not Pay for Abortions Except to Save the Life of the Woman—From the Presbytery of Washington.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 1625.]**

**\* Item 20-03. On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Consider the Possibility of Adding to the Disability Benefits the Option of Partial Disability Benefits—From the Presbytery of San Gabriel.**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1628.]**

**Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with underline.]**

**“The Presbytery of San Gabriel humbly overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to ~~instruct~~ urge the Board of Pensions to:**

**“1. investigate and consider the possibility of adding to their Disability Benefits the option of receiving partial benefits for partial disability of plan members, appropriately *pro rated* for the medically certified degree of disability, to include human as well as financial costs and,**

**“2. ~~that the Board of Pensions~~ report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with ~~plans for~~ its investigation including its recommendations regarding implementation or the impediments to this scheme being approved.”**

**\* Item 20-04. On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Switch Mental Health Providers—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 1630.]**



**Comment:** The 220th General Assembly (2012) commends and encourages the Board of Pensions to increase mental health care network providers for all members.

**\*Item 20-05. BOP Amendments to Articles of Incorporation—BOP.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1631.]

Amend the first paragraph as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with underline.]

“The Board of Pensions recommends that the ~~[219th]~~ [220th] General Assembly ~~[(2010)]~~ [(2012)] approve the following amendments to its Articles of Incorporation, which require the prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be effective. [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]”

**Item 20-06. Churchwide Gifts Program and New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN.**

That the recommendation is approved with comment. [See pp. 1632–33.]

**Comment:** We urge the 220th General Assembly (2012) to affirm the work of the Presbyterian Foundation and encourage all Presbyterians to seriously consider the Presbyterian Foundation for investment services, financial advice, endowments, and assistance in growing a culture of generosity within the church; the Presbyterian Foundation reinvests its fees to further the mission of the church and follows investment strategies that accord with our values. We request that the General Assembly allow time to view the video *God’s Hidden Treasures*.

**\* Item 20-07. Confirm Directors of the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1633.]

Amend the first paragraph as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with underline.]

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, New Covenant Trust Company, recommends that the ~~[212th]~~ [220th] General Assembly (2012) confirm the following individuals as directors of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that have been elected for the year 2012, consistent with the Deliverance for New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., as approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999) and amended by the 212th and 214th General Assemblies (2000) and (2002), and subject to applicable law:”

**Item 20-08. Confirm Reelection of President of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—PPC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1633.]

**Item 20-09. New Presbyterian Hymnal—PPC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1634.]

**\* Item 20-10. General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC).**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment and with comment. [See pp. 1659–60.]

Amend Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with underline.]

“3. Continue and increase the publication of material that provides a platform for new voices, material that is important to the life of the church, and material that represents the diversity of the church, realizing, as they have stated in their self-study, that “some books, in fact, are accepted with PPC’s full expectation of break-even sales or, in a few cases, even ~~[loses]~~ [losses].”

**Comment:** That the General Assembly pay attention specifically to Recommendation 8.

**Item 20-11. On Amending G-2.0804 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Regarding the Benefits Plan—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 1665.]

**Comment:** In response to the urging of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Board of Pensions has been working to develop a relief of conscience mechanism related to benefits for the same gender domestic partners of plan members. The Board had a special committee that met for a year and has now communicated to plan members and employing organizations offering the opportunity to register an objection. We encourage them in this effort in the interest of maintaining the unity of the Body of Christ.

**Item 20-12. Commissioner Resolution. On Shared Benefits Plan.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1668–69.]

**\*Item 20-13. Board of Pensions Response to 2010 Referral: Item 18-12 Recommendation that the Board of Pensions Develop a Plan to Ensure That Funds from Any Relief of Conscience Churches Do Not Go to Fund Abortions Through Any Avenue** (*Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1313 of the electronic version*).

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1669.]

**\*Item 20-14. Board of Pensions Response to 2010 Referral: Item 18-06: On Directing the Board of Pensions to Extend Benefits to Same-Gender Spouses and Domestic Partners.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1670.]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

**Item 20-A. Board of Pensions Report on Amendments to the Benefits Plan.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1671.]

**Item 20-B. Minutes, Board of Pensions.**

That the minutes are approved.

**Item 20-C. Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.**

That the minutes are approved.

**Item 20-D. Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.**

That the minutes are approved.

Moderator Presa assumed the chair.

**DISSENT**

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 20-02 of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation: Justin L. Marple, Presbytery of Western New York; and Cody U. Watson, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Stated Clerk Parsons reminded the assembly that immediately following dinner the assembly would immediately address the business of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues.

**PRAYER AND RECESS**

Moderator Presa recognized Reggie Weaver, teaching elder from the Presbytery of Chicago, who closed the meeting with prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:45 p.m.

**BUSINESS MEETING VIII**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The Reverend Lyim Hong-Tiong, the general secretary-elect of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting the ministry of Waters Edge was shown.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Tom Harmon, vice-moderator of the Committee on Bill and Overtures. Harmon gave an update of the committees on the docket for the evening, which would be Middle East Peacemaking Issues and Mission Coordination.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES**

Moderator Presa recognized Jack Baca, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues, for a report from the committee. There was no consent agenda.

Moderator Baca recognized Amgad Beblawi, area coordinator for the Middle East, to present the review of the PC(USA) involvement in the Middle East. Baca recognized Laurie Anderson, chair of the Middle East Monitoring Group to give a report to the assembly.

Item 15-04 was approved with amendment.

Baca presented Item 15-11 and recognized Brian Ellison, chair of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee, for a report on engagements with corporations involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.

Moderator Presa recognized Blake Brinegar who introduced a minority report. The minority report was amended to insert a new Recommendation 5 to read: [5. The 220 General Assembly (2012) instructs the General Assembly Mission Council to create a process to raise funds to invest in the West Bank and the program will be inaugurated no later than the meeting of the 221st General Assembly (2014).]

The minority report was perfected. Moderator Presa put the question to the assembly, "Shall the minority report become the main motion?" The minority report was approved. The assembly voted to answer Item 15-11 with an amended alternate resolution.

Item 15-10 was presented. At this point, the report was arrested.

**PRAYER AND RECESS**

Moderator Presa recognized Missionary Advisory Delegate Nuhad Tomeh, serving in Lebanon, who offered the closing prayer. The assembly recessed at 10:30 p.m. to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, July 6.

Friday, July 6, 2012, 8:30 A.M.

**BUSINESS MEETING IX**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Mabel Gonnet, vice-moderator of the Waldensian Evangelical Church of Rio de la Plata, Uruguay, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting the Presbyterian Foundation's involvement with the 1001 Worshipping Communities was shown.

## REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Commissioner Eustacia Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, reminded commissioners of how much work was still before the assembly and moved that the report of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues be presented to the assembly as the first item of the afternoon session, and that all reports not completed in the morning session be arrested. The assembly approved this motion by a voice vote.

The assembly approved the motion to limit debate time per speaker to one minute. A motion was approved to make Assembly Committee 13 the order of the day at 1:50 p.m. The motion to allow extra speaking time for those who do not speak English as their first language was approved.

Moderator Presa recognized Susan Spencer, who moved that an administrative commission be appointed by the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), in consultation with the Stated Clerk, with the authority described in the assembly's action on Recommendation 5 of Item 05-12, and that the commission be composed of fourteen members: four commissioners from the 220th General Assembly (2012), four members from the Mid Council Commission created by the 219th General Assembly (2010), four members from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, one member from the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, and one representing synod executive leadership. In addition to the authorities granted as a commission, this group is to have responsibilities as a task force to fulfill the tasks defined by the actions on Item 05-12 (Recommendations 1-4 and Recommendation 7). The membership for action taken on Item 05-12 (Recommendation 8) will remain as described in that motion. The assembly approved the motion.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Lynn Bova, moderator, Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Bova announced that the total financial implications of actions recommended by assembly committees amounted to: \$0 for 2012; \$148,385 for 2013, representing an increase of \$.08 per capita; and \$96,390 for 2014, representing an increase of \$.05 per capita. On Saturday morning, the committee is slated to present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budgets for 2013 and 2014.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:  
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Presa recognized Marci Glass, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Glass reported the total financial implications of actions under consideration by the assembly for the mission budgets were: \$18,420 for 2013, \$13,740 for 2014. The total mission budget for 2013 would be \$81,756,103 and \$78,196,031 for 2014.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Stated Clerk Parsons was recognized and reviewed the Standing Rules for nominations from the floor, and outlined the procedure for considering the nominations.

Moderator Presa recognized Catherine Purves, moderator of General Assembly Nominating Committee. Purves announced a challenge was presented to Item 00-02-A(3). The assembly voted to elect all nominees who were uncontested (p. 86).

The challenged nomination was considered as follows:

Purves placed the name of Daryl Fisher-Ogden in nomination for election to the General Assembly Advisory Committee on the Constitution, Class of 2018. David Brown nominated Katherine J. Runyeon from the floor, to replace the committee nominee and spoke to the nomination. Purves spoke to the nomination of Fisher-Ogden. The assembly elected Daryl Fisher-Ogden.

Moderator Presa recognized Landon Whitsitt, Vice-Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010), who moved the nominees in Item 00-04, p. 97, on behalf of Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010). None of the nominees were contested. The assembly elected the nominees.

Moderator Presa turned the chair over to Vice-Moderator Tom Trinidad.

A motion was made to reconsider the assembly's action on Item 15-11. Vice-Moderator Trinidad led the assembly in prayer. The motion was disapproved.

## REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Jack Baca, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues. Baca moved that action on Items 15-03, 15-05, 15-07, 15-08, and 15-10 be answered by the action taken on 15-11. The assembly approved the motion. Item 15-02 was approved with amendment. Item 15-01 was disapproved. The assembly voted to answer Item 15-06 by action taken on Items 15-02, 15-10, and 15-11. The assembly voted to disapprove Item 15-09. The assembly voted to approve Item 15-12 with amendment.

Moderator Baca urged all commissioners to deepen their commitment to work for peace in the Middle East.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Middle East and Peacemaking Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

### Consent Agenda

**There are no recommendations for a consent agenda.**

### Financial Implications

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

### I. For Plenary Action

**Item 15-01. On Recognizing that Israel's Law and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against Palestinian People—From the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 1353.]**

**Item 15-02. On Boycotting Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories and Hadiklaim (an Israeli Date Growers Cooperative)—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1366.]**

**Amend Recommendations 1–5 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]**

**~~“1. [Condemn the production and sale of Israeli products that come from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.]~~[Call upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.]**

**~~“2. Call for the boycott of [all Israeli products coming from the occupied Palestinian Territories, including] AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products[.]~~[and all date products of Hadiklaim, The Israel Date Growers Co-Operative Ltd, often marked by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River (not Israeli products from Israel.)]**

**~~“[3. Call for the boycott of all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Cooperative, Ltd., often marketed by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River.]~~**

**~~“[4.]~~ [3.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC (USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott [until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.]**

**~~“[5.]~~ [4.] Direct the Stated Clerk to inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, and call upon them to join in the boycott of these companies.”**

**Item 15-03. On Divestment from Caterpillar—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.**

**That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 15-11. [See p. 1370.]**

**Item 15-04. On Supporting a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the U.S.-Iran Issues—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1377–78.]

Amend Recommendations 1–5 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1. Acknowledge the church’s support of a peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the tensions developing as a result of Iran’s nuclear program between the United States[,] ~~and~~ Iran[, European Union nations, Iran’s Arab neighbors, and Israel, and affirm that the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should apply to all nations in the region without double standards.]

“2. Call for the direct, unconditional negotiations between the United States and Iran with the goal of finding and implementing a peaceful resolution [~~and affirm the longer term goal of reestablishing diplomatic relations.~~]

“3. Oppose preemptive military action by any nation against Iran [~~and by Iran against any nation.~~]

“4. Call for a renewed effort at all levels—people-to-people, interfaith groups, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government—to help the United States and Iran eliminate the tensions that have existed between our two nations and to unite the [~~American and Iranian people in a common effort to solve the problems of poverty, illness, and climate change~~ [people of the United States and Iran in efforts for their common good].”

“~~5. Encourage members, councils, and appropriate offices of the General Assembly Mission Council/Presbyterian Mission Agency to support measures both to prevent war and to open channels for citizen diplomacy, cultural exchange, and rebuilding long-valued relationships with the church in Iran in a new context.~~]

“~~5.]~~ [6.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this resolution to the church, and to the president of the United States, the secretary of state of the United States, every member of Congress, [~~the government of Iran,~~]the secretary general of the United Nations, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, and all missions to the United Nations.”

**Item 15-05. On Ethical Investment and Divestment—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 15-11. [See p. 1381.]

**Item 15-06. On Responding to the Call from Palestinian Christians for Economic Solidarity—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.**

The recommendation is answered by the actions taken on Items 15-02, 15-10, and 15-11. [See pp. 1385–86.]

**Item 15-07. On Rejecting the Use of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction Policies in Peacemaking Efforts Between Israelis and Palestinians—From the Presbytery of National Capital.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 15-11. [See p. 1387.]

**Item 15-08. On Approving the GAMC’s Recommendations on Selective Divestment Made by MRTI—From the Presbytery of the Palisades.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 15-11. [See p. 1390.]

**Item 15-09. On Human Rights and Religious Freedom of Arab Christians and Other Palestinian Citizens—From the Presbytery of San Jose.**

The recommendation is disapproved. [See pp. 1393–94.]

**Item 15-10. On Pursuing a Creative Course of Action Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 15-11. [See p. 1396.]

**Item 15-11. MRTI Report on Engagements with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank—GAMC.**

In response to Item 15-11, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following alternate resolution: [See pp. 1399–1400.]

1. call for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to pursue a positive and creative course of action with respect to the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict that will make a difference in the lives of those who are most vulnerable on all sides and that will preserve an effective witness to peace in the entire region;
2. call for a process of engagement that will bring Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the U.S. into effective partnering for study, travel, and social action;
3. advocate for the development of educational programs that expose U.S. Christians, Jews, and Muslims to the varied experiences of both Palestinians and Israelis;
4. devise a plan of active investment in projects that will support collaboration among Christians, Jews, and Muslims and help in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state. We also encourage greater denominational engagement with Christians in the West Bank around issues of job creation and economic development.

**[5. The 220 General Assembly (2012) instructs the GAMC to create a process to raise funds to invest in the West Bank and the program will be inaugurated no later than the meeting of the 221st General Assembly (2014).]**

#### Item 15-12. Commissioners' Resolution. On Prayer and Action for Syria.

The recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1411.]

1. Amend Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with and underline.]

“2. Stand with the Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, our partner church, and other churches who [are facing unprecedented challenges now and are attempting to respond through new forms of witness] ~~[have already themselves helped Christian refugees from Iraq, understanding the dangers that surround religious and other minorities in times of violence].~~”

2. Amend Recommendations 6–7 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with and underline.]

“6. Urge the U.S. government

“~~[•]~~ to support a mediated process of cessation of violence by all perpetrators, including the Assad regime and armed opposition groups,

“~~[•]~~ to call for all outside parties to cease all forms of intervention in Syria,

“~~[•]~~ to support a strong and necessary role for the United Nations, possibly including observers and peacekeeping forces, and

“~~[•]~~ to refrain from military intervention in Syria.”

“7. Support full, public congressional debate of any potential U.S. [military] intervention, including cyberwar, weapons supply, training (as is already reported), and drone warfare, to examine carefully the possible humanitarian benefits, costs, and outcomes of such intervention, including its impacts on ~~[religious communities and those imprisoned by the Assad regime]~~ [the Syrian people], and to support review of the impacts of sanctions and other pressure on both Syrian society and the regime.”

#### DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 15-02 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues: Timothy D. Thomas, Presbytery of Muskingum Valley.

#### PRAYER AND RECESS

Vice-Moderator Trinidad led the assembly in prayer and declared worship to be the order of the day. The assembly recessed at 11:15 a.m. for a Service of Daily Worship at which Tony de la Rosa was the preacher.

### **BUSINESS MEETING X**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Clement Bowman, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Charlotte, and Rachel Shussett, a young adult advisory from the Presbytery of Lehigh, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

#### **1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting the ministry of Water's Edge was shown.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Tom Harmon, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee. Harmon moved an update to the docket for the rest of the day, which included reports from assembly committees in the following order: Civil Union and Marriage Issues (13), Foundation video (from Committee 20, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation), Church Growth and PILP (16), Church Orders and Ministry (07), Immigration Issues (12), Mission Coordination (10), Peacemaking and International Issues (14), Health Issues (21), Authoritative Interpretation Review (08), and Review of Biennial Assemblies (04). The motion was approved by the assembly.

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES**

Moderator Presa recognized Aimee Moiso, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues, for a report from the committee. Moiso introduced Benton Trawick, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues, who led the assembly in prayer.

There were no consent agenda items. Moiso introduced Item 13-04 and moved its approval. A minority report (MR1) was moved by Michael Wilson. Upon challenge, the Moderator's ruling that the report from the committee was in order was upheld.

The minority report (MR1) was perfected. The minority report was disapproved as the main motion.

Bill Thro presented minority report (MR2) and the minority report was perfected. The minority report (MR2) was disapproved as the main motion.

The committee's recommendation on Item 13-04 was disapproved. The report was arrested.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Stated Clerk Parsons informed the assembly that participants would be invited to complete an evaluation of this General Assembly online.

Moderator Presa recognized Mission Advisory Delegate Carolyn Weber, serving in Ethiopia, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 5:30 p.m.

Friday, July 6, 2012, 7:00 P.M.

### **BUSINESS MEETING XI**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Cameron Ross, young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, and Claudia Pagan-Guadalupe, young adult advisory delegate from Presbiterio del Noroeste, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

#### **1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**

A video highlighting Northland Village Church in Los Angeles was shown. The Moderator called on Nick Warnes, organizing pastor of Northland Village Church, who addressed the assembly.



## REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Presa recognized Eustacia Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, who reported that the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues and eight other committees had yet to bring reports and business before the assembly. Marshall also reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures had examined the Minutes of the General Assembly from the beginning of business on Saturday afternoon, June 30, through the end of business on Thursday, July 5, and found them to be in order.

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR HOWARD RICE,  
MODERATOR OF THE 191ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1979), **UPCUSA**

Moderator Presa recognized Kathy Runyeon, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco, to deliver a memorial for Howard Rice, Moderator of the 191st General Assembly.

Howard Leland Rice Jr.—1931–2010

The Reverend Dr. Howard Leland Rice Jr. was a person of passion and compassion, a prophetic and prayerful pastor.

A Wisconsin native and graduate of Carrol College, Howard attended McCormick Theological Seminary, and found a passion for urban ministry. In 1956, he was ordained by Winnebago Presbytery and called first to serve in Minneapolis then later re-called to Chicago, a city he loved. There he served three small struggling congregations, successfully merging them into one multiracial, bilingual congregation and with that work he established his understanding of ministry to and for all of God's people.

In 1968, Howard was called to San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) as professor of ministry, and in 1981 he added responsibility as chaplain of the seminary. Howard remained at SFTS until his retirement in 1997.

Howard made the move west, not because he had lost love for the life of a congregation, but because of declining health and loss of physical energy. He was told he had multiple sclerosis; that diagnosis was later, much later, corrected to spinal cord damage. Howard spent the rest of his life and ministry on crutches and then in a wheelchair—but his physical condition did not dampen his spirit, feistiness, or zest for service.

Howard said of himself that he was something of a bulldog. Sister Elizabeth Liebert, dean at SFTS, said in his eulogy that “Howard had a huge heart for people, for ministry, and for the church that he served so long and well. Always standing with the underdog, he was persistent to the point of stubbornness in defending them.”

While at SFTS, Howard taught Presbyterian History and Polity and he instilled in his students a genuine love for how our polity is a living out of our faith. Howard taught polity as a tool to aid in God's work to church bodies what God intends for Christ's body.

Howard was elected Moderator of the 191st General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. in 1979. We were moving toward reunion of the UPCUSA and the PCUS and it was fitting for Howard to be an agent for reconciliation.

One mark of that year was the growing awareness of accessibility, or too often the lack thereof, of our churches' facilities. On his tours as Moderator, when Howard came to visit in his wheelchair, churches had to retrofit to be able to welcome him. It was apt that he forced us to face the ways we may keep some people out of our sanctuaries.

In the early 1970s, Howard's emphases in ministry had turned to recognition of the need to feed both mind and soul. He began a series of spiritual retreats for pastors in the San Francisco Bay Area and for the next twenty plus years he helped Presbyterians and other Protestants discover spirituality in the Reformed tradition and he assisted as SFTS developed a pioneering program in Christian Spirituality. Another mark of his year as Moderator was Howard's organization of spiritual retreats in three parts of the country and his urging each presbytery to send a delegate.

Howard's publications included *Reformed Spirituality: An Introduction for Believers*; *The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, and other texts exploring prayer, worship, Presbyterian history in the western United States, and a study of our ordination questions.

Over the years, Howard was recognized and honored in many ways, as a recipient of the McCormick Distinguished Alumnus Award and with honorary doctorates from Carroll College and from Whitworth College in Spokane. Upon retirement in 1997, Howard was named professor of ministry emeritus by SFTS and was paid tribute in the U.S. Congress for his work as a scholarly and spiritual leader.

Even after retirement, Howard remained in service to the church, including service as interim president of Cook College and Theological School in Tempe Arizona.

In his final years, Howard grieved mightily the 2004 death from a brain tumor of his oldest daughter, Wendy, who was also a minister of the PC(USA). Howard is survived by his wife, Nancy, their second daughter Amanda and both daughters' children. He is also survived by many generations of students.

Again from Liebert's eulogy for Howard: "He is beloved by hundreds of students, pastors, and church folks, whose hopes and struggles he held dear. We mourn the loss of mentor, colleague, spiritual advisor, friend, and consummate pastor."

Let us thank God for the life and ministry of Howard Rice.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

Moderator Presa recognized Aimee Moiso, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues, to finish the report from the committee. Moiso moved the approval of Item 13-NB. An amendment was introduced that Item 13-NB answer Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13, and 13-14. The assembly disapproved a motion that Item 13-05 be considered separately. The assembly also disapproved a motion that Item 13-02 be considered on its own merit. The assembly approved an amendment that Item 13-NB answers Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13 and 13-14. The assembly then approved the main motion to approve Item 13-NB.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### **Consent Agenda**

**There are recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda.**

#### **Financial Implications**

**There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a "\$" sign next to the item.**

#### **I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 13-01. On Amending W-4.9000 to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1161.]

**Item 13-02. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1173.]

**Item 13-03. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Boston.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1183.]

**Item 13-04. On Amending W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1192.]

**Item 13-05. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1202–03.]

**Item 13-06. On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of New York City.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1213–14.]

**Item 13-07. On An Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9001, Christian Marriage—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1223–24.]

**Item 13-08. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1234.]

**Item 13-09. On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1244.]

**Item 13-10. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Redwoods.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1253–54.]

**Item 13-11. On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of the Redwoods.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1263–64.]

**Item 13-12. On Confirming the Current Definition of Marriage and Any Current Authoritative Interpretations of Marriage in W-4.9000–.9001—From the Presbytery of Charleston Atlantic.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1274.]

**Item 13-13. On Amending W-4.9001 Regarding Marriage and G-4.0208 Regarding Exceptions—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See pp. 1283–84.]

**Item 13-14. Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Session, Rutgers Presbyterian Church, New York, New York—ACC.**

The recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB. [See p. 1292.]

[Item 13-15 became Item 07-17. There is no Item 13-15.]

[Item 13-16 became Item 07-18. There is no Item 13-16.]

**Item 13-NB**

The recommendation is approved as amended: [See p. 1300.]

All other items in this committee are answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB.

That the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following resolution:

“In a desire to promote the peace, unity, and purity of the church, we move the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) enter into a season of serious study and discernment concerning its meaning of Christian marriage in the two-year period between the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the 221st General Assembly (2014). We would further move the Office of Theology and Worship prepare and distribute educational materials to all presbyteries and congregations. These materials should include the relevant Scriptures, key methods of biblical interpretations, current understandings of our Constitution, and some suggested guidance for prayerful and reconnecting ways of listening to one another.

“We would ask that all presbyteries report to the Office of the General Assembly on how this was conducted in their congregations at least three months prior to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

“This motion is offered in the hope and trust that such discernment will genuinely seek the rule and will of God be done in our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as it is in Heaven under the guidance of the Triune of God.”

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$500—GAMC—Unrestricted]

## DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from Item 13-02 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: W. Kenneth Bibbee Jr., Presbytery of West Virginia.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from Item 13-04 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: David Duquette, Presbytery of Lehigh; James C. Goodloe IV, Presbytery of The James; and Meredith White-Zeager, Presbytery of Western Reserve.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from Item 13-05 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Shawn Foster, Presbytery of Cascades; and Roberta Richardson, Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from Item 13-14 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Shawn Foster, Presbytery of Cascades.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from Item 13-NB of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Amy Dame, Presbytery of Southern Kansas; Barbara Lutter, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area; and Peter A. Vial, Presbytery of West Virginia.

A motion to suspend the standing rules for the submission of new business was disapproved.

Moderator Presa turned over the chair to Vice-Moderator Trinidad.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON  
CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP (PRESBYTERIAN INVESTMENT AND LOAN PROGRAM, INC.)

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Chad Herring, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP, for a report from the committee. Herring reported that approval of items in their report would increase per capita \$240 in 2012; \$102,310 in 2013; and \$58,949 in 2014. He also reported that the increase in the mission budget would be \$161,828 in 2013 and \$136,754 in 2014. Herring introduced Jay Hudson, president of the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), who reported to the assembly on the work of PILP. The assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 16-01 (approved), 16-04 (approved), 16-05 (approved), 16-08 (approved), 16-09 (approved with amendment), and 16-10 (approved). Herring invited Addie Peterson, vice-moderator of the committee, who introduced a video on UKirk ministries. Item 16-02 was approved with amendment. Herring moved the approval of Item 16-07 with amendment. Recommendations 2 and 5 were removed from Item 16-07, and the remaining recommendations in Item 16-07 were approved with amendment as an omnibus motion. Item 16-07 Recommendation 2 was approved with amendment. Item 16-07 Recommendation 5 was approved with amendment. Item 16-03 was approved. Item 16-06 was approved with amendment.

Herring reported that the committee affirmed the recipients of the Women of Faith Awards (Item 16-B): Elder Judith Henry, Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan, and the Reverend Ann Rhee Menzie as well as the recipients of the Sam and Helen Walton Award (Item 16-A): Covenant Fellowship Presbyterian Church, Redwoods Presbytery; Temecula Valley Korean Presbyterian Church, Riverside Presbytery; Grace Presbyterian Church, Cherokee Presbytery; Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church, Salem Presbytery; Misión Hispana El Buen Pastor, Salem Presbytery; and New Hope Presbyterian Church, Orange, California, Los Ranchos Presbytery.

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

**Consent Agenda**

**There are recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda. Such items are marked with an asterisk (“\*”).**

**Financial Implications**

**There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**\*Item 16-01. Nominees to the PILP Board of Directors—GAMC.**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1443.]**

**Item 16-02. 1,001 Worshipping Communities—GAMC.**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.] [See pp. 1443–44.]**

**“1. Declare a churchwide commitment to ignite a movement that results in the creation of 1,001 worshipping communities in the next ten years.**

**“2. Encourage [each] [the] General Assembly [agency] [Mission Council and other General Assembly agencies] to join in fulfilling this movement.**

**“3. Encourage each session and mid council to:**

**“a. pray for the fulfillment of God's purpose within this movement and**

**“b. discern and pursue ways to participate in this movement.**

**“4. Develop workable strategies and collaborate with congregations and mid councils on growing new congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA).**

**“[5. Require the General Assembly Mission Council to bring recommendations regarding this movement to the 221st General Assembly (2014) and to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) as to its progress.]”**

**\$Item 16-03. African American Church Growth Strategy Report—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1444.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$41,750, (2014) \$12,525—GAMC—Unrestricted]

**\*Item 16-04. Confirm Reelection of President of the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program—PILP.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1449.]

**\*Item 16-05. General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1449–50.]

**\$Item 16-06. Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1454.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

**“The General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the General Assembly Mission Council (specifically, the Office of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women and the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly (specifically, the Mid Council Commission in the Office of the Stated Clerk) to hold a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA). This consultation shall bring together representatives of these offices, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. [The consultation shall be held in coordination with the African American Church Growth Strategy consultation.] The consultation shall:**

**“1. Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial ethnic and new immigrants into the church.**

**“2. Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth.**

**“3. Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregation levels.**

**“4. ~~[Designate a monitoring group to assess progress toward these goals that shall report at each General Assembly.]~~ [Designate the GAMC to monitor and report on the progress toward these goals at each General Assembly.]**

**“5. Include in its strategies a plan to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).<sup>1</sup>**

**“6. Present a report on the national consultation at the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

**“[7. Study the successes of other denominations.]”**

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$4,265, (2014) \$11,810 GAMC—Unrestricted; (2012) \$240, (2013) \$36,315, (2014) \$240 GAMC—Per Capita]

**\$Item 16-07. Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century.**

**1. That Recommendation 1 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1462.]**

Amend Recommendation 1.c. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

**“c. Call mid councils to utilize these newly acquired assets in holistic evangelism for the purpose of starting new churches (especially amongst new immigrant communities and communities of color) and encouraging underrepresented leadership (particularly women and people of color), utilizing programs provided by the Office of**

Evangelism and Church Growth of the General Assembly Council and others as needed [while strengthening existing churches.]

2. That Recommendation 2 is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1462–63.]

Amend Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. *Regarding Bi-Vocational* [~~and Tent-Making Ministries~~] [Ministries]

“Charge the 220th General Assembly (2012) [~~to appoint a task force to study and make recommendations~~] [to affirm] [ing] ordained bi-vocational ministry as a critically viable form of ministry in the 21st century church. [~~This task force~~] [The General Assembly Mission Council] shall be directed to make recommendations regarding vocational development and training; fundraising, support, and interpretation of bi-vocational ministry within church councils; increasing the utilization of the Church Leadership Connection to connect churches and teaching elders called to bi-vocational ministry; and addressing issues surrounding the compensation and provision for benefits to support this important form of ministry. [~~This task force would work with the Office of Vocation, the Committee on Theological Education, and other bodies to make recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).~~]

3. That Recommendation 3 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1463.]

Amend Recommendation 3 by inserting a new section f. to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[f. Call upon PC(USA) seminaries to develop resources for congregations to use to analyze their particular local mission contexts.]”

4. That Recommendation 4 is approved. [See pp. 1463.]
5. That Recommendation 5 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1464.]

Amend Recommendation 5 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to work together to develop and implement specific and comprehensive plans to [~~offer all denominational news, policy statements, web information, telephone direction, church statements, and other communications in Korean, Spanish, and other languages as needed. Both entities~~] [provide basic accessibility of essential GAMC information to major non-English language groups, specifically Korean and Spanish, via links on the web page, telephone answer prompts, and other devices as technologies and resources evolve. The GAMC] will report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) as to their progress.”

6. That Recommendation 6 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1464.]

Amend Recommendations 6.b. and 6.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“b. Charge the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to study how to bring teaching elders receiving below-minimum compensation [~~—a group that includes women and pastors of immigrant and underrepresented racial ethnic congregations, ministries, and fellowships—~~] up to or above the minimum compensation set by presbyteries.

“c. Charge the Office of the General Assembly to add annual compensation to the Annual Statistical Report, including salary and benefits, of all exempt church workers [who participate in the Board of Pensions], identified by gender and race/ethnicity.”

7. That Recommendation 7 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1465.]

Amend Recommendation 7 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“Charge the General Assembly Mission Council (through its Office of Theology, Worship and Education and its Office of Vocation) and the other five agencies of the PC(USA)—Board of Pensions, Foundation, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—to articulate a renewed call for the priesthood of all believers, [~~moving away from models of church that rely on an unhealthy dependence on professionalized ministry and ignore the call of believers for mis-~~]

~~sion and ministry in daily life.~~ [affirming the gifts for ministry of all believers, freeing those called to ordered ministry to carry out their calls better.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$115,813, (2014) \$112,419 GAMC—Unrestricted; (2013) \$65,995, (2014) \$58,709 Per Capita]

8. That Recommendation 8 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1465.]

Amend Recommendation 8 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“Urge presbyteries to examine the cultural contexts in which their congregations do ministry to enumerate compelling reasons for congregational leaders to broaden their understandings of community. We urge presbyteries to offer training to learn how [~~white privilege and other discriminatory attitudes and practices~~] [all discriminatory attitudes and practices] limit potential for building up the Body of Christ.”

9. That Recommendation 9 is approved with amendment. [See p. 1465.]

Amend Recommendation 9 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[That the General Assembly direct the chair of the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century to appoint a five-person subcommittee of that committee and limit in the next two years \$26,000 expenses, completing work and reporting to the 221st General Assembly (2014).] [Equip a subcommittee of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century] [The purpose of the subcommittee is] to develop practical resources for further communication with and use for mid councils, congregations, and individuals on forming faithful plans for our common future.”

10. That Recommendation 10 is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1465–66.]

Amend Recommendation 10.c. and insert new Recommendations d. and e. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“c. Call on [~~the preaching and educational ministry of the church~~] [pastors, sessions, and Christian educators] to equip Presbyterians to live out their Christian faith publicly through their various social roles and spheres of influence in practical demonstration of the love and teachings of Jesus, in concrete ways (as citizens, consumers, family, and individuals). Our budgets and programs must reflect our commitment to mission and focusing outwardly.

“[d. Call on local pastors, sessions, and congregations to engage in hands-on ministry outside the walls of their buildings and in their neighborhoods.]

“[e. Call on church members ages 15 to 35 to assume greater leadership in growing the church with special focus among their peers.]”

\*Item 16-08. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Directing the Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry Area to Share Stories of Great Commission Congregations.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 1486.]

\*Item 16-09. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Inviting the Community to Attend Presbyterian Churches.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1487.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 16-09 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) designates a national day to be recognized annually [on the third Sunday of September] by all of the PC(USA). This day will encourage Presbyterian church members to offer an invitation to acquaintances outside the church community to attend a Sunday church service. This national day would facilitate church growth and would open the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the community.”

\*Item 16-10. 2010 Referral: Item 09-06. “Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report.”

That the response is approved with comment. [See p. 1487.]

Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Office of Collegiate Ministries to present a progress report regarding the Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report received by our committee to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

### Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 16-A. Sam and Helen Walton Awards—GAMC.

The Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP reports to the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the awards were acknowledged and will be presented to the recipients at meetings of their respective presbyteries. [See p. 1490.]

Item 16-B. Recognize Women of Faith Awards—GAMC.

The Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP reports to the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the awards were acknowledged and will be presented to the recipients at meetings of their respective presbyteries. [See p. 1490.]

Item 16-C. Minutes, Presbyterian Church Investment and Loan Program.

The minutes are approved.

#### DISSENT

The following commissioners filed a dissent from Item 16-07 (Recommendation 5) of the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP: Eglá García, Presbytery of Salem; Edwin González-Castillo, Presbiterio de San Juan; José González-Colón, Presbytery of New York City; Tony López, Presbytery of San Francisco; Sandra Marcial-Ramirez, Presbiterio Del Suroeste; Julio Ramirez-Eve, Presbytery of New Hope; José Rosa-Rivera, Presbiterio de San Juan; Veronica Soto-Feliciano, Presbiterio Del Noroeste; and Carmen Torres-Cordero, Presbiterio Del Suroeste.

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

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Charles Collier, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry, for a report from the committee. Collier introduced the consent agenda. The assembly approved the consent agenda (with the removal of Item 07-08): Items 07-01 (disapproved), 07-07 (approved with amendment), 07-09 (disapproved), 07-12 (disapproved), 07-13 (answered by action taken on Item 07-09), 07-16 (disapproved), 07-19 (approved), 07-20 (approved), 07-21 (approved), 07-22 (approved), and 07-23 (approved). Martha McDonald, committee vice-moderator, introduced Items 07-10 and 07-11. Items 07-10 and 07-11 were disapproved with comment. Collier introduced Items 07-17, 07-18 and 07-24. A minority report for Item 07-17 was disapproved as a substitute motion. Item 07-17 was approved as amended and with comment. Trinidad led the Assembly in prayer. Collier moved that Items 07-18 and 07-24 be answered by the action taken on Item 07-17. The motion was approved. The assembly voted to disapprove 07-02. The motion that Items 07-03 and 07-06 be answered with the action taken on Item 07-02 was approved. Item 07-05 was approved. McDonald introduced Item 07-04, which was disapproved by the assembly. Item 07-08 was disapproved.

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

#### Consent Agenda

**There are recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda. Such items are marked with an asterisk (“\*”).**

#### Financial Implications

**There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.**

#### I. For Plenary Action

**\*Item 07-01. On Amending G-2.0104b to Make It Consistent with the Constitutional Questions in W-4.4003—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 669.]**

**Item 07-02. On Amending G-2.0104b to Clarify Standards for Ordination—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

**That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 670.]**



**Item 07-03. On Amending G-2.0104a to Include Standards Regarding Sexual Behavior—From the Presbytery of Central Florida.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 07-02. [See p. 673.]

**Item 07-04. On Amending the *Book of Order* Concerning the Titles Used for Those in Ordered Ministries—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 675.]

**Item 07-05. On Amending G-2.0104a to Include “Repentance of Sin” and “Means of Grace”—From the Presbytery of San Jose.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 678.]

**Item 07-06. On Replacing G-2.0104b with the Language of G-6.0106b in the Former Form of Government—From the Presbytery of Washington.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 07-02. [See pp. 679–80.]

**\*Item 07-07. On Reevaluating the Process by Which Ordination Exams Are Written, Administered, and Graded—From the Presbytery of Cascades.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 682.]

Amend Item 07-07 by inserting new Recommendations 3.–5. to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[3. Assess the exams’ assumed cultural neutrality and revise exams as needed to address disparities in pass rates.

“[4. Work with councils to develop effective, alternative methods of examination, and to encourage their use to grow the pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.

“[5. Request the assembly fund an expanded study of the overall process of preparation for ministry including the standard ordination examinations with recommendations to be reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014).]”

[Financial Implications: 2013: \$17,660; 2014: \$10,260 (Per Capita—OGA)]

**Item 07-08. On Adding G-2.0104c Allowing Operational Manuals to Require Adherence to Certain Theological and/or Behavioral Expectations—From the Presbytery of South Alabama.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 683.]

**\*Item 07-09. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See pp. 685–86.]

**Item 07-10. On Adding New Section G-2.0106 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Pertaining to Ordinations—From the Presbytery of Stockton.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 688.]

Comment: Recognizing that some councils fear being reviewed for decisions they make regarding ordination, we remind those who would file complaints against, and the higher councils who will review those complaints, to bear in mind the previously adopted standards of review contained in the interpretation of G-6.0108/G-2.0105:

“Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515, and action, pp. 28–29).

**Item 07-11. On Adding G-2.0106, Freedom of Conscience for Councils—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment: [See p. 691.]

**Comment:** Recognizing that some councils fear being reviewed for decisions they make regarding ordination, we remind those who would file complaints against, and the higher councils who will review those complaints, to bear in mind the previously adopted standards of review contained in the interpretation of G-6.0108/G-2.0105:

“Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515, and action, pp. 28–29).

**\*Item 07-12. On Amending G-2.0104b to Clearly State the Authority of Scripture as the Most Important Basis for the Ordination of an Office of the Church—Presbytery of Wyoming.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 692.]

**\*Item 07-13. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Albany.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 07-09. [See pp. 695–96.]

**Item 07-14.** [Item 07-14 became Item 06-17. There is no Item 07-14.]

**Item 07-15. On Approving the Administration of the Lord’s Supper by Methodist Ministers—From the Presbytery of Grace.**

[Withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace, June 9, 2012.]

**\*Item 07-16. On Affirming Statements in the *Book of Order* to Guide Councils in Examining Candidates for Ordination or Installation—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See pp. 697–98.]

**Item 07-17. On Honoring Christ in Our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of Sacramento.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment and with comment. [See pp. 699–700.]

**Amendment:** Amend the last paragraph of the recommendation to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed, same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we [~~decline to take an action that would have the effect of imposing on the whole~~] [acknowledge that the] Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [~~does not have~~] one interpretation of Scripture in this matter. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment.”

**Comment:** We request that this statement be brought before each presbytery at a stated meeting in which the report from the 220th General Assembly (2012) is given.

**Item 07-18. On Committing Ourselves to Respectful Dialogue with Those Who Hold Differing Convictions—From the Presbytery of Chicago.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 07-17. [See pp. 701–02.]

**\*Item 07-19. Report of the Office of Vocation on the Process to Evaluate the Current Call System to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 703.]

**\*Item 07-20. Clarification of Wording in G-2.0702—From the Interim Associate for Preparation for Ministry/Exams in the Office of Vocation, Office of the General Assembly/General Assembly Mission Council—ACC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 706.]

**\*Item 07-21. Authoritative Interpretation on 10-A. Pastor Will Not Moderate Session—From Associate Presbytery Pastor/Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Los Ranchos—ACC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 707.]

**\*Item 07-22. Question as to Whether G-2.0104b Has Been Amended—From the Session, First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tennessee—ACC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 709.]

**\*Item 07-23. Regarding the Structure of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee—PCCEC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 710.]

**Item 07-24. On Honoring Christ in Our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 07-17. [See pp. 712–13.]

#### DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the actions taken on Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, 07-10, 07-11, 07-17, 07-18, and 07-24 of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry: Gayle Janzen, Presbytery of South Dakota.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Trinidad recognized Joann Lee, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues, for a report from the committee. Lee reported that José González-Colon, committee vice-moderator, would assist as needed in presenting the report. After removing Items 12-03 and 12-09 from the consent agenda, the assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 12-01 (disapprove), 12-02 (answered by action taken on Item 12-03), 12-04 (approved with amendment), 12-05 (approved with amendment), 12-06 (answered by action taken on Item 12-04), 12-07 (approved with amendment), 12-08 (approved with amendment), 12-10 (approved with amendment), and 12-11 (approved with amendment). Item 12-03 was approved with amendment. Item 12-09 was approved with amendment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

#### Consent Agenda

There are recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda. Such items are marked with an asterisk (“\*”).

#### Financial Implications

There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

#### I. For Plenary Action

**\*Item 12-01. On Rescinding the 219th General Assembly (2010) Action Regarding a Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians (Item 11-11)—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See p. 1135.]

**\*Item 12-02. On Taking Action Concerning the Place and Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 12-03. [See pp. 1137–38.]

**Item 12-03. On Taking Action Concerning the Place, Plight, and Contributions of Immigrant People in Our Country, Neighborhoods, and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1139–40.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-03 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

**“The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to urge General Assembly agencies, presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to ~~[do the following:]~~ [take actions concerning the place and plight of immigrant people, regardless of status, in our neighborhoods and communities of faith.]**

**“[The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for comprehensive legislation for immigrants living and working in the United States. The conditions that brought about that resolution have not improved; therefore, we ask the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families to do the following:]**

**“1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to and advocate ~~[for]~~ justice for immigrants regardless of status.**

**“2. Encourage presbyteries to ~~[create]~~ [build bridges by creating] cross-cultural ministry teams and immigration issues task forces (or their equivalent) that will[:]**

**“a. identify and become acquainted with immigrant people in their communities;**

**“b. encourage and support pastors and congregations whose memberships and ministries are directly impacted by the immigration crisis;**

**“c. encourage and financially support the education of immigrant people in a holistic way—for example through English as Second Language programs, after-school programs for young children, and scholarships for college and graduate studies; ~~[and]~~**

**“d. provide opportunities to celebrate and learn from the culture and languages of the immigrants’ homelands while helping the immigrants to navigate within the culture and language of their new home[:];]**

**“[e. resist the temptation to let language and culture be a barrier in our call to meet new people; and]**

**“[f. lift up the gifts immigrant people bring to the Church by sharing stories of joy and challenge while experiencing mutual transformation.]**

**“3. Educate and advocate in partnership with religious, business, community, and law-enforcement leaders for ~~[legislative]~~ reform and action ~~[at the national, state, and local level]~~ by[:]**

**~~“[a. continuing to advocate on behalf of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, especially the DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors);]~~**

**~~“[b.] [a.] offering legal assistance to immigrants applying for ~~[resident alien]~~ [lawful permanent resident] status or other immigration status;~~**

**~~“[c. advocating for employers’ rights to employ workers, provide safe and reasonable work conditions, and assist employees in the payment of taxes;]~~**

**~~“[d.] [b.] focusing law enforcement on the ~~[elimination of criminal behavior without creating an environment of harassment for immigrant people;]~~ [maintenance of community safety and fostering the growth of positive relationships and confidence between law enforcement and immigrant populations; and]~~**

**~~“[e. establishing minimum standards of care for detainees that includes legal representation; and]~~**

**~~“[f.] [c.] encouraging all church councils to meet with their state’s Access to Justice Commission (or equivalent) and to encourage their work in honoring principles and values that respect and value immigrants.~~**

**“[4. Partner with religious, business, community, and law-enforcement leaders for legislative reform at the federal level on the following:**

**“[a. continuing to advocate on behalf of Comprehensive Immigration Reform as outlined in the resource guide published by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). Specifically, it must simultaneously create legal avenues for people to enter the U.S.; allow people already here to earn the opportunity to adjust their status; address the multivyear backlogs in family and employment based immigration; and create and implement a smart border security and enforcement regime that respects core principles of due process;**

**“[b. actively advocating for legislation such as the DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) that offers hope for young immigrants by providing a pathway to citizenship;**

“[c. advocating against mandatory participation in the E-verify system, in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform, for as long as the E-verify system continues to have a higher than necessary incidence of in-accuracy; and

“[d. establishing minimum standards of care for detainees that include legal representation.]”

\*Item 12-04. On Advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1142–44.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-04 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

“[1. Urge all congregations to consider the biblical mandate to love the stranger among us and to see Jesus in his or her face. To this end we urge congregations to

“[a. reexamine reasons behind the fears that jobs will be taken away by immigrants in our communities;

“[b. support denominational goals toward diversity and make efforts toward a better understanding of immigrant sisters and brothers’ language and culture;

“[c. practice biblical hospitality to immigrant groups, particularly those formed for religious or self-help purposes.]”

“~~[1.]~~ [2.] Urge all councils within the church to join with other faith communities, business organizations, law-enforcement entities, and other civil society groups to educate and advocate for comprehensive immigration reform at the ~~[national, state, and local]~~ [federal] level[s]. Elements of such reform, from our perspective, must include:

“a. Making family unity a priority by avoiding separation of families, revising visa preferences and caps, and eliminating visa backlogs;

“b. Providing a reasonable and inclusive path for undocumented migrants presently living in the United States to eventually gain citizenship without imposing punitive costs, wait times, or other irksome conditions;

“c. Facilitating integration of immigrants into their communities by celebrating the culture and languages of their homelands, by providing civics education and legal assistance to regularize their status, and by providing access to all social services;

“d. Requiring humane enforcement procedures that develop measures to reduce human smuggling and migrant deaths, and that aim to eliminate human and civil rights abuses ~~[stemming from indiscriminate raids on homes and workplaces]~~; abolishing enforcement programs such as Operation Streamline and arrangements that involve local agencies in the enforcement of immigration laws, such as “287(g)” Agreements and the Secure Communities Program;

“e. Eliminating lengthy detention for migrants, except those accused of dangerous crimes, strengthening due process protections at every stage of the system, and establishing and stringently enforcing minimum standards of care in all detention facilities;

~~“[f. Protecting refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced persons by more careful vetting of their conditions upon entry into the country and by rigorous training for and oversight of immigration officials;]”~~

“~~[g.]~~ [f.] Protecting all workers from exploitation, abuse, and affronts to their dignity by enforcing labor and employment laws that provide fair wages, the right to organize and to seek redress for grievances;

“~~[h.]~~ [g.] Providing safe, legal, and realistic paths for future migration, consistent with the needs of the U.S. economy without undercutting the employment of anyone already working in the U.S, allowing new migrants to bring their families with them and allowing them the freedom to change places of employment.

“~~[2.]~~ [3.] Urge all councils within the church to join Christ’s mission of building communities, encouraging them to

“a. Draw from materials readily available\* to provide education to congregations and surrounding communities concerning economic contributions of immigrants, problems migrants face as a result of current legislation, and its practical application during and after crossing the border;

“b. Create welcoming worship services and programs ~~[for]~~ [with] migrants in the area;

“c. Build relationships ~~[with migrant communities]~~ by celebrating gifts ~~[they bring]~~, listening to stories ~~[they tell]~~, and accepting ~~[them]~~ [all] as children of God, and

“d. Supporting migrant communities through providing and funding educational programs and by advocating access to higher education.

~~“[3. Form a diverse team whose task is to create a confession, possibly to be included in *The Book of Confessions*, which describes and celebrates the perceived desire and movement of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Presence, regarding the issues of borders, migration, and the treatment of migrants at this point in history.]”~~

“[4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Office of Public Witness and other related ministries, and the Office of the General Assembly, through the Office of Immigration Issues, to advocate for other measures that will improve the plight of immigrants in our midst:

“[a. Call on Congress to immediately pass legislation comparable to the DREAM Act that provides a pathway to citizenship for eligible students. Simultaneously, urge the administration to provide temporary legal status for students eligible under the DREAM Act or comparable legislation in the meantime.]”

“[b. Urge the administration and Congress to enact clear, enforceable detention reforms, including rigorous medical treatment standards and increased access to pastoral care, legal counsel, and legal orientation programs. And to expedite the release of individuals who pose no risk to the community and expand the use of community-based alternatives to detention that are more humane and cost-effective.

“[c. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to urge the Border Patrol to cease the practice of lateral repatriation that separates migrant families.

“[d. Direct the Office of General Assembly to urge the administration to end policies such as Secure Communities and 287g programs that lack oversight and transparency and have led to racial profiling and have undermined the stability of communities and their trust of law enforcement agencies.

“[e. Draw attention to the human rights crisis along the border region between Mexico and the United States that has led to the deaths of thousands of migrants, affirm the right of individuals and organizations to provide life-saving humanitarian aid in the border regions, and urge church councils to support humanitarian aid efforts. Join a multitude of other communities by becoming an official member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, whose principles are echoed above and laid out in the *Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform*.

“[f. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Office of Immigration Issues and other appropriate offices, to investigate how free trade agreements are affecting immigration into the U.S., and to report its findings to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

“[g. When selecting venues for church-related activities, especially church-wide events, consider the safety and freedom from harassment of all who might attend.

“[4.] 5. Invite church-wide prayer for all suffering on both sides of the border, recognizing that fear, hatred, tension, and division in our communities is counter to God’s desire for human life.”

\*Item 12-05. On the Plight of Indonesian Christian Immigrants and the Passage of the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act—From the Presbytery of Newark.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1147.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-05 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Newark overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) to take action as follows with respect to ~~[a certain group of Christians]~~ [refugees] who are threatened with deportation to Indonesia and to request that the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families join in the action as follows:

“1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to ~~[strangers]~~ ~~[others]~~, and thus welcome immigrant people to ~~[our]~~ [this] nation and ~~[our]~~ [this] church as part of both the history and the future of ~~[our]~~ [this] nation and ~~[our]~~ church.

“2. Educate and advocate for the passage of the bill introduced in the House of Representatives called the ‘Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act’, H.R. 3590, together with any bill introduced in the Senate to achieve the same ends, as well as for the signature of such act upon submission to the president.

“3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations about the plight of the Indonesian ~~[Christian]~~-immigrants and the proposed Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act and calling congregations to support and advocate for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.

“4. Direct the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness to advocate on Capitol Hill for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.”

**\*Item 12-06. On Adopting a Statement and Call to Action Regarding Immigration—From the Synod of the Southwest.**

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on Item 12-04. [See pp. 1149–50.]

**\*Item 12-07. On Beginning Active Exploration in Communities to Seek Answers on How to Be Church Together with Immigrant Communities—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1151–52.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-07 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Hudson River overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:

“1. Call presbyteries and local congregations to a time of being church together with immigrant brothers and sisters. This call urges presbyteries and local congregations ~~[of all cultures and immigration statuses]~~ to ~~[begin active (more than setting up a committee!) exploration in]~~ [actively connect with immigrants] in their home communities, ~~[seeking to answer]~~ exploring how they can be church together ~~[with immigrant communities]~~ through:

“• Quarterly worship services centered on immigrant voices and experiences;

“• Spiritual disciplines that grow our willingness to have our worship and fellowship transformed by the immigrant in our midst;

“• Prayer meetings with immigrants;

“• A deepening of relationship - from “Landlord/Tenant” to Spiritual Covenant—in churches hosting immigrant fellowships.

“• Liturgy that shakes up and expands our vision of *who* is the church;

“• Gatherings of prayer, worship, dreaming, and planning together among churches and presbyteries that are seeking to stand with immigrant communities; and

“• Developing best practices that can be shared via a discussion board, blog, or other free social media.

“2. Provide a space for an accounting of the shared experiences of churches engaged in ministry with immigrants by asking the Office of the General Assembly and the Moderator to craft a ~~[week]~~ [time] of worship that lifts up the ‘on the ground’ stories of this time of exploration during [the ‘Big Tent’ August 1–3, 2013, and] the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

**\*Item 12-08. On Approving a Statement Urging Congregations to Commit Two Years to Building Relationships with Refugees Living in Our Neighborhoods and Towns—From the Presbytery of Chicago.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1154.]

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Chicago respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) to ~~[approve a statement]~~ [urge] [urging] congregations to support and serve refugees living in our own neighbor-

hoods, neighboring towns, and cities. This may include ~~[matching]~~ [setting aside] monies ~~[already set aside for global mission trips in 2013–2014 or]~~ [and] beginning new initiatives that support refugees in the local area.

“[The 220th General Assembly (2012) urges congregations to commit two years to building relationships with those who, after fleeing their homelands, now live in the United States, some of whom worship among us. We encourage congregations [to] form relationships of mutuality, by offering hospitality, reaching out to the specific needs of our refugee neighbors, learning about the gifts they offer the community, and how we can be Christ for one another.]”

Item 12-09. A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality—ACREC.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1155.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-09 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

~~“[1. Recognize denominational support for ‘A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need.’]”~~

~~“[2.] Direct the Office of Immigration Issues and the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to collaborate in the development of accessible worship and study resources that will assist Presbyterians in understanding, engaging, and integrating an ecclesiology of ‘Being Church Together.’”~~

~~“[3. Call for the passage of the DREAM Act, and direct the Office of Public Witness to advocate for its passage.]”~~

\*Item 12-10. Commissioners’ Resolution. Regarding Safe Communities for Everyone.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1157.]

Amend Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. requests the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries section, with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and other appropriate offices, to address the civil liberties, racial profiling, security, and due process concerns related to the arrest and detention of immigrants through the Secure Communities program~~[, drawing on the 2010 Human Rights Report section on immigrant detention prepared by the Presbyterian Immigration Issues office];”~~

\*Item 12-11. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1159.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 12-11 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) urges our church to take the following actions concerning the plight of immigrant people in our neighborhoods and communities of faith:

“1. Renew our commitment to the “Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States” (216th General Assembly [2004]) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 737ff.)

“2. Renew our commitment to the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on “Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 880 ff).

“[3. Renew our commitment to the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) regarding a call to stand with immigrant Presbyterians in their hour of need (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 879–81).]”

~~“[3.] [4.]~~ Mindful that the problems addressed in the actions above have continued and in many cases been exacerbated since 2006, we recommend that our church councils be called upon to act in the following ways:

“a. [Text remains unchanged.]



“b. [Text remains unchanged.]

“c. [Text remains unchanged.]

“d. [Text remains unchanged.]

“e. [Text remains unchanged.]

“f. To direct the PC(USA) [~~Washington office~~] [Office of Public Witness] to make immigration reform one of the top policy issues in their work with members of congress and the White House.

“g. To direct the PC(USA) [~~Washington office~~] [Office of Public Witness] and PC(USA) related agencies to actively seek and engage denominational partners and faith-based organizations that are working on immigration reform.

“h. To direct the GAMC and related agencies to work together with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)[, the Office of Immigration Issues,] and PC(USA) racial ethnic caucuses in a coordinated strategy with interested presbyteries to create political will towards immigration reform.”

Moderator Presa resumed the chair.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Sam Evans, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report from the committee. Items 10-03 and 10-21 were lifted from the consent agenda, leaving Items 10-7 (approved), 10-8 (approved), 10-9 (approved), 10-10 (approved), 10-11 (approved), 10-12 (approved), 10-18.A.1. (approved), 10-18.A.2. (approved), 10-18.B.1. (approved), 10-18.C.1. (approved), 10-18.C.2. (approved), 10-18.D. (approved with amendment), and 10-20 (approved). Item 10-03 was answered with an alternate resolution. Item 10-21 was approved. Vice-moderator Marci Glass introduced Item 10-15. Item 10-15 was disapproved. Item 10-16 was approved with comment. Item 10-17, Recommendation A.1., was answered by action taken on Item 16-07; Item 10-17, Recommendations A.2.–4., Recommendations B.1.–3., Recommendations C.1.–3., were approved. Item 10-17, Recommendation D.1. was approved; Item 10-17, Recommendation D.2., was approved with amendment; Item 10-17, Recommendation E., was approved. Evans introduced Item 10-14 with six recommendations, and introduced Thomas Hawkins to present a minority report on Recommendation 4. The motion to make the substitute motion the main motion was disapproved. Item 10-14, Recommendations 1–3 and 5–6 was approved. Item 10-14, Recommendation 4, was answered by an alternate resolution, with the following floor amendments: in the first sentence to insert after “Pentecost offerings” the words [and the Peacemaking Offering]; to strike the following words in the second sentence:

~~[World Communion offering be shared by Global Missions and Peacemaking and distributed in the following manner:~~

~~–50 percent GAMC, Presbyterian Peacemaking~~

~~–25 percent to be allocated bi annually by the GAMC for global witness and outreach beyond the United States~~

~~–20 percent to be used by congregations, and~~

~~–5 percent by presbyteries for peacemaking and or outreach to the world.]~~

and to insert in their place the following words:

“[current distribution patterns be maintained for the next funding cycle and that the existing Special Offerings Task Force be asked to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the effect of new fund raising techniques, to work collaboratively with funding recipients, update progress on the 20 million by 2020 goal, and recommend additional strategies].

The assembly voted to answer Items 10-06, 10-05, and 10-19 with the action taken on Item 10-14. Item 10-02 was disapproved with comment. Item 10-01 was disapproved with comment.

The report was arrested.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Laura Phillips, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues, for a report from the committee. Item 14-02 was lifted from the consent agenda and the assembly approved the consent agenda: Items 14-01 (approved with amendment), 14-03 (approved), 14-04 (approved with amendment), 14-05 (approved), and 14-NB (approved). Item 14-02 was approved with amendment and with the following floor amendment: strike the words “[~~and 1504~~]” in Recommendation 1

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

### Consent Agenda

Consent agenda items are indicated by an asterisk (“\*”).

### Financial Implications

There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.

### I. For Plenary Action

**\*Item 14-01. On Supporting the United Nations—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1301.]

1. Amend Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. ~~[Acknowledge]~~ [Affirm] the church’s historic support for the United Nations as an instrument of peacemaking and peace building and a guarantor of the human and legal rights of people and nations.”

2. Amend Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. ~~[Call upon Presbyterians individually and collectively to pray for the efforts of the United Nations; learn about the United Nations and its work; and urge our national leaders to support fully the United Nations.]~~ [Give thanks for the engagement of Presbyterians with the United Nations from its creation forward.]”

3. Insert new text as Recommendations 4.–5., and re-number current 4.–6. as 6.–8., as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[4. Commend the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations for its long-standing witness through educational seminars, congregational programs, ecumenical and interfaith cooperation, strategic reflection, and advocacy for international justice and peace.”

“[5. Encourage Presbyterians individually, and as congregations, mid councils, and other groups to learn about, pray for, support, and make use of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations in its work to inspire, equip, and connect Presbyterians, Presbyterian mission personnel, and our partners for ministry as faithful disciples of Jesus in the global community and to witness to the United Nations community in the name of Jesus Christ, based on the policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies.]”

“~~[4.]~~ [6.] Urge seminaries, universities, colleges, and campus ministries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide opportunity for faculty and students to learn about the purposes and mission of the United Nations.

“~~[5.]~~ [7.] Call upon the United States government to

“a. foster peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force;

“b. support efforts to strengthen the United Nations and the rule of international law;

“c. assure that its financial obligations to the United Nations are adequately and promptly met;

“d. overturn laws that mandate an automatic cut-off of U.S. support to UN agencies that allow Palestine as a member; and

“e. show its commitments to the extension of international order by the ratification of major international treaties still pending action in the U.S., including the Law of the Sea Treaty; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

“~~[6.]~~ [8.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this resolution to the church, and to the president of the United States, the secretary of state of the United States, every member of Congress, the secretary general of the United Nations, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, and all missions to the United Nations.”

**Item 14-02. On Support for the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)—From the Presbytery of Boston.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1304–05.]

1. Strike the words “~~[and 1504]~~” in Recommendation 1.

2. Amend Recommendation 2.d.–f. by inserting new text as “d.” and re-lettering current “d.”–“f.” as “e.”–“g.” to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[d. Guided by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, reaffirm the important role of Congolese women and children in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stress the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.]”

“~~[d.]~~ [e.] Fully fund and implement all provisions of Public Law: 109-456 ‘Democratic Republic of Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Act of 2006.’

“~~[e.]~~ [f.] Provide encouragement and financial and technical support to the Congolese government to provide quality education for its children and youth in order for them to become informed, active, and responsible citizens.

“~~[f.]~~ [g.] Urge the Congolese government to

“(1) Provide adequate funding for the education of all primary and secondary students;

“(2) Institute free primary and secondary education for all students;

“(3) Pay teachers adequate living wages and provide health insurance for them; and

“(4) Incorporate civic and electoral education into the school curriculum in order for democratic decision-making and election processes to be understood.”

3. Amend Recommendation 4. by inserting new text as “d.” to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[d. Contribute to the “Build Congo Schools Project” to rebuild the Presbyterian schools thru the Medical Benevolence Foundation and provide support for books, scholarships, vehicles, and teacher training thru the PC(USA)’s Congo ECO’s (E047897, E051843).]”

**\*\$Item 14-03. For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World—ACSWP.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1308–10.]

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$1,000—GAMC—Unrestricted]

**\*Item 14-04. Human Rights Update—ACSWP.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 1314.]

Amend Item 14-04 by adding a new Recommendation 5 to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[5. Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to include forced abortions, gender and disability selection based abortions, and infanticide within its next Human Rights Update study.]”

**\*Item 14-05. Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness, an Interim Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Peace Discernment Steering Team.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 1333–34.]

**\*\$Item 14-NB.**

That the following new item of business is approved. [See p. 1347.]

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Presbyterian Ministry to the UN, and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to study and consider actions to bring justice to the disputed territory of Western Sahara, considered by many international jurists to be illegally occupied by Morocco, including the issue of corporate engagement and the renewal of diplomatic efforts to support self-determination, and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

**[Financial Implication: (2013) \$1,753—Per Capita, \$1,752—GAMC—Unrestricted; Financial Implication: (2014) \$3,438—Per Capita, \$3,437—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 14-A. Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

That the minutes are approved.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ISSUES

Moderator Presa recognized Charlotte Poetschner, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues, for a report from the committee. Item 21-05 was lifted from the consent agenda. The assembly approved the Item 21-04 (approved with amendment). Item 21-05 was approved with amendment. Diane Bostic Robinson, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues, moved Item 21-01. Item 21-01 was answered with an alternate resolution. Item 21-02 was approved with amendment. Item 21-03 was approved with amendment and with comment. Item 21-06 was disapproved with comment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Consent Agenda**

**Since Item 21-05 was pulled, there are no items for the consent agenda.**

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 21-01. On Instructing MRTI to Study and Report Corporate Practices of Health Insurance Companies and Possible Divestment of Same—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.**

In response to Item 21-01, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. [See p. 1687].

**“1. The MRTI Committee is instructed to request information and explanations of health insurance company policy and practice on: state and federal lobbying expenditures and political/campaign contributions, government subsidies and profit margins related to provisions of the healthcare ‘reform’ legislation, aggregate data on increases in premiums and deductibles over the past ten years, categories and percentages of claims denied, and percentages of profits used in compensating top executives in comparison with return to shareholders.**

**“2. The MRTI Committee is instructed to be in conversation with the PC(USA) Board of Pensions to ensure the PC(USA) health plan submits to the same standards that PC(USA), through MRTI, asks of other insurers.**

**“3. Based on this corporate engagement and analysis, a summary of which shall be posted, MRTI is asked to evaluate the variance between church principles of universal access and affordability and corporate objectives, to assess the likelihood of significant change in corporate behavior, and to recommend to the GAMC and General Assembly measures, including possible divestment, that would strengthen the integrity of the church’s practice.**

**“4. The GAMC, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions, in turn, are requested to report on their actions (or request guidance) to the 221st and 222nd General Assembly (2014) and (2016), with an eye to guiding individual Presbyterians, congregations, and mid councils in relation to their own investment holdings in this major part of the economy.**

**“5. The Office of Public Witness and other Presbyterian bodies are encouraged to continue to support cost-effective health coverage for all through the single payer (or expanded Medicare) model common elsewhere in the developed world, and, to support making health care affordable and transparent.”**

**Item 21-02. On Instructing the General Assembly to Take Action to Implement the PC(USA)'s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1692–93.]

Amend the recommendation section of Item 21-02 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take the following actions to implement *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, the policy approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 919ff):

“1. Affirm that persons with disabilities are distinct cultures within the rich multicultural makeup of the PC(USA).

~~“2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Board of Pensions to form a working group that includes human resources staff from each entity and representatives from Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) and the disability consultants in order to develop a plan for training all entity staff, commissioners to GAMC, and all commissioners to General Assembly in disability awareness and inclusion. The working group will meet three times before the 221st General Assembly (2014) and report back its plan at the 221st General Assembly (2014). The plan may include contracting with a third party if agreed to and approved by PDC and the disability consultants.”~~

“2. Direct the Stated Clerk to form a working group that includes human resources staff from General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Board of Pensions to form a working group that includes human resources staff from each entity and representatives from Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) and the disability consultants in order to develop cost-effective training materials (web-based or otherwise) and to develop a plan for training all entity staff, commissioners to GAMC, and all commissioners to General Assembly in disability awareness and inclusion. In turn, advise and commend mid council staff and commissioners to take these training materials back to their presbyteries for use and implementation by each presbytery and its councils and mission entities. The working group will meet three times before the 221st General Assembly (2014) and report back its plan at the 221st General Assembly (2014). The plan may include contracting with a third party if agreed to and approved by PDC and the disability consultants.”

~~“3. [Direct the GAMC to fund, with new money, the disability consultants at a level that includes travel expenses and to fund, with new money, disability consultants and PDC volunteers for travel expenses for consulting with PC(USA) staff in developing the new training plan.] [Fund the working group with new financial resources of \$10,060 in 2013 and \$6,360 in 2014 to be designated as directed by the working group.]~~

~~“4. Direct all entities in PC(USA) to use ‘people first’ language in all publications and official communications of the PC(USA) and to encourage church-wide study and use of ‘people first’ language.”~~

“4. Direct the appropriate GAMC entity to place a link on the homepage of the PC(USA) to the policy of ‘Living Into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities’ and to encourage church-wide study and implementation of the policy.”

“5. Instruct OGA to encourage event planners and committees on local arrangements to recruit and include people with disabilities in planning and to include people with visible disabilities and other disabilities in church-wide worship leadership.

“6. Direct PC(USA) entities to report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the progress that has been made since the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the plan that fulfills the recommendations in this overture.

“7. Ask the General Assembly to provide the necessary equipment for all disabled commissioners and delegates with disabilities for full participation.”

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$10,060, (2014) 6,360—GAMC–Unrestricted]

**Item 21-03. On Providing Just Access to Reproductive Health Care—From the Presbytery of Albany.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment and with comment. [See pp. 1698–99.]

Amendment: Amend the recommendation section of Item 21-03 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

~~“[Recognizing that women and men deserve full access to health care as a basic human right, whether or not medical insurance is available,] [The Presbytery of Albany respectfully overtures] the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [seeks] to protect all women’s and [men’s] access to comprehensive health care, including access to health services that enable responsible family planning and honor the exercise of individual conscience [and the gift of human life], by~~

~~“1. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to [advocate for] [support] full access to reproductive health care for both women and men in both private and public health plans; [including, but not limited to, breast cancer screening, infertility testing, medically approved contraception methods (including ‘Plan B’ or ‘morning after’ medication), pap and HPV tests, prostate and testicular cancer screening, pre and postnatal care and, in the case of problem pregnancies, adequate and legal access to abortion services when necessary,] and directing the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to support similar access through international aid organizations and programs;~~

~~“2. protecting the integrity of individual conscience by affirming the ability of women and men to make good moral decisions in matters of reproductive health, including decisions about infertility, parenthood, and responses to problem pregnancies, in consultation with their families, pastors, health-care professionals, and scientifically accurate medical information;~~

~~“[3. opposing state and federal efforts to add coercive or demeaning language in regard to family planning or to defund or criminalize present laws for the purpose of denying or delaying access to family planning services, including abortion services;~~

~~“[3. affirming the position of the 204th General Assembly (1992) Majority Report “Response to the Report of The Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion,” Item 3, pages 14–15, Items a. through h.:~~

~~“(a) The state has a limited legitimate interest in regulating abortions and in restricting abortions and in restricting abortions in certain circumstances.~~

~~“(b) Within this context of the state’s limited legitimate interest, no law should impose criminal penalties against any woman who chooses or physician who performs a medically safe abortion.~~

~~“(c) Within this same context of the state’s limited legitimate interest, no law should deny access to safe and affordable services for the persons seeking to terminate a problem pregnancy.~~

~~“(d) No law or administrative decision should provide for a complete ban on abortion.~~

~~“(e) No law or administrative decision should~~

~~“(i) limit access to abortions;~~

~~“(ii) limit information and counseling concerning abortions; or~~

~~“(iii) limit or prohibit public funding for necessary abortions for the socially and economically disadvantaged.~~

~~“(f) No law should prohibit access to, nor the practice of contraceptive measures.~~

~~“(g) No law should sanction any action intended to harm or harass those persons contemplating or deciding to have an abortion.~~

~~“(h) No law should condone mandatory or forced abortion or sterilization. Such laws should be abolished where they do exist:”~~

~~“[And further affirming that no state or federal law should be enacted to defund or criminalize family planning for the purpose of denying or delaying access to family planning services;]~~

~~“[4. supporting effective public disclosure by “crisis pregnancy centers” of their affiliation with anti-contraception and/or anti-abortion religious or partisan groups, the ending of any public funding for such enterprises, and appropriate licensing and regulation to prevent deceptive practices and non-factual information being provided in the guise of education and support;]~~

~~“[4. supporting effective and full public disclosure of information regarding reproductive health care and opposing public funding of any organizations shown to provide misinformation concerning reproductive health issues;]~~

“5. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to advocate for more generous paid family and medical leave policies and corresponding policies that provide quality child-care and preschool programs in order to strengthen the family life of working parents and promote the development of children.

“6. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to identify and support programs that research shows to be effective in reducing unintended pregnancies and teenage pregnancy, thereby reducing the number of abortions in the U.S.”

Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) expresses its appreciation to the Presbytery of Albany for raising this matter in such a thorough and compassionate manner.

Item 21-04. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Compassionate Treatment of Veterans Suffering from PTSD, TBI, and/or Other Mental Afflictions Rising from Military Service.

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1701–1702.]

Approve the recommendation section of Item 20-04 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) does the following:

“1. Instructs the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to urge that all presbyteries [~~provide~~] [offer] training to [~~facilitate~~] ministers [~~of their respective~~] [and] churches [~~to identify active or veteran military members of their churches who are at risk due to disorders resulting from injuries, visible and invisible, including Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)] [to recognize and intervene pastorally in instances of veteran military-related Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS)/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)], and to be informed about [community and Veterans Administration] resources that are available to help these members and to urge all ministers of particular churches to participate in this training. [To urge presbyteries to draw upon the resources of the Presbyterian Council on Military Chaplains in the provision of training to presbyteries, pastors, and particular churches.]~~

“2. Urges that in this training, pastors be instructed to reach out, not only to the members who are at risk, but to the family members as well as they are also greatly at risk to violence, mood swings, depression, and other symptoms of these combat-induced illnesses.

“3. Asks that the OGA instruct both the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., and presbyteries to advocate for rights for veterans returning from Iraq/Afghanistan in their respective states. Specific advocacy should include but not be limited to

“[• Judicial/Legal Structures]

“[•][—]establishing veterans courts in the various jurisdictions throughout the country;

“[•][—]mandating sentencing guidelines requiring judges to incorporate treatment as part of the sentencing for veterans that suffer from these disabilities;

“[• Psychiatric/Mental Health Structures]

“[•][—]requesting that military and veterans receive [early intervention] treatment for mental afflictions [~~at the earliest possible time~~] since it will be most effective if done early and not delayed;

“[•][—]holistic early intervention strategies that include veterans’ families;]

“[•][—]strengthening PTSD/TBI-related transitional care military-to-civilian and hospital-to-community structures.]

[• Retraining/Employment Transitional Structures

“[•][—]increasing funding for work programs to retrain vets as many of them are trained in skills that don’t readily translate into a civilian workforce.

“[•][—]increase funding for retraining and employment transitional counseling structures.]

“With these items we hope to promote a welcoming home of our wounded veterans, helping them to connect or reunite with their families, adapting to their challenges through prayer, pastoral counseling, and church support; and to help them reintegrate as happy members of church life and society.”

**Item 21-05. Commissioners' Resolution. On Funding for Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) for AIDS Competency Training.**

That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See pp. 1703–1704.]

Amend Recommendation 3 by striking the existing text and inserting new text to read as follows:

“3. [Provides \$25,000 to the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) to be utilized to support the development of and expand participation in certification of AIDS competent church and church leaders programs.] [Create an Extra Commitment Opportunity Account to support the AIDS ministry, to be utilized to support the development of and expand participation in certification of AIDS competent church and church leaders programs and distribute information to the mid councils and congregations that better educate the church to the existence of this opportunity.]”

**Item 21-06. Commissioners' Resolution. On Calling the Church to a New Way Forward on the Issue of Pregnancies and Abortion.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See pp. 1705–1706.]

Comment: Item 21-06 calls for “A New Way forward on the issue of pregnancies and abortion.” Considering this resolution invited the committee to consider the 1992 report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion. This noteworthy study brought twenty years of relative peace on a matter that has been a source of intense conflict in the PC(USA) for many years prior to the study. The study accomplished no mean feat in setting forth common ground that Presbyterian can gather around; common ground that eschews partisanship on either side of the cultural divide. We found insight and guidance in this document that was both eloquent and relevant to our work; therefore we do not see the need for a new study but rather commend the existing study to our church.

DISSENT

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 21-03 of the Assembly Committee on Health Issues: Justin L. Marple, Presbytery of Western New York; and Christine J. Romig, Presbytery of Peace River.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATIONS

Moderator Presa recognized Barbara Ross, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Authoritative Interpretation Review, for a report from the committee. The assembly approved Item 08-01 with amendment and with comment. Item 08-02 was approved.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Review of Authoritative Interpretations. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Consent Agenda**

There are no recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda.

**Financial Implications**

There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 08-01. Report of the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order*.**

The recommendation is approved with amendment and with comment. [See p. 715.]

Amendment:

1. Amend Recommendation 1 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. That the authoritative interpretations described below that are derived from decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission be removed as having no effect because the former Form of Government language on which they were based is no longer in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or The Form of Government, [Ør] is contradicted by new language [ , or was previously removed]. [Reference guidelines # 4 & 5]”

2. Amend Recommendation 2, in the table, “Ref. 90-2” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through.]



[Ref. 90-2]	[1990]	[G-13.0112d]	[G-6.02]	[Proposals for significant change in <i>Book of Order</i> should not originate with ACC.]	[Do Not Retain]
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**Comment: In Recommendation 2, it was discovered that item reference 90-2 is not an authoritative interpretation.**

**3. Amend Recommendation 4 as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]**

**“4. That the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order* be dismissed with [admiration and] thanks [and commended for their gift to the church].”**

**Item 08-02. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-3.0306 Regarding Laboring Inside the Bounds of a Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.**

**The recommendation is approved. [See p. 764.]**

#### DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 08-01(Recommendation 1) of the Assembly Committee on Authoritative Interpretation Review: Gayle Janzen, Presbytery of South Dakota.

#### REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES

Moderator Presa recognized Joan Fong, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies, for a report from the committee. Item 04-01 (Recommendation 5) was removed from the consent agenda. The assembly approved the consent agenda: Item 04-01 [Recommendations 1 (approved), 2 (approved), 4 (approved), 6 (approved with amendment), and 7 (approved)].

A motion was approved to arrest the report.

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator Presa recognized Jeffery Ferguson, theological student advisory delegate from San Francisco Theological Seminary, who led the assembly in prayer. The assembly recessed at 1:31 a.m.

Saturday, July 7, 2012, 9:00 A.M.

#### BUSINESS MEETING XII

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall A of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Joan Fong, ruling elder commissioner from the Presbytery of San Francisco, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

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

Moderator Presa recognized Eustacia Marshall, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, for a report from the committee.

It was announced that minutes of business meetings from Friday and Saturday morning would be approved by a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

Protests found to be in decorous language are recorded in the *Minutes* as follows:

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Jerry Ganfield, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “My belief in the meaning of love, grace, liberty and freedom that is embodied in this very day of ‘Freedom,’ July 4, 2012 has been diminished by the ability of unknown individuals or groups causing division, making threats of action after a duly constituted body has elected by 62% a Vice-moderator. I protest the meek and mild leadership that acquiesces to such against the ruling of the body.”

Protest on assembly action in disapproval of a motion for a speak-out and disapproval of a motion to amend the docket for time where commissioners would be told the facts that caused Rev. McCabe to resign—From Marilyn S. Daniel, commissioner from the Presbytery of Transylvania: “I voted in favor of both motions. The disapproval of these motions, particularly #2, deprived me of my right to follow church polity. Based on the little information we were given, I have reason to believe that one or more commissioners violated his/her ordination vows. Without names and facts I cannot proceed to file a disciplinary action

under D-10. F 3.0205 recognizes that a majority vote determines a decision. Rev. McCabe was confirmed as vice-moderator by 60% of the vote. G 3.0105 provides those in the minority with the proper response. I did not know Rev. McCabe until Sat. during ‘Meet the Moderator Candidates’ time. She was completely open about her role in a same-sex marriage. To the best of my knowledge no one filed a disciplinary action against her as a result; under church polity that would have been the process to follow. To the best of my knowledge, there was no barrier to her election. Therefore, any commissioner who failed to be ‘... governed by the church’s polity ...’ (W-4.4003(e)) would be subject to disciplinary action. Additional violations would involve failure to ‘... be a friend of your colleagues in ministry ...,’ failure to ‘... further the peace, unity and purity of the church,’ (W-4.4003(g)) and failure to ‘... fulfill your ministry ... under the authority of Scripture ...’ (W-4.4003(d)) Paul addressed the dangers of gossip—long before social media. We have deeply hurt a life-long young Presbyterian pastor—all of which would have been avoided by following church polity. We failed to name this: injustice. And the bottom line: There will be no woman in top leadership of this church for the next two years.”

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Paul Harkess, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “That a duly elected Vice-Moderator should be threatened such that she feels forced to resign is a threat to the peace, purity and unity of the church that should not have been tolerated. What began as a beautiful expression of the love and respect we are called by our Savior to have for each other in the election of a Moderator and Vice-Moderator of differing views was sullied by the intimidation and threats from outside the Assembly and allowed a reversal of proper action of election by the duly elected delegates who expressed 62% support for her election. Bullying and intimidation have no place in the church and those responsible should be disciplined for their abhorrent actions which have undermined the Assembly and the credibility of our Moderator.”

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Barbara Lutter, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “I protest the action of the 220th General Assembly which gave power to bullies and ignored the assembly’s clear mandate of electing and confirming Tara McCabe as Vice-Moderator. We teach our children that bullying is wrong. What we witnessed at the opening of the plenary today, 7-4-12, was bullying on a personal as well as institutional level. Tara Spuhler McCabe was the target of hate speech and bullying. I am disappointed that she was compelled to resign due to the hate speech contained in blogs and the electronic media. I am also disappointed and distressed by the manner in which this was managed and handled by the Moderator. Capitulating to bullies leads to reduced confidence in his leadership. I am saddened by the divisive and unpleasant tactics which have invaded our plenary at the very point in which we should be seeking the will of God. These tactics should not have been permitted to prevail. These actions threaten the peace, unity and purity of our church, which is a deep violation of the very promises and covenants we made together when we were commissioned for this service.”

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Judy Kolwicz, commissioner from the Presbytery of Newton: “Every commissioner, every Elder (both Ruling and Teaching) makes a vow to support the peace unity and purity of the church AND a vow to serve with intelligence, imagination and love. The report of Vice-Moderator Tara Spuhler McCabe to the Assembly was that there was ‘pervasive poisonous activity’ including entries on Twitter and other cyber communications. The Assembly elected The Reverend McCabe in a fair election knowing that she had participated in a civil union. The PC(USA) has a process to bring a complaint against one when there is a cause. This process was replaced with a conspiratorial ‘secret’ attempt to discredit. I would like to see the PC(USA) process applied to any and all who chose to use cyber-bullying to threaten the duly elected Vice-Moderator, forcing her resignation. I believe that a church who feels it has the authority to call another country ‘apartheid’ needs to consider its own oppressive tactics and strategies. The General Assembly should make a public apology to the Vice-Moderator for the unloving actions of sisters and brothers. I respectfully request that this matter be fully investigated and that there be some attempt to require those who have contributed to cyber bullying to be accountable for their actions.”

Protest on advocacy after the question was called—From Timothy D. Thomas, commissioner from the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley: “After the question was called, a commissioner requested a person to speak for ‘information’ purposes. The person who spoke advocated for the motion and did not answer questions. After the advocacy a vote was taken and the motion passed. I think the vote passed as a result of the vice-moderator’s ineffectiveness to stop the person who was questioned (advocating). I respectfully oppose this action.”

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Joann Lee, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “I protest the action of the 220th General Assembly to allow a small, mean-spirited minority to trump the will of the majority who voted for Tara Spuhler McCabe as Vice-Moderator of the 220th GA. Vice-Moderator Tara Spuhler McCabe received a larger margin of the majority than did the Moderator. Her election was decently and in order and the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst. To allow people outside of or a minority of this assembly to threaten to hijack our process constitutes bullying. And what happened to Vice-Moderator Tara Spuhler McCabe on blogs and the internet also constitutes bullying. To succumb to bullies acts out of fear and we as an assembly are called to be better than that. I protest our failure to stand behind a duly elected vice-moderator.”

Protest on the resignation of the Vice-Moderator—From Kitty Martin, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “I am deeply distressed and saddened by the vicious attacks on Tara Spuhler McCabe that led her to resign as Vice-Moderator of this 220th Assembly. I was shocked to hear her address the Assembly, telling us what was happening, and

thus resigning to ensure the Assembly could move forward and not be hindered in doing its business. I believe she was bullied—and bullying is wrong in every way. The actions of the attacking people do not preserve the peace, unity, and purity of the church—which we as ruling elders and teaching elders vow to do.”

Protest on the action of choosing the Thursday preacher—From Gregory Roth, commissioner from the Presbytery of San Francisco: “I protest the Thursday Preacher Tony De La Rosa as a choice of the Moderator, as his is in a same sex relationship, which he introduced in his sermon. It points to the ongoing advocacy to violate the constitution. This was inappropriate right before we discussed the subject of same-sex marriage.”

Protest on the actions of a group of commissioners during the report of Committee 13—From Kitty Martin, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “Yesterday afternoon and last night, during Committee 13’s (Civil Unions) report to plenary, I observed a small group of commissioners whose movements to get their views expressed on the floor were carefully orchestrated by their ‘floor manager’ commissioner. They were dispersed by this ‘floor manager’ to particular microphones. Now, I realize in itself this is a strategy often used by supporters of particular viewpoints/beliefs on issues before the GA to get certain resolutions approved or not approved. However, this group I observed in action yesterday, I believe acted inappropriately in several ways. Please see bullet points below. This group of commissioners gathered on plenary floor in the back of the commissioner area by my presbytery’s seats. My seat is P60, and I clearly could see these persons—the group remained stationed there throughout Committee 13’s report. Each time Comm. 13’s recommended resolutions were defeated, I watched these commissioners celebrate the defeat—granted the ‘celebration’ was not blatant jumping up and down, but their clustered groups joyful reaction seemed to me to be very disrespectful of those of the commissioners who were hurt—specifically LGBT persons and their friends and supporters. One commissioner, Jodi Craiglow, who appeared to be one of the strategic ‘floor managers’ actually spoke twice on two (2) different recommended resolutions—speaking from different microphones on the same resolution. Both times—she was recognized by the moderator who allowed her to speak twice on the same resolution. I watched her speak from Mike 7 and shortly afterwards she moved to Mike 8 and again was recognized by the moderator on the same resolution. This was repeated on another resolution—2 different mikes, and once again recognized by the moderator.”

Protest of assembly action on Item 13-NB—From Jerry Egger, commissioner from the Presbytery of Wabash Valley: “The Assembly’s vote on Item 13-NB was out of order. The motion before the assembly was to answer all remaining items of Committee 13 by action on 13-NB. When moderator called for a vote, he stated that it was to act on 13-NB in substance [re a period of discernment on marriage]. What the Assembly should have voted on was the procedure of linking other items to 13-NB. I cast my vote (in the positive) assuming I could then vote on the substance of 13-NB in the negative.”

Protest of the Moderator’s failure after vote on Item 13-NB—From Barbara Lutter, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “I protest the failure of the Moderator from admonishing the commissioners and delegates’ inappropriate and intimidating conduct on the floor of the plenary immediately following the body’s vote on Item 13-NB. A number of commissioners gathered behind microphone #7, and celebrated in a loud and obvious manner, high-fiving, clapping, and one woman jumping up and down. This indecorous conduct should not have been tolerated and I am profoundly saddened that the leadership did not recognize me to ask that the conduct be admonished. I am profoundly saddened and disappointed that those on the ‘prevailing’ side of this action were so insensitive and inappropriate, and certainly did not create a gracious and loving community.”

Protest of lack of decorum during and after debate on Item 13-NB—From Stan Martin, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: “It is with displeasure that I submit a protest for lack of decorum and respect allowed during and after debate/discussion on Item 13-NB. I witnessed acts that could be seen as influencing voters and/or intimidation of the speakers to those standing in line waiting to speak. Examples include servicing drinks to those waiting in line to speak on this item, moving speakers to different microphones to seemingly engage in moving the speakers to more favorable microphones, and the appearance of using electronic media to communicate on this item while on the floor. While this may or may not have been the intention, the perception remains. I also witnessed disrespectful acts of self-congratulations following the final vote that disrespected those who may have been hurt by the vote. I respectfully submit this protest and ask the leadership of the General Assembly to remind commissioners to act in respectful, ethical, and proper decorum while in session.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 15-11—From Annie Rawlings, commissioner from the Presbytery of New York City: “The TSAD from the Presbytery of New York City was the second person in line—from the start of consideration of Item 15-11. She was pre-empted repeatedly by people asking questions. The questions had the effect of depriving her voice. This is not decent and in order. This is unfair. People are using questions to shut down debate. She was a microphone #2. Also, the Moderator erred in first saying we would hear from all who had lined up to speak, and then prematurely letting the vote proceed on the substitute motion. He suggested that voting on the substitute motion would not impede debate. However it did cut off debate on divestment. I protest this occurrence in the strongest of terms.”

Protest on the advice of the Stated Clerk on a substitute motion for Item 15-02—From Joanne Hardy, commissioner from the Presbytery of Northern New England: “I submitted a substitute motion for 15-02 which included a clause to divest from Caterpillar. The Stated Clerk ruled it was out of order because he stated that issue had already been answered by 15-11. The original 15-11 motion had included divestment—but the substitute motion which closely resembled 15-10 did not mention

divestment. Thus we had no opportunity to vote for or against divestment. PC(USA) could both invest and divest as the committee had intended by recommending both 5-10 and 5-11. Thus I respectfully protest the ruling by the Stated Clerk which did not allow us to vote on divestment.”

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES

Moderator Presa recognized Joan Fong, moderator of the Assembly Committee on the Review of Biennial Assemblies, for a report from the committee.

Item 04-01, Recommendation 3, was approved with amendment. Item 04-01, Recommendation 8 was approved with amendment. Item 04-01, Recommendation 5, was disapproved with comment and with floor amendment to the comment: insert as the first line: [To direct the Stated Clerk to communicate with the presbyteries the need to prioritize sending young adult commissioners under the age of thirty-six to the General Assembly.]

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on the Review of Biennial Assemblies and the committee report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on the Review of Biennial Assemblies

Consent Agenda

Consent agenda are indicated with an asterisk (“\*”).

Financial Implications

There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.

I. For Plenary Action

**\$Item 04-01. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).**

**\*1. That Recommendation 1 is approved. [See p. 241.]**

**\*2. That Recommendation 2 is approved. [See p. 241.]**

**3. That Recommendation 3 is approved with amendment. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.] [See pp. 241–42.]**

***“3. Regarding Concurrences for Overtures and Commissioners’ Resolutions***

**“That in order to improve collaboration among presbyteries, assure that the business before it is both of common concern to the mission of the church (G-3.0302(d)) and about key issues facing the church and society, and to encourage well-considered, significant overtures and resolutions of church-wide significance:**

**“a. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**“Shall ~~[G-3.0502]~~ ~~[G-3.0302d]~~ be amended ~~[by adding a new section ‘f.’]~~ to read as follows: ~~[(Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.)]~~**

**“~~[‘f. present to meetings of the General Assembly such overtures from presbyteries and synods that have received concurrences from at least 10 percent of the presbyteries or, in the case of overtures from a synod, concurrence by 10 percent of the synods.’]~~**

**“~~[‘d. propose to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church, and proposing to General Assembly overtures that have received a concurrence from at least one other presbytery.’]~~**

**“b. Amend Standing Rule A.3.(c)6 so that it reads as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]**

**“(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (excluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that existing overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided by the overturing body. The concurrence and any addi-**

tional rationale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly. *Concurrences to any overture shall be received up to 45 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture with constitutional implications shall be received up to 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.*”

“c. Amend Standing Rule A.8.a as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“‘a. ~~Any two commissioners may propose an item of new business, known as a commissioners’ resolution, for assembly consideration by delivering it in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two resolutions. An item of new business, in the form of a commissioners’ resolution, must be signed by commissioners representing [10 percent of the presbyteries] [at least one other presbytery]. Such resolutions must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two such resolutions.’~~”

\*4. That Recommendation 4 is approved. [See p. 242.]

5. That Recommendation 5 be disapproved with comment and referred back to the Special Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies: [See p. 243.]

Comment: [To direct the Stated Clerk to communicate with the presbyteries the need to prioritize sending young adult commissioners under the age of thirty-six to the General Assembly.] The young adult demographic has been and continues to be an underrepresented group as commissioners to General Assembly. The assembly suggests the committee discover other ways to increase young adult representation.

\*6. That Recommendation 6 is approved with amendment. [See p. 243.]

Amend Recommendation 6 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“6. *Regarding Moderatorial Pre-election Activities*

“a. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.3(c) follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“‘(c) Distribution of written [~~campaign~~] materials at General Assembly ~~outside of the candidate’s room~~ shall be limited to ~~printed materials placed in mailboxes~~ the public distribution area.’”

“b. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.3(d) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“‘(d) ~~On the day of the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall provide a room for each candidate where commissioners and advisory delegates may meet and talk with the candidate. Candidates are encouraged to meet and make themselves available for conversation with commissioners and advisory delegates within the scope of these [~~campaign~~] procedures.’~~”

\*7. That Recommendation 7 is approved. [See p. 244.]

8. That Recommendation 8 is approved with amendment. [See p. 244.]

Amend Recommendation 8 as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“8. *Regarding Extending the Timeframe for the Work of the Biennial Review Committee*

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) instructs the Committee to Review Biennial General Assemblies to continue its work to the 221st General Assembly (2014) in order that all matters related to the form and function of the meeting of the General Assembly may be explored, developed, and discerned, and additional recommendations brought to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly for the 221st General Assembly (2014). Three new committee members will be appointed by the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) from among the commissioners to the 220th General Assembly (2012).”

[Financial Implications: 04-01, Recommendation 8: 2013: \$27,230; 2014: \$11,495 (Per Capita—OGA)]

Tim Womack, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues, spoke about the “Encountering the Gospel Anew” initiative.

A motion seeking reconsideration of Item 10-15 failed.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Presa called on Sam Evans, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report.

Evans reported that the total financial implications to the mission budget of actions approved to date by the assembly were \$929,159 for 2013; and \$823,186 for 2014. It was announced that the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board would be responsible for incorporating these amounts into the 2013 and 2014 mission budgets as submitted to the assembly.

The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation A.3.

Evans introduced Michael Kruse, outgoing chair of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), and Matthew Schramm, incoming chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB). Kruse, along with Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the GAMC, conducted the installation service for Schramm and for Art Canada, vice-chair of the PMAB.

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

**Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination**

**Consent Agenda**

Consent agenda items are indicated with an asterisk (“\*”).

**Financial Implications**

There are recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications and are indicated with a “\$” sign next to the item.

**Consent Agenda**

The following recommendations are being moved as a consent agenda.

**\*Item 10-07. Revision to the General Assembly Mission Council Manual of Operations—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 806–809.]

**\*Item 10-08. Name Change for the GAMC—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 810.]

**\*Item 10-09. 2013–2016 Mission Work Plan—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 812–13.]

**\*Item 10-10. Changes to the *Organization for Mission*—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 815.]

**\*Item 10-11. Amendment to *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A, Regarding Disbursement of Funds—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 821–22.]

**\*Item 10-12. ACREC Name Change—ACREC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 822.]

**\*\$Item 10-18., Recommendations A.1., A.2., B.1, C.1., and C.2., Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church—GAMC.**

1. That Recommendation A.1. is approved. [See p. 867.]

2. That Recommendation A.2. is approved. [See p. 868.]

3. That Recommendation A.3. is approved. [See p. 868.]

4. That Recommendation B.1. is approved. [See p. 869.]

5. That Recommendation C.1. is approved. [See p. 869.]
6. That Recommendation C.2. is approved with the following amendment: [See p. 870.]

To insert a new Recommendation D. to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]:

“D. 1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council not to implement the 218th General Assembly (2008) action regarding cost allocation and recovery with respect to the Theological Education Fund in the 2013–2014 General Assembly Mission Budgets.

“2. Direct the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), in consultation with the Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010) and with the Committee on Theological Education (COTE), to appoint a special committee on the funding of theological institutions, with a charge to review the funding relationship of theological institutions to the General Assembly and the church, and to propose any needed changes, including a strengthened funding mechanism for the support of theological institutions by the church. The special committee should make its report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). The special committee should consist of thirteen members, all of whom should be persons who are especially knowledgeable about theological institutions. One member should be the director of COTE, and a second the director of the GAMC Theology, Worship and Education ministry area. The remaining eleven should include two elected members of COTE, five PC(USA) seminary presidents, and a GAMC member. Other members would likewise be persons with knowledge and experience in the field of theological education, one of whom should have expertise in fund-raising. The special committee will hold up to three face-to-face meetings (an initial meeting for two days, and up to two additional one-day meetings). Conference calls and other technological resources would be used for other meetings in order to reduce costs.”

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$20,360, (2014) \$12,655—Per Capita—OGA; (2013) \$266,000, (2014) \$247,000—GAMC—Unrestricted]

\*Item 10-20. A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 871.]

#### Part One: GAMC Items

#### Part Two: Specific Business Items

**Item 10-03. On Supporting Young Adults in Mission and Leadership Development for the Future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Presbytery of Western New York.**

In Response to Item 10-03, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following alternate resolution: [See p. 797.]

“In recognition of the new directional goal of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) regarding young adults, which includes reducing the funding responsibilities for individual young adult volunteers, the 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the GAMC to increase promotion of this vital and dynamic program to mid councils while encouraging mid councils to increase their mission funding by 10.01 percent beyond the Pentecost offering over the next five years, dedicated to inspiring, equipping, and connecting with young adults to further enable their ability to serve nationally and internationally in the name of Jesus Christ.”

**Item 10-21. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Promoting the Opportunity to Host Christmas International House.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 873.]

**Item 10-15. The Methodology Task Force Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Design for a Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA).**

That the recommendation is disapproved. [See pp. 838–39.]

**\$Item 10-16. Women of Color Consultation Committee Report—GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved with the following comment: [See pp. 854–55.]

“Even though the overall 2011 consultation was beneficial and sought to do what it was tasked to do according to the 2008 report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, we acknowledge that there were painful events that transpired during the consultation for many of its participants. Specifically, generational conflicts, issues of internalized oppression, intersections of race, gender, and class and white and male privilege occurred. These were moments of learning opportunities that were missed. The 2008 report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to

God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies,” continues to address the problems and issues raised at the 2011 Women of Color Consultation.”

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$34,325, (2014) \$3,370—GAMC—Unrestricted]

**\$Item 10-17. Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report.**

1. That Recommendation A.1. is answered by action taken on Item 16-07. [See pp. 858, 1462.]
2. That Recommendation A.2. is approved. [See p. 858.]
3. That Recommendation A.3. is approved. [See p. 858.]
4. That Recommendation A.4. is approved. [See p. 859.]
5. That Recommendation B.1. is approved. [See p. 859.]
6. That Recommendation B.2. is approved. [See p. 859.]
7. That Recommendation B.3. is approved. [See p. 859.]
8. That Recommendation C.1. is approved. [See p. 860.]
9. That Recommendation C.2. is approved. [See p. 860.]
10. That Recommendation C.3. is approved. [See p. 860.]
11. That Recommendation D.1. is approved. [See p. 860.]
12. That Recommendation D.2. is approved with the following amendment: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.] [See p. 861.]

~~“[Direct]~~ [Encourage] the Office of Ministries with Youth and encourage other PC(USA) entities to incorporate cultural proficiency/sensitivity training in relation to Hispanic/ Latino/a young people as a part of the training process for leadership of all events, gatherings, and resources (including providing interpreters for Spanish-speaking participants, bilingual worship, and multilingual promotional resources).”

13. That Recommendation E. is approved. [See p. 861.]

[Financial Implication: Recommendations A.1., A.4., D.1.: (2013) \$19,225 (2014), \$12,525—GAMC—Unrestricted]

**Part Three: Special Offerings**

**\$Item 10-14. Special Offerings—GAMC**

1. That Recommendation 1 is approved. [See p. 825.]
2. That Recommendation 2 is approved. [See p. 826.]
3. That Recommendation 3 is approved. [See pp. 827–28.]
4. In response to Item 10-14 (Recommendation 4), the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following alternate resolution: [See pp. 830–31.]

“In the spirit of Items 10-19 and 10-5 (overtures from the Presbyteries of Pittsburgh and Western North Carolina), it is important to maintain existing programs, percentages, and designees in the One Great Hour of Sharing, the Christmas Joy Offering, the Pentecost offerings [and the Peacemaking Offering]. The 220th General Assembly (2012) recommends that the [current distribution patterns be maintained for the next funding cycle and that the existing Special Offerings Task Force be asked to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the effect of new fund raising techniques, to work collaboratively with funding recipients, update progress on the 20 million by 2020 goal, and recommend additional strategies].~~[World Communion offering be shared by Global Missions and Peacemaking and distributed in the following manner:~~

50 percent GAMC, Presbyterian Peacemaking

25 percent to be allocated bi-annually by the GAMC for global witness and outreach beyond the United States

20 percent to be used by congregations, and

5 percent by presbyteries for peacemaking and or outreach to the world.]



5. That Recommendation 5 is approved. [See p. 837.]

6. That Recommendation 6 is approved. [See p. 837.]

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$405,929 (2014); \$400,000 (GAMC—Restricted)]

**Item 10-05. On Maintaining the Integrity of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.**

That the recommendation is answered by action taken on Item 10-14. [See p. 799.]

**Item 10-06. On Retaining the Peacemaking Offering as an Independent Offering Appropriate to World Communion Sunday—From the Presbytery of Albany.**

That the recommendation is answered by action taken on Item 10-14. [See p. 803.]

**Item 10-19. On Restoring the Objectives of the One Great Hour of Sharing—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.**

That the recommendation is answered by action taken on Item 10-14. [See p. 870.]

**Item 10-02. On Instituting a Special Offering Designated to Native American Ministry for a Period of Three Years—From the Presbytery of Inland Northwest.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with the following comment: [See p. 796.]

Comment: “We ask the GAMC staff to work with this group to insure there are ways for individuals and organizations to designate gifts toward this cause.”

**Item 10-01. On Recognizing Bloomfield College as a Racial Ethnic College—From the Presbytery of Newark.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with the following comment: [See p. 793.]

Comment: In Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA, a commitment was made to support those schools and institutions “that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups.” The General Assembly Mission Council was asked to propose ways in which this responsibility could be fulfilled. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) related schools currently listed as racial ethnic include Barber Scotia, Cook Native American Ministries, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Menaul School, Presbyterian Pan American School, and Stillman College. The Christmas Joy Offering was established and has for many years been divided between recognized racial ethnic schools and retired church workers with underfunded pensions.

Many colleges and secondary schools within the United States today accept racial ethnic students and some, like Bloomfield, have a majority of racial ethnic students. While Bloomfield’s recruitment and admission policies should be acknowledged and applauded, the specific nurturing and confidence-building environments provided by the currently recognized racial ethnic schools to their students do not appear to have the same curricular focus in schools such as Bloomfield.

We advise that the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) be asked to develop a brief strategy report that articulates those elements in racial ethnic schools that have effectively generated new and positive racial ethnic leadership within our church and our communities. Bloomfield College should be encouraged to reapply if they feel they meet the criteria once those attributes have been more clearly defined.

**Item 10-04. [Item 10-04 became Item 11-20. There is no Item 10-04.]**

**Item 10-13. [Item 10-13 became Item 16-07. There is no Item 10-13.]**

#### Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 10-A. Minutes, General Assembly Mission Council.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 10-B. Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corp.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 10-C. Audit (see pages 998–1022 of the electronic version)

The audit is received.

DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-17 (Recommendation A.1.) of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination: José Rosa-Rivera, Presbiterio de San Juan.

INVITATION TO BIG TENT

Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (formerly the General Assembly Mission Council), and Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk, extended an invitation to come to the Big Tent event (August 1–3, 2013) in Louisville, Kentucky.

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Presa recognized Eric Dennis, chair of the Committee on Local Arrangements, who made the presentation of an engraved gavel to Neal Presa, Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012). Dennis expressed appreciation for all the volunteers and support from Pittsburgh and surrounding presbyteries for hosting the assembly meeting.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Presa called on Lynn Bova, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report.

Bova reported that the total financial implications to the per capita budget of actions approved by the assembly were \$240 for 2012; \$293,868 for 2013 (approximately 15 cents of per capita); and \$159,202 for 2014 (approximately 8 cents of per capita).

Item 03-12, Recommendation 2.b., was approved with the following amendment from the committee: strike “[~~\$13,871,111~~]” and insert “[\$14,164,979]” for the 2013 budget and strike “[~~\$14,199,728~~]” and insert “[\$14,358,930]” for the 2014 budget.

Item 03-12, Recommendation 4., was approved with the following amendment from the committee: strike [~~\$6.80~~] and insert [\$6.87] for 2013 and strike [~~\$6.98~~] and insert [\$7.02] for 2014.

Members of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures sang a song to express thanks to the Committee on Local Arrangements for all their work.

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

**Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures**

**Consent Agenda**

Consent agenda items are indicated with an asterisk (“\*”).

**Financial Implications**

**There are no recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.**

**I. For Plenary Action**

**Item 03-01. On Amending Standing Rule F.6.c. Regarding Nominations from the Floor—From the Presbytery of Boston.**

**That the recommendation is approved with amendment. [See p. 169.]**

**Amend Recommendations 1–2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]**

**“1. Amend Standing Rule F.6.c.(2) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]**

**“(2) When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented [~~and stating the person’s reason for challenging the nomination presented by the nominating committee~~], as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the**

**“Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk. *The availability of the pertinent information provided by the person challenging the nominating committee’s nominee shall be announced to the assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor.*”**

~~“[2. Amend F.6.c.(3)(d) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.~~

~~“(d) *The election shall take place no earlier than twenty-four hours following the nominating speeches. Without further discussion or debate, the General Assembly will move to vote.*”~~

**Item 03-02. On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Forward Only Per Capita Funds Received to Their Synods and the General Assembly—From the Presbytery of Detroit.**

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment. [See p. 170.]

Comment: That the recommendation be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) for deliberate consideration and recommendation to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with comment. Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) makes this referral because the difficulty of presbyteries raising and transmitting per capita funds goes beyond the scope of the original overture.

**\*Item 03-03. Amendment to the *Organization for Mission* Clarifying the Roles of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of GAMC—COGA & GAMC.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 172.]

**\*Item 03-04. Site of the 223rd General Assembly (2018)—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 173.]

**\*Item 03-05. Amend Section IV.C.2. of the *Organization for Mission*—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 174.]

**\*Item 03-06. Amend Section IV.C. of the *Organization for Mission* Regarding Committee on Representation—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 174–75.]

**\*Item 03-07. Amend Section IV.C.5. of the *Organization for Mission* Regarding the General Assembly Nominating Committee—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 175.]

**\*Item 03-08. Election of Associate Stated Clerks—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 175.]

**\*Item 03-09. Amend Section IV.C.3.a. of the *Organization for Mission*—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 176.]

**\*Item 03-10. Amend Standing Rule K.1.c.—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 176.]

**\*Item 03-11. Confirm Election of Presbyterian Historical Society Board Members—COGA.**

That the recommendation is approved. [See p. 177.]

**Item 03-12. Joint COGA/GAMC Budget Proposals—COGA/GAMC.**

That Recommendation 1 is approved. [See p. 177.]

That Recommendation 2.a. is approved. [See p. 177.]

That Recommendation 2.b. is approved with amendment. [See p. 177.]

Amend Recommendation 2.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

**“b. Approve the total Expenditure Budget for 2013 totaling [~~\$13,871,111~~] [\$14,164,979] and for 2014 totaling [~~\$14,199,728~~] [\$14,358,930].”**

**That Recommendation 3 is approved. [See p. 177.]**

**That Recommendation 4 is approved with amendment. [See p. 177.]**

**Amend Recommendation 4 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]**

**“4. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve a per capita apportionment rate of [~~\$6.80~~] [\$6.87] per active member for 2013, and a rate of [~~\$6.98~~] [\$7.02] to be effective for 2014.”**

**That Recommendation 5 is approved. [See p. 178.]**

**\*Item 03-13. A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—ACREC.**

**That Recommendation 1 is approved. [See p. 178.]**

**That Recommendation 2 is approved with amendment. [See p. 178.]**

**Amend Recommendation 2 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]**

**“2. Direct the [~~associate for organizational diversity, education, and recruitment (ODER)] [General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), Human Resources Department] to assist the six agencies in developing their six-year plans, in consultation with ACREC and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).”~~**

**That Recommendation 3 is approved with amendment. [See p. 179.]**

**Amend Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]**

**“3. Direct the [~~Office of General Assembly (OGA) staff for the agency review committees] [committee on review of the General Assembly agencies] to provide for meaningful participation by ACREC in the six-year agency review committees, including providing timely notice of meetings and communicating with ACREC staff.”~~**

**That Recommendation 4 is approved. [See p. 179.]**

**That Recommendation 5 is approved. [See p. 179.]**

**\*Item 03-14. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Establishing a Code of Ethics for Elected Commissioners and Elected/Appointed Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).**

**That the recommendation is approved. [See pp. 188–89.]**

**\*Item 03-15. Commissioners’ Resolution. Designating as an Honored Name, the Reverend Elijah Parish Lovejoy.**

**That the recommendation is approved with comment. [See p. 190.]**

**Comment: Grant the Presbyterian Historical Society discretion for the people to be included on the list in the future.**

## **II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 03-A. Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

That the minutes are approved with exception.

Comment: The COGA minutes for 2010 & 2011 are approved with minor notes for the Stated Clerk to clarify acronyms and make them consistent. These minor notations will be given to the Stated Clerk so the changes may be made before going to the Presbyterian Historical Society.

Item 03-B. Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society.

That the minutes are approved with exception.

Comment: The minutes are approved with the exception of formatting and defining acronyms and closing a meeting with prayer.

COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

John Wilkinson thanked members of the committee, and introduced Vince Thomas as the incoming moderator for the committee.

EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Presa recognized Assistant Stated Clerks Deborah Davies and Kerry Rice to make a presentation to the Committee on Local Arrangements from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Presa introduced Peter Smith, who introduced a video welcoming the church to Detroit, host city for the 221st General Assembly (2014).

THANKS TO STAFF

Moderator Presa called upon Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons for a moment of personal privilege, in which he expressed his appreciation to OGA staff, volunteers, vendor staff, elected members and staff of other General Assembly agencies, student assistants, and others.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moderator Presa called upon Stated Clerk Parsons for announcements on various topics.

CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator Presa called upon Yena Hwang, teaching elder member of the Presbytery of National Capital, who offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT

The assembly was adjourned at 12:04 p.m. with worship, to be dissolved upon the convening of the 221st General Assembly (2014) on June 14, 2014 in Detroit, Michigan.



## **SECTION TWO**

Assembly Committee Reports Containing  
All Reports, Referrals, and Recommendations of the  
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly,  
the Office of the General Assembly, Permanent and Special Committees,  
the General Assembly Council, the Board of Pensions,  
the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation,  
the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation,  
Overtures, and Commissioners' Resolutions





## Item 00-01

[The assembly approved Item 00-01. See p. 5.]

### *Report of the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee 2012*

**The Stated Clerk Nominating Committee unanimously and enthusiastically recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve that the Reverend Gradye Parsons be elected to a second term as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.**

### *Rationale*

Gradye Parsons has served faithfully and effectively as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for the past four years, leading by word and example from a deep, centered spirituality based on his love for Jesus Christ and his church, engaging countless dialogue partners from across the geographic and theological spectrum in the ongoing conversation that is the essence of Presbyterian polity and mission.

Leaders from the six agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gave independent but highly consistent positive reviews of their experience with Gradye Parsons, citing his calm, clear-eyed, well-grounded approach to myriad aspects of the church's life and witness. His references, including mid council leaders, pastors, and long-time colleagues, as well as the end-of-term review conducted by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, indicate that he is genuinely called to this ministry as a demonstration of his love of God and neighbor.

During his tenure, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while undergoing profound and ongoing change, has benefited greatly from having, as its ecclesiastical "Head of Communion," a person who teaches an adult Sunday school class in his local congregation and insists that "dangerous elders" are the key to the future of the church. His ministry is consistent with the Mission Statement of the Office of the General Assembly, a statement shaped by his vision: "Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Office of the General Assembly will encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be a people of hope—seeking together the mind of Christ; working for justice and mercy in the world; and participating in God's continual reformation of the church."

The Stated Clerk Nominating Committee believes that Gradye Parsons has fulfilled his ordination vow "to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love," as well as modesty and a pervasive, warm sense of humor. As one reference put it: "He is called to it. He loves the church we are and he believes in the church God wants us to be."

The members of the committee count it a privilege and a joy to recommend to you the Reverend Gradye Parsons as our nominee for Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### 1. *Background*

The Stated Clerk Nominating Committee was elected by the 219th General Assembly (2010). The nine members include four past General Assembly commissioners. The members are:

Ruling Elders: Reid Beveridge (Wilmington, Delaware); Melissa Kirkpatrick (Gainesville, Virginia).

Teaching Elders: Dan Krebill (Bozeman, Montana); Judith Wellington (Albuquerque, New Mexico).

Three Persons from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly: Dennis Hughes, teaching elder, (Seattle, Washington); Eileen Lindner, teaching elder, (Tenafly, New Jersey); Vincent Thomas, ruling elder, (Minneapolis, Minnesota).

One Person from the General Assembly Mission Council: Matthew Schramm, teaching elder, (Bay City, Michigan).

Mid Council Staff Representative: Terry Epling, teaching elder, (St. Louis, Missouri).

Committee Assistant: Barbara Murphy, ruling elder, (Orange, California).

The committee's work was governed by the section in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly related to the election of the Stated Clerk: H.2.b.(3)and(4). The process was carried out in three segments: a churchwide application process (May–December 2011), a review and interview process (January–Mid-March, 2012), and a selection and announcement process (mid-March–May 2012).

The committee met face-to-face June 28–30, 2011, and March 13–14, 2012, and held several telephone conference call meetings.

## 2. *Application Process*

The committee developed an application packet that included an application form, a request for biographical information, including ecclesiastical standing, work history, and other information, along with supplemental questions. The availability of the application packets was announced at the Fall 2011 Polity Conference and through print and electronic media. Applications were due January 1, 2012, but the date was extended to January 3 because of the Sunday date and a postal holiday.

The committee received five requests for application packets. Because of the postal holiday, those who had requested packets were informed in late December of the extended deadline. The committee received one application, that of Gradye Parsons.

## 3. *Review and Interview Process*

The committee found itself in an almost unprecedented situation, having only one application. The committee felt a responsibility to conduct a thorough and careful interview, despite having only the incumbent's application, and did so in March 2012. A list of a dozen further questions was created for the oral interview. All committee members were present, and the committee spent several hours interviewing Gradye Parsons, using both the prepared questions and follow-up questions generated by the discussion.

## 4. *Selection and Announcement Process*

It became very clear to the committee that Gradye Parsons is called to the ministry in which he has served as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for the past four years. His deep Christian faith, formed in family and church from his childhood on, his wide-ranging intelligence, and his warm, collegial style were evident to all, along with his joy for the work. At the conclusion of the interview, the committee was pleased to nominate Gradye Parsons by unanimous vote for a second term as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The committee has prepared an information packet for the commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012), including biographical information, a personal statement, and answers to four questions, prepared by the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee.

The committee will present its report and its nominee, the Reverend Gradye Parsons, during the Sunday, July 1, afternoon plenary of the 220th General Assembly (2012).

## Item 00-02

[The assembly approved Item 00-02. See p. 40.]

### *General Assembly Nominating Committee 2012 Nominations*

**The General Assembly Nominating Committee recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) elect the following nominees:**

### **Key for the General Assembly Nominating Committee Report**

Mariana Pardo (D) (YA) HFR 26–35 Milwaukee LAK AL NEW  
 ③ ④ ② ① ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨

*means*

Mariana Pardo (person living with a disability) (Young Adult) Hispanic/Latina, Female, Ruling Elder, 26–35 years old, Milwaukee Presbytery, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, At-large position, New (first term) nomination.

### **Key:**

#### **① Gender and Ordination designation:**

**FT**—Female Teaching, Minister of the Word and Sacrament  
**FR**—Female Ruling Elder  
**FL**—Female Church Member  
**MT**—Male Teaching Elder, Minister of the Word and Sacrament  
**MR**—Male Ruling Elder  
**ML**—Male Church Member  
**MC**—Male Minister non Presbyterian

**② Racial/Ethnic designation:**

- A**—Asian American
- B**—African American
- H**—Hispanic/Latina/Latino
- M**—Middle Eastern
- N**—Native American
- O**—Other
- W**—Caucasian

Combination of letter codes may be used when applicant indicates more than one racial/ethnic category (bi-racial or multi-racial) i.e. B/N = African American and Native American.

**③ Person living with disability designation:**

- D**—Disability (persons with self-identified disability)

**④ Youth/Young Adult designation:**

- Y**—Youth (GA Committee on Representation; 25 years and younger when nominated)
- YA**—Young Adult (35 years and younger when nominated)

**⑤ Age Range:**

- 25–** (25 years old and younger); **26–35** years old; **36–45** years old; **46–55** years old; **56–65** years old; and **65+** (66 years old and older)

**⑥ Presbytery****⑦ Synod:**

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

**⑧ Membership:**

- ACE** =Associate Pastor of Christian Education
- AA** =Asian American At-Large
- AC** =Asian American Caucus
- AL** =At-Large
- BC** =Black Caucus
- COGA**=Committee on the Office of the General Assembly
- DCE** =Director of Christian Education
- FND** =Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation
- GAMC**=General Assembly Mission Council
- HA** =Hispanic/Latina At-Large
- HC** =Hispanic/Latina/Latino Caucus
- MC** =Middle Eastern Caucus
- NA** =Native American At-Large
- NC** =Native American Caucus
- P** =Presbytery
- PAS** =Pastor Serving a church that employs a church educator
- PTI**=Presbyterian Theological Institution
- S** =Synod
- UCC** =United Church of Christ
- WCL** =Woman Church Lay Employee

**⑨ Nomination Category:**

- NEW** =New Nomination
- REC** =Re-classified
- REN** =Re-nominated

† =Appointed by General Assembly Moderator [Any vacancy in a position for which the General Assembly Nominating Committee makes nominations may be filled until the next succeeding General Assembly by appointment of the Moderator of the General Assembly upon advice by the nominating committee that the committee has decided to present the name of the appointee to the next session of the General Assembly as its nominee for the position." *Organization for Mission IV. C.1.H.*]

**A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Julie MacLemore	WFR	56–65	New Covenant	SUN	AL	NEW†
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2018**

2.	Fred Denson	BMR	65+	Genesee Valley	NE	AL	NEW
3.	Daryl Fisher-Ogden	WFT	56–65	Santa Barbara	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Daniel Williams	WMT	46–55	Shenandoah	MAT	AL	NEW

**B. Advisory Committee on Litigation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Barry McDonald	WML	46–55	San Fernando	SCH	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2018**

2.	Matthew R. Hall	WML	36–45	St. Andrews	LW	AL	REN
3.	Beth Law	BFR	46–55	National Capital	MAT	AL	REN

**C. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Raymond R. Roberts	WMT	46–55	Elizabeth	NE	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Rachel Eggebeen (YA)	WFL	26–35	De Cristo	SW	AL	NEW
3.	Kevin Johnson	BMT	56–65	Detroit	COV	AL	NEW
4.	Christine M. Darden	BFR	56–65	Eastern Virginia	MAT	AL	REN
5.	Marsha Fowler	WFT	56–65	San Gabriel	SCH	AL	REN
6.	Charles Eric Mount	WMT	65+	Transylvania	LW	AL	REN†

**D. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	David Esterline	WMT	56–65	Blackhawk	LIN	AL	NEW
2.	Mark S. Jones, Sr.	BMR	56–65	Pacific	SCH	BC	NEW
3.	Lilia Maria Ramirez-Jimenez	HFT	36–45	Palisades	NE	HA	NEW
4.	Samson C. Tso	AMT	36–45	New York City	NE	AC	NEW
5.	Debbie Battiste-Kleinman	NFR	46–55	New Covenant	SUN	NA	REN
6.	Aida Faris	MFR	65+	Mission	SUN	MC	REN

**E. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Kerri Allen	OFT	36–45	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Jacob Parsons-Wells (YA)	WML	26–35	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
3.	Louise Davidson	WFR	65+	Scioto Valley	COV	AL	NEW
4.	Mary M. Fulkerson	WFT	56–65	New Hope	MAT	AL	NEW
5.	Susie Wiggins	WFR	56–65	Arkansas	SUN	AL	NEW
6.	Darcy Metcalfe (YA)	WFR	26–35	Wabash Valley	LIN	AL	REN

**F. Audit Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Ellen Pearre Cason	WFR	56–65	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
2.	Richard Allen Turpen	WMR	56–65	Sheppards and Lapsley	LW	AL	REN

**G. Board of Pensions****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Christopher Mason	WMR	46–55	New York City	NE	AL	REC
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Tony De La Rosa	HMR	46–55	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
3.	Harland Doak	WMR	46–55	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
4.	Fairfax Fair	WFT	46–55	Detroit	COV	AL	NEW
5.	Mark Lu	AML	36–45	Los Ranchos	SCH	AL	NEW
6.	Linda Patrick	WFL	56–65	Middle Tennessee	LW	AL	NEW
7.	Frank C. Spencer	WMR	46–55	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
8.	Bob Gorsky	WMR	46–55	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
9.	Judith A. Harris	WFL	46–55	Lehigh	TRI	AL	REN
10.	John Hougen	WMT	46–55	East Iowa	LAK	AL	REN
11.	Linda Jacobsen	WFR	46–55	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	REN
12.	Frank James (D)	BMR	56–65	Sheppards and Lapsley	LW	AL	REN
13.	Bettina Kilburn	WFT	46–55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	REN
14.	Joseph M. Kinard	BML	46–55	Middle Tennessee	LW	AL	REN

**H. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Neal Pressa (YA)	AMT	26–35	Elizabeth	NE	220th GA Moderator	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Margaret Elliott	WFR	46-55	Salem	MAT	AL	NEW
3.	James Wilson	WMR	46-55	Scioto Valley	COV	AL	NEW
4.	Leah Johnson	WFR	56-65	Donegal	TRI	AL	REN

5.	Eileen W. Lindner	WFT	46-55	Palisades	NE	AL	REN
6.	Virginia Rainey	WFR	56-65	Huntingdon	TRI	AL	REN
7.	Vincent A. Thomas	BMR	46-55	Twin Cities Area	LAK	AL	REN
8.	Robert Wilson	BMR	65+	North Alabama	LW	AL	REN

**I. Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment**

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Sharon M. Davison	BFR	56-65	New York City	NE	AL	NEW
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**J. Committee on Theological Education**

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Jose Irizarry	HMT	36-45	De San Juan	BPR	AL	NEW
2.	Mindy Douglas Adams	WFT	36-45	Salem	MAT	AL	REN
3.	Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri (YA)	HFR	26-35	Tropical Florida	SA	AL	REN
4.	Max Sherman	WMR	65+	Mission	SUN	AL	REN
5.	Landon Whitsitt (YA)	WMT	26-35	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN
6.	Kathryn Wolf Reed (YA)	WFT	26-35	Sheppards and Lapsley	LW	AL	REN

**K. Educator Certification Committee**

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Hugh Anderson	WMT	56-65	Cascades	PAC	MC	NEW
2.	Mary Marcotte	WFR	56-65	New Covenant	SUN	AL	NEW
3.	Sung Hee Chang	AFL	36-45	New Hope	MAT	R/E	REN†
4.	Kathy L. Dawson	WFT	46-55	Greater Atlanta	SA	PTI	REN
5.	Susan Sharp Campbell	WFT	45-55	West Virginia	TRI	AL	NEW

**L. Finance Committee**

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Kathy Trott	WFR	56-65	Sacramento	PAC	AL	REN†
2.	Jack D. Shelver	WMR	65+	San Diego	SCH	AL	REN

**M. General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations**

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Kathryn Jones	WFR	46-55	Grace	SUN	AL	NEW
2.	Tyler Orem (YA)	WML	18-25	Whitewater Valley	LIN	AL	NEW
3.	Y. Dianna Wright	BFR	46-55	Salem	MAT	AL	NEW
4.	Sherri Hausser	WFT	36-45	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	REN†
5.	Aimee Moiso (YA)	WFT	26-35	San Jose	PAC	AL	REN
6.	Rodney Petersen	WMT	46-55	Boston	NE	AL	REN

**N. General Assembly Committee on Representation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Thomas G. Kirkpatrick	WMT	65]	Olympia	ANW	AL	NEW
2.	Ruben Ortiz-Rodriguez	HMT	46–55	Del Suroeste	BPR	AL	NEW
3.	Myung Han	AMT	46–55	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
4.	Tressie Muldrow	BFR	65+	National Capital	MAT	AL	NEW
5.	Josephine Mueller	AFR	46–55	Riverside	SCH	AL	NEW
6.	Wanda Tanner-McNeill	BFR	46–55	Philadelphia	TRI	AL	NEW
7.	Hector M. Rivera-Velez	HMT	46–55	Mission	SUN	AL	REN
8.	Issa Sayar	MMR	65+	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	REN

**O. General Assembly Mission Council****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	James E. Foucher Jr.	BMC		United Church of Christ		Ecumenical Advisory	NEW
2.	Pending					Ecumenical Advisory	NEW
3.	Pending					Synod Staff	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

4.	Neal Presa (YA)	AMT	26–35	Elizabeth	NE	Moderator 220 <sup>th</sup> GA	NEW
5.	Marilyn Gamm	WFT	46–55	The John Knox	LAK	Commissioner 219 <sup>th</sup> GA	NEW†
6.	Marianne O. Rhebergen	WFT	56–65	Cayuga-Syracuse	NE	Presbytery	NEW†
7.	Josephine Stewart	WFR	56–65	Charlotte	MAT	Presbytery	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2018**

8.	Thomas O. Fleming Jr.	WMR	56–65	Pacific	SCH	Commissioner 220 <sup>th</sup> GA	NEW
9.	Nancy Ramsay	WFT	56–65	Grace	SUN	Commissioner 220 <sup>th</sup> GA	NEW
10.	Kevin Yoho	WMT	56–65	Newark	NE	Presbytery Staff	NEW
11.	Chad Herring	WMT	36–45	Heartland	MAM	Presbytery	NEW
12.	James R. Ephraim, Jr.	BMT	56–65	Sheppards and Lapsley	LW	Presbytery	NEW
13.	Marsha Zell Anson	WFR	56–65	Glacier	ROC	Presbytery	NEW
14.	David Shinn	AMT	36–45	Detroit	COV	Presbytery	NEW
15.	Susan Osoinach	WFR	65+	Palo Duro	SUN	Presbytery	NEW
16.	Andrew Barron (YA)	WML	26–35	Foothills	SA	Young Adult	NEW
17.	Molly Baskin	WFL	56–65	Chicago	LIN	Presbytery	REN†
18.	Jung Nam Lee	AMR	65+	Hanmi	SCH	Presbytery	REN†

**P. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Flor N. Vélez-Díaz (YA)	HFR	26–35	Del Norte	BPR	AL	NEW†
2.	Mary Charlotte McCall	WFT	65+	Yukon	ANW	AL	NEW

**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

3.	Patrick Notley	WMT	46–55	Southern New England	NE	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2018**

4.	Julia Henderson	WFR	46–55	Denver	ROC	AL	NEW
5.	Terry Epling	WMT	46–55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	NEW
6.	Helen R. Heffington	WFT	46–55	Peace River	SA	AL	NEW
7.	Robin Roberts	WMR	46–55	Mississippi	LW	AL	NEW
8.	Sarah Thornburg	WFR	36–45	Western North Carolina	MAT	AL	NEW

**Q. Mission Development Resources Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	David Hicks	WMT	56–65	Grand Canyon	SW	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Donald A. Wingate	WMR	56–65	Central Florida	SA	AL	NEW
3.	Frances Lin	AFR	36–45	San Diego	SCH	AL	NEW
4.	Martin W. Lifer III	OMT	46–55	Charleston –Atlantic	SA	AL	NEW
5.	Robert D. Bidwell	WMT	56–65	Maumee Valley	COV	AL	REN
6.	Joan Fong	AFR	46–55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
7.	Steven Shussett	WMT	36–45	Lehigh	TRI	AL	REN
8.	Jane Searjeant Watt	WFT	65+	Albany	NE	FND	REN

**R. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Karen Gray	WFL	46–55	Kiskiminetas	TRI	AL	NEW
2.	Stephen Kelly	WMR	56–65	Transylvania	LW	AL	NEW
3.	Eustacia Marshall (YA)	BFT	26–35	Charlotte	MAT	AL	NEW
4.	Michele Minter	BFR	46–55	New Brunswick	NE	AL	NEW
5.	David A. Davis	WMT	36–45	New Brunswick	NE	AL	REN
6.	Enid Flores	HFL	36–45	De San Juan	BPR	AL	REN
7.	Victor L. Hymes	BMR	46–55	San Francisco	PAC	AL	REN
8.	Paul E. Lee	AMR	36–45	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
9.	D. Scott Weimer	WMT	46–55	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	REN
10.	Louise Westfall	WFT	46–55	Denver	ROC	AL	REN



**S. Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	John Etheredge	BMR	65+	New Hope	MAT	AL	NEW
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Tiffany Brown (YA)	BFL	26–35	Non-Presbyterian	NP	AL	NEW
3.	Jonas Georges	OMT	56–65	Tropical Florida	SA	AL	NEW
4.	Laura Krauss	WFT	46–55	Pacific	SCH	S	NEW
5.	Lawrence Low	AMT	65+	Seattle	ANW	AL	NEW
6.	Rebecca Reyes	HFT	56–65	New Hope	MAT	S	NEW
7.	Shonte Young	BFL	36–45	Non-Presbyterian	NP	AL	NEW
8.	Carolyn Ashe (D)	BFR	65+	Long Island	NE	P	REN
9.	Cynthia Hayes	BFL	46–55	Non-Presbyterian	NP	AL	REN
10.	Oscar L. Heyward	BMR	56–65	New York City	NE	P	REN
11.	Bernadette Hightower-Hughes	BFL	46–55	Non-Presbyterian	NP	AL	REN
12.	T. Ewen Holmes	WMT	46–55	Twin Cities Area	LAK	AL	REN
13.	Selma Jackson	BFR	56–65	New York City	NE	AL	REN
14.	Johnetta Marshall	BFR	65+	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	REN
15.	Joe Nelson	NFR	65+	Palo Duro	SUN	AL	REN
16.	Cathryn Surgenor	WFT	46–55	Hudson River	NE	P	REN
17.	Lori Winblood	NFR	46–55	Western Colorado	ROC	AL	REN

**T. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Don Yancey	WMT	56–65	St. Andrew	LW	AL	NEW
2.	Sung-Joo Park	AMT	46–55	Twin Cities Area	LAK	AL	NEW
3.	Karen Stocks	WFT	46–55	Mission	SUN	AL	REN
4.	Donna C. Weddle	WFT	56–65	National Capital	MAT	AL	REN

**U. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Stephanie Fritts	WFL	56–65	Olympia	ANW	AL	NEW
2.	Kathy Faye Lee (YA)	AFL	26–35	South Louisiana	SUN	AL	NEW
3.	Adrian Washington	BMT	56–65	Pueblo	ROC	AL	NEW
4.	Jeff Holland	WMT	36–45	Santa Barbara	SCH	AL	REN

**V. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Sung Yeon Choi-Morrow (YA)	AFL	26–35	Chicago	LIN	AL	NEW
2.	Peter Mann	WMR	65+	Minnesota Valleys	LAK	AL	NEW
3.	Byron Wade	BMT	46–55	New Hope	MAT	AL	NEW
4.	Diane Waddell	WFR	56–65	Heartland	MAM	AL	REN

**W. Presbyterian Men****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	David Caves	WMT	56–65]	Kiskiminetas	TRI	AL	REN
2.	George Goodman	BMT	65+	Peaks	MAT	AL	REN

**X. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board of Directors****GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

1.	Mary Gene Boteler	WFT	56–65	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAT	AL	NEW
2.	Adlai Amor	AMR	46–55	National Capital	MAT	AL	REN
3.	Elizabeth Caldwell	WFT	56–65	Chicago	LIN	AL	REN
4.	John Temple	WML	65+	Hudson River	NE	AL	REN

**Y. Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Pamela Szurek	WFT	46–55	Long Island	NE	AL	NEW†
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**GANC Nomination—Class of 2016**

2.	Pending—Hispanic/Latina/o						NEW
3.	Timothy A. Beach-Verhey	WMT	36–45	Coastal Carolina	MAT	AL	NEW
4.	Sylvia Karcher	WFT	65+	Riverside	SCH	AL	NEW
5.	Janis Alling Adams	WFR	46–55	Cincinnati	COV	AL	REN
6.	Margaret Aymer Oget	BFT	36–45	Greater Atlanta	SA	PTI	REN
7.	Steven Ranney	WMT	46–55	Giddings-Lovejoy	MAM	AL	REN

**Z. Review Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Clemente H. Anzaldua	HMR	56–65	Mission	SUN	AL	NEW
2.	David H. Bennett	WMT	36–45	Albany	NE	AL	NEW
3.	Paul Costel	WMR	46–55	Mid-Kentucky	LW	AL	NEW
4.	Gordon Enderle	WML	46–55	John Knox	LAK	AL	NEW
5.	Gary Kidwell	WMC	56–65	Disciples	Ecum	AL	NEW
6.	Anne Drennan	WFR	46–55	Monmouth	NE	Agency	NEW
7.	Pending					Agency	NEW

## 00 PLENARY

8.	Nancy Muth	WFT	56–65	Philadelphia	TRI	Agency	NEW
9.	James N. Tse	AMR	46–55	New York City	NE	Agency	NEW
10.	Donna Misterly	WFR	65+	Riverside	SCH	Commissioner	NEW
11.	Irene Pak (YA)	AFT	26–35	San Jose	PAC	Commissioner	NEW
12.	Pending					Commissioner	NEW

**AA. Review Committee on the Board of Pensions****GANC Nomination—Class of 2014**

1.	Fahed Abu-Akel	MMT	65+	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	NEW
2.	Dick Coffelt	WMR	65+	Grand Canyon	SW	AL	NEW
3.	Maria Curatolo	WFL	46–55	Episcopal	Ecum	AL	NEW
4.	Jim Kitchens	WMT	56–65	San Francisco	PAC	AL	NEW
5.	Karen Garrett	WFR	46–55	Heartland	MAM	Agency	NEW
6.	Deborah Block	WFT	56–65	Milwaukee	LAK	Agency	NEW
7.	Douglas F. Megill, M.D. (D)	WMR	56–65	Lake Erie	TRI	Agency	NEW
8.	Kent Grimes	WMR	65+	Charleston Atlantic	SA	Agency	NEW
9.	Teresa Bryce Bazemore	BFR	46–55	Philadelphia	TRI	Commissioner	NEW
10.	Faith Dow Jongewaard	WFT	56–65	Mission	SUN	Commissioner	NEW
11.	Scott Prouty	WMT	46–55	Minnesota Valleys	LAK	Commissioner	NEW
12.	Judith Wellington	NFT	46–55	Santa Fe	SW	Commissioner	NEW

**Item 00-03**

[The assembly approved Item 00-03. See p. 2.]

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following assembly committee structure [a brief list of the business to be referred to that committee follows the committee title]:

**01 BUSINESS REFERRAL****02 BILLS AND OVERTURES**

Docket of the assembly and referrals of business to assembly committees after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules C.4.b.); appeal of persons denied the right to speak at a public hearing (Standing Rule E.5.b.); review requests for distribution of material to commissioners (Standing Rule E.6.c.); review requests from agencies to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings during assembly meeting (Standing Rule E.6.d.); recommend approval of time limits on debate (Standing Rule F.1.b.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly *Minutes* (Standing Rule F.1.c.); requests for presentations to the assembly (Standing Rule F.1.d.); review protests, determine if entered in the *Minutes*, prepare response if needed (Standing Rule F.1.e.); report on assembly committee requests for establishment of special committees or commissions (Standing Rule K.1.a.–b.).

**03 GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES**

Consider matters related to: Meetings of the assembly; per capita budget; standing rule amendments; operation of the Office of the General Assembly; statistics; publishing of reports; General Assembly Nominating Committee process; special committees; commissioners and advisory delegates credentials/leaves of absence.

**04 REVIEW OF BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES**

*Consider matters related to:* The report of the General Assembly Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies.

**05 MID COUNCILS ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Mid council boundaries; mid council-related referrals; the report of the Mid Council Commission.

**06 CHURCH POLITY**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (Chapters 1 and 3), Form of Government Chapters I, III–IV, VI (except as covered by the Mid Council Commission) with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; amendments to the Rules of Discipline with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice.

**07 CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to Chapter II of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; recruiting, enlistment of persons to service of church. Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

**08 AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION (A.I.) REVIEW**

*Consider matters related to:* The report of the General Assembly Task Force to Review Authoritative Interpretations.

**09 ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to Chapter V of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; matters dealing with relationships with, and attitudes toward, other religious movements or bodies; conversations with other Presbyterian denominations; nominations for ecumenical advisory delegates; nominations for delegations to corresponding churches; reports of corresponding bodies.

**10 MISSION COORDINATION**

*Consider matters related to:* Mission programs authorized by General Assembly; PC(USA) vision and mission goals; *Organization for Mission* and General Assembly Mission Council *Manual of Operations*; mission budget; audits; churchwide compensation.

**11 SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Concerns of church in national affairs; national military matters; matters relating to righteousness and justice of persons/organizations. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.

**12 IMMIGRATION ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* The church's response to U.S. immigration policies and related issues.

**13 CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to the Form of Government, Rules of Discipline, and Directory for Worship related to marriage and civil unions; referrals defining marriage.

**14 PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Peacemaking, international military affairs, and the arms race except matters touched upon by the Middle East Peacemaking Issues Committee; international matters; human rights; plight of refugees worldwide; international economic justice; global evangelism and education.

**15 MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Peacemaking, international military affairs and the arms race primarily involving the nations of the Middle East; Middle East monitoring committee; MRTI recommendations concerning Middle East nations.

**16 CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP**

*Consider matters related to:* Items concerning evangelism, outreach, and church growth as they relate to congregations and councils of the church; church transfers, PILP.

**17 THEOLOGICAL ISSUES & INSTITUTIONS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to the Directory for Worship and Chapter II of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; authority and interpretation of Scripture; Christian educators; theological institutions; celebration of Lord's Supper requests.

**18 CONFESSIONS OF THE CHURCH**

*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to *The Book of Confessions*. The report of the General Assembly Heidelberg Catechism Committee.

**19 REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES (ACC, ACL, COR)**

*Consider matters related to:* Review of the work of the General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committees as Scheduled [2012: ACC, ACL, COR] (See *Organization for Mission*, Section IV.D.2.).

**20 BOARD OF PENSIONS, FDN, PPC**

*Consider matters related to:* Report of Board of Pensions; business related to the church's pension, annuity, and medical plans; other forms of such programs, including government or private retirement programs; business related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

**21 HEALTH ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to:* Health, managed care, disabilities, abortion.

**Item 00-04**

[The assembly approved Item 00-04. See p. 40.]

**Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010), places in nomination the following persons for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee:**

Nominee	Diversity	Age	Synod of Residence
<b>Class of 2014</b>			
<b>Marta T. Rodriguez-Fonseca</b>	<b>HFR</b>	<b>56–65</b>	<b>Synod of Boriquen Puerto Rico</b>
<b>Class of 2016</b>			
<b>Judith E. North</b>	<b>WFR</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>Synod of Lakes and Prairies +</b>
<b>Class of 2018</b>			
<b>Bertram G. Johnson</b>	<b>BMR</b>	<b>36–45</b>	<b>Synod of Alaska- Northwest</b>
<b>Juanita D. Holley</b>	<b>B/NFR</b>	<b>56–65</b>	<b>Synod of Lincoln Trails</b>
<b>Yena Hwang</b>	<b>AFT</b>	<b>35–45</b>	<b>Synod of Mid-Atlantic</b>
<b>Judy Lussie (D)</b>	<b>AFR</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>Synod of the Pacific</b>
<b>Danny C. Murphy Sr.</b>	<b>BMT</b>	<b>56–65</b>	<b>Synod of South Atlantic</b>
<b>John M. Willingham</b>	<b>WMT</b>	<b>46–55</b>	<b>Synod of the Trinity</b>

***Rationale***

This slate of eight nominees represents the greater diversity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as mandated by F-1.0403 in the *Book of Order*.

If this slate is elected, the full membership of the General Assembly Nominating Committee will consist of 5 teaching elders, (1 female, 4 males), 9 ruling elders (6 females, 3 males), and 2 church members (1 female, 1 male).

The racial ethnic breakdown will be: 2 Asian American, 3 African American, 1 African American/Native American, 2 Hispanic/Latina, 1 Hispanic/Native American, and 7 Caucasian.

Three members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee are living with a disability.

KEY to abbreviations:

AFR=Asian American Female Ruling Elder  
 AFT=Asian American Female Teaching Elder  
 BMR=African American Male Ruling Elder  
 BMT=African American Male Teaching Elder  
 B/NFR=African American Female Ruling Elder  
 HFR=Hispanic/Latina Female Ruling Elder  
 WMT=Caucasian Male Teaching Elder  
 D=Disability  
 +=Moderator Appointment



**Item 01-01**

[The assembly approved Item 01-01. See p. 2.]

*Proposed Docket of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the proposed docket as follows:

**Proposed Docket  
220th General Assembly (2012)  
Pittsburgh, PA**

**Saturday, June 30:**

8:30–11:15	Riverside Conversations: Preassembly Workshops for Commissioners/Advisory Delegates Lunch Break
1:30p.m.	<b>220TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES</b> Worship Commissioning Service
3:00 p.m.	<b>BUSINESS MEETING 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stated Clerk’s Orientation</li> <li>• Committee on Local Arrangements</li> <li>• Moderator’s Report</li> <li>• General Assembly Nominating Committee Report</li> <li>• Assembly Committee on Business Referrals</li> <li>• Six Agency Video</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayer Recess
5:30 p.m.	Commissioner and Advisory Delegate Orientation to the Six Agencies (in the Exhibit Hall with a Group Dinner)
7:00 p.m.	Opening Prayer <b>BUSINESS MEETING 2</b> Moderator’s Election

**Sunday, July 1:**

10:00–Noon	Worship in Local Churches (to include lunch)
1:30 p.m.	NEW BUSINESS DEADLINE
2:00 p.m.	<b>BUSINESS MEETING 3</b> Stated Clerk’s Election General Assembly Mission Council Report
4:00–6:00 p.m.	Moderator’s Reception (2nd Floor Concourse)
6:00 p.m.	Group Dinner
7:30 p.m.	<i>Committee Meetings I</i>

**Monday, July 2:**

7:00 a.m.	OGA Breakfast with Worship—Convention Center, Hall D. Speaker Brian McLaren
9:30 a.m.	<i>Committee Meetings II</i> Lunch Break
1:30 p.m.	<i>Committee Meetings III</i> Dinner Break
7:30 p.m.	<i>Committee Meetings IV</i>

**Tuesday, July 3:**

8:30 a.m.	Worship
9:30 a.m.	<i>Committee Meetings V</i> Lunch Break
1:30 p.m.	<i>Committee Meetings VI</i>
Evening	Committees meet as needed (it is anticipated that all committees will be finished with business by 5:00 p.m.)

01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

**Wednesday, July 4:**

8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Committees Roundtable Discussions  
Lunch Break  
2:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 4**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Stated Clerk's Orientation II
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee Reports

Announcements  
5:30 p.m. Closing Prayer  
Recess  
Dinner Break  
7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 5**

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

Commissioning of New Missionaries  
Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Thursday, July 5:**

8:30 a.m. **BUSINESS MEETING 6**  
9:30 a.m. Opening Prayer

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee Reports

11:15 a.m. Worship  
Recess  
Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. **BUSINESS MEETING 7**

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

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
5:30 p.m. Recess  
Dinner Break  
7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 8**

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

Announcements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess

**Friday, July 6:**

8:30 a.m. **BUSINESS MEETING 9**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- GANC Report
- Assembly Committee Reports



11:15 a.m.	Worship Recess Group Lunch
1:30 p.m.	<b>BUSINESS MEETING 10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures</li> <li>• Ecumenical Greeting</li> <li>• Assembly Committee Reports</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayer
6:00 p.m.	Recess Group Dinner
7:30 p.m.	Opening Prayer <b>BUSINESS MEETING 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures</li> <li>• Ecumenical Greeting</li> <li>• Assembly Committee Reports</li> </ul> Announcements Closing Prayer Recess
<b>Saturday, July 7</b>	
9:00 a.m.	Opening Prayer <b>BUSINESS MEETING 12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures</li> <li>• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)</li> <li>• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)</li> <li>• Introduction of Presbytery of Detroit Committee on Local Arrangements</li> </ul> Closing Worship in Plenary
11:00 a.m.	

## Item 01-02

[The assembly approved Item 01-02 with amendment. See p. 2.]

### I. REFERRALS IN PROGRESS

#### A. *Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) Referral in Progress.*

*2010 Referral: Item 03-21. A Resolution to Adapt the Session Annual Statistical Report (SASR)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 201 of the printed version; pp. 220–21 of the electronic version).*

Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

#### B. *General Assembly Mission Council Referrals in Progress*

1. *Alternate Resolution to 2004 Referral: Item 04-12. Recommendation 2. That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council Office of Theology and Worship Undertake an Analysis of the Directory of Worship with the Goal of Evaluating Its Influence and Effectiveness in Guiding Sessions, Pastors, and Higher Governing Bodies in Planning and Conducting Worship That Is Authentically Reformed and Culturally Appropriate—From the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 86).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

2. *2006 Referral: Item 07-06, Recommendation 1.d., That the General Assembly Mission Council’s Office of Theology and Worship Consider Drafting a Report on Reformed Theology and Economic Justice, Especially Dealing with the Theological Language Appropriate to Address Social and Economic Justice—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Delegation to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches General Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16, 575–79).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

3. *2006 Referral: Item 13-03. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship to Undertake a Study of “Salvation and Sin,” and Report the Results of Its Study to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1101).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

4. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 5. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available Liturgical Resources Based on “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

5. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 6. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available the Historical Resources on Prayer and Worship That Underlie “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

6. *2008 Referral: Item 07-05. Ecumenical Policy Statement, Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly to Develop Materials Based on the Ecumenical Stance of the PC(USA) for Use with Local Congregations—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 14, 15, 516–26).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

7. *2008 Referral: Item 07-08. Mutual Recognition of Baptism with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministries Area, to Develop Congregational Study Guides for the Pastoral Recommendations: Tangible Expression of Mutual Recognition of Baptism and Make Readily Available to Congregations, Pastors, and Seminaries—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 14, 15, 527–31).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

8. *2008 Referral: Item 07-11. Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement, Recommendation 3.b. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council to Work with Presbyteries in Understanding This Agreement and Facilitation Their Partnership with Episcopal Dioceses—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 14, 15, 538–41).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

9. *2008 Referral: Item 09-08. Report, God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, Recommendation 2.m. That the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry Area, in Consultation with Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, Prepare and Distribute a User-Friendly Instrument Based on the Reformed Tenets of Our Faith for Helping Congregations Achieve Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Justice in Compensation and Other Employment Issues—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 897–923).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

10. *2008 Referral: Item 09-10. Report, The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming, Recommendation 3.b. Urge the “Restoring Creation” Program to Establish a Presbyterian Green Energy Fund, Which Would Help Congregations and Other Organizations in Our Church Reduce Their Carbon Footprint Through Investments in Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy Production, and Green-e Certified Carbon Offsets—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 934–58).*

*Interim Report:* Due to budgetary constraints, a Presbyterian Green Energy Fund has yet to be established, though there is a great interest in doing so. While conversations are underway to explore creation of such a fund, Environmental Ministries provides information to churches on how to lower their energy usage and take steps to become carbon neutral. In conjunction with the Presbyterian Hunger Program and other programs, a webpage devoted to climate change issues, including reducing energy in churches, was created in the fall of 2009 at <http://gamec.pcusa.org/ministries/environment/>. Environmental Ministries also directs churches interested in making large energy updates to loans available through the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

Anticipate final report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

11. *2008 Referral: Item 09-15. Report, Struck Down, But Not Destroyed: From Hurricane Katrina to a More Equitable Future, Recommendation 6. Urge the Presbyterian Foundation, in Collaboration with the General Assembly Mission Council, to Loan \$4 Million to Local Initiatives Support Corporation to Create a Low-Interest Revolving Loan Fund Available to Presbyterian Congregations, Presbyteries, and Coalitions in Which Church Entities Are Involved, in the Affected Gulf Re-*

gion for Development Loans to Support Construction and Rehabilitation of Affordable, Permanent Rental Housing and Mixed Housing Attached to Congregational Redevelopment, or to Fund Neighborhood Initiatives Organized by Community Development Corporations in Which a Presbyterian Congregation or Presbytery Is Involved—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 994–1009).

*Interim Report:* The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), on which representatives of the Presbyterian Foundation and New Covenant Trust Company are members, worked to promote investment in low-income housing by banks operating in areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina, and the communities where significant numbers of New Orleans residents moved.

Anticipate final report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

12. *2010 Referral: Item 08-04. Report, Toward an Understanding of Christian-Muslim Relations. Recommendation 2. In Consideration of the Need for a More Intentional and Engaged Approach to Christian-Muslim Relations, Call Upon the Church, Through Its Agencies and Governing Bodies, to Support Education for Christian-Muslim Relations Among Presbyterians, by Doing Items a. Through c.—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31, 32–33, 589–601).*

*2010 Referral: Item 08-04. Report, Toward an Understanding of Christian-Muslim Relations. Recommendation 3. Call Upon the Church, Through Its Agencies and Governing Bodies, to Support Further Theological Reflection Regarding Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, in Company with Muslims and Within the Christian Family, by Doing Items a. Through c.—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31, 32–33, 589–601).*

*2010 Referral: Item 08-04. Report, Toward an Understanding of Christian-Muslim Relations. Recommendation 4. Call Upon the Church, Through Its Agencies and Governing Bodies, to Support Presbyterians in the Practice of Faithful Witness with Muslims, by Doing Items a. Through g.—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31, 32–33, 589–601).*

*Response:* Work on 2010 referrals Item 08-04 recommendations 2, 3, and 4 must be deferred until a decision is made on hiring a staff person for Interfaith Relations Office in Theology Worship & Education.

13. *2010 Referral: Item 08-09. On Referring “Christians and Jews: People of God” and “Understanding Christian-Muslim Relations.” Recommendation. 1. Refer the Report from the Offices of Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship Entitled: ‘Christians and Jews: People of God,’ Back to the Office of Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship to Rewrite the Report After Broader Consultation to Include the National Middle East Presbyterian Caucus, PC(USA) Partner Churches and Agencies in the Middle East, Relevant Mission Networks of the PC(USA), the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy; 2. That Correspondence About This Report Between the National Middle East Presbyterian Caucus and the General Assembly Mission Council, and Between the Israel-Palestine Mission Network and the General Assembly Mission Council Be Sent to These Offices and Committee Working on the Revised Paper—From the Presbytery of San Francisco (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31, 33, 625–27).*

*Response:* An interim report has been submitted and can be found as Item 09-Info. The final response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

14. *2010 Referral: Item 09-NB. Convocation on Criminal Justice. Recommendation. That the PC(USA) Provide Up to \$10,000 in 2011 to Support a Broad Convocation of Interested Individuals, to Be Called by PHEWA, to Consider and Propose the Creation of a Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) Network on Criminal Justice for Education and Advocacy Ministries to the 220th General Assembly (2012) and Recommend a Funding Strategy—From the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 83, 705).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented at 221st General Assembly (2014).

15. *2010 Referral: Item 10-10. Report, Neither Poverty Nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church. Recommendation 2.e. Request the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to Convene an Appropriately Structured Discussion Among the Seminaries on the Matter of Compensation Ranges and Sharing Economic Burdens During Recession Periods, Reporting a Digest of Their Findings to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 35, 742–72).*

*Response:* A final response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014) and is expected to be a Social Involvement Report based on data from the survey of nonprofit and denominational groups.

16. *2010 Referral: Item 11-03. On Making Resources Available Regarding Destruction and Loss of Coastal Wetlands. Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Congregational Ministries Publishing, to*

*Work in Conjunction with the Presbytery of South Louisiana to Develop Resources on the Implications of Coastal Wetlands Loss for God's Creation and God's Community—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41, 810–12).*

*Response:* Final response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

17. *2010 Referral: Item 11-03. On Making Resources Available Regarding Destruction and Loss of Coastal Wetlands. Recommendation 3. Establish Financial Support for a Theological Wetlands Education Center in the Presbytery of South Louisiana for Presbyterians of All Ages to Learn to Be Stewards of the Wetlands and Proactive in Their Repair—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41, 810–12).*

*Response:* Final Response will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

18. *2010 Referral: Item 14-08. Breaking Down the Walls. Recommendation 3.e. Urges a Visit to Israel/Palestine by a High-Level Joint Delegation of Presbyterians (Including Representatives from the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and the General Assembly Mission Council) and Appropriate Counterparts in the American Ecumenical, Jewish, and Muslim Communities, with Costs Shared Among the Participating Faith Groups, for the Purpose of Identifying Opportunities for Positive Investment, with a Report Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Middle East Study Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 1021–1119).*

*Interim Report:* Preliminary conversations regarding positive investment in the West Bank and Gaza were held with representatives of the Presbyterian Foundation, related institutions, and a few congregations who expressed interest. A Compassion Peace & Justice Ministry Area trip to Israel and Palestine during November of 2011 also explored options. Further research and evaluation of the investment options will continue, with a final report being made to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

19. *2010 Referral: Item 13-11. On Strengthening the Peacemaking Program. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) Directs the General Assembly Mission Council, Through the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Peacemaking Program, to Appoint a Five-Person Steering Team, at Least One of Whom Shall Be a College Student or Other Young Adult, to Work with ACSWP and Peacemaking Program Representatives to Design and Implement a Broadly Participatory Four-Year Process to Do Items 2.a. Through 2.h.—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 67–69, 967–72).*

*Interim Report:* In response to this referral an interim report has been prepared that contains recommendations. It is Item 14-05, “Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness, an Interim Report.”

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy sought nominations throughout the church, consulted on priorities and prospectus developed in response to this action, and appointed a team of six persons, emphasizing relative youth and substantial international experience. The resulting group of four women and two men, (one Asian American, one African American, and four Caucasian Americans, two in their twenties, two in their thirties, and two in their fifties) has met several times and is presenting the interim report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) with final report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

### **C. Office of the General Assembly Referrals in Progress**

1. *2010 Referral: Item 10-10, Recommendations 2h and 2i. Neither Poverty Nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 35, and 324).*

Final response will be made to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

2. *1999 Referral: Commissioners' Resolution 99-9. An Annual Opportunity for Congregations to Hear from Racial Ethnic Minority Preachers (Minutes, 1999, Part I, p. 684).*

*Interim Report:* In response to this assembly action, the Office of the General Assembly has collected statistical information annually from the Clerk's Annual Questionnaire with the help of Research Services. Below is a compilation of the data received from 1999 through 2010.

Did your congregation invite a racial ethnic minister (other than your pastor if he or she is a racial ethnic minister) to preach during the year?

Year	Total Congregations	Total Reporting	% Reporting	Invite R/E Preacher ?
1999	11,216	9,524	84.9%	27.6%
2000	11,178	9,116	81.6%	29.1%
2001	11,141	8,581	77.0%	31.1%

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2002	11,097	8,190	73.8%	30.4%
2003	11,064	7,965	72.0%	30.0%
2004	11,019	7,165	65.0%	30.0%
2005	10,980	7,055	64.0%	29.0%
2006	10,903	6,977	64.0%	29.0%
2007	10,794	6,636	61%	31%
2008	10,820	7,570	70%	30%
2009	10,657	7,642	72%	31%
2010	10,536	6,945	66%	31%

If yes, on how many Sundays did a racial ethnic minister serve as preacher?

Year	Number Sundays	Mean Sundays	Median Sundays
1999	6749	2.83	1
2000	6397	2.62	1
2001	5890	2.46	1
2002	5567	2.42	1
2003	2275		
2004	1958	2.7	1
2005	1959	3	1
2006	1963	2.47	1
2007	1942	2	1
2008	2229	2.5	1
2009	2304	2.7	1
2010	2169	2	1

If no, when was the last time a racial ethnic guest preacher was asked?

Year	Number Responding	In the Last Year	2-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	> 9 Years	Never
2001	4298	20.2%	20.6%	11.9%	4.9%	15.3%	27.1%
2002	4085	20.1%	21.3%	12.4%	5.2%	14.6%	26.4%
2003	5376	16.0%	19.0%	11.0%	4.0%	9.0%	41.0%
2004	4687	17.0%	18.0%	13.0%	4.0%	8.0%	40.0%
2005	4852	19.0%	21.0%	15.0%	6.0%	10.0%	29.0%
2006	4798	15.0%	18.0%	13.0%	5.0%	9.0%	39.0%
2007	4407	14%	17%	14%	6%	9%	40%
2008	5201	14%	17%	14%	6%	10%	39%
2009	5223	14%	18%	13%	6%	11%	39%
2010	4756	13%	17%	14%	7%	11%	38%

II. FINAL RESPONSES TO REFERRALS

A. *Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns Final Responses to Referrals*

1. *2004 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Request the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, Following Review of Resources Currently Available to Meet the Needs of Clergywomen in the Call Process and in Pastorates, to Make Recommendations That Contribute to a Pro-active, Health-giving, Ministry to and Relationship with Our Clergywomen—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 77, 389–90).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 11-12, “A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters,” being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

2. *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies, Recommendation 3. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to Create a Permanent Joint Working Group on Women of Color in the Church, to Be Made Up of Two Members of ACREC and Two Members of ACWC, Appointed by the Leadership of Each Committee—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 11-13, “A Resolution to *Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God*,” being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

## **B. Board of Pensions Final Responses to Referrals**

1. *2010 Referral. Item 14-08. Recommendation 3.d.–e. Call on Denominational Agencies and Entities, Presbyteries, Congregations, and Individual Members to Invest Positively, After Due Vetting, in Sustainable Economic Development Projects for the West Bank and Gaza (That Do Not Support the Occupation) Sponsored By Palestinians or Jointly by Palestinians and Israelis in Equitable Partnership; Urge a Visit to Israel/Palestine by a High-Level Joint Delegation of Presbyterians (Including Representatives from the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and the General Assembly Mission Council) and Appropriate Counterparts in the American Ecumenical, Jewish, and Muslim Communities, with Costs Shared Among the Participating Faith Groups, for the Purpose of Identifying Opportunities for Positive Investment, with a Report Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1023 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* In part, the Board of Pensions Policy on Divestment and Affirmative Investment reads: “*Affirmative Investment*—The duties of care and loyalty apply equally as limitations on the purchase of securities. In addition, the separation of roles and responsibilities between the Board and our investment managers is breached when we begin telling our investment managers to actively purchase specific securities. At that point we become portfolio managers ourselves, and to date that is not a responsibility we have undertaken because it would impose additional regulatory burdens and administrative expenses on the Plan that we have chosen to avoid.”

With that policy in mind, a trip to the Middle East as contemplated in Recommendation 3.e. would be poor stewardship. The full Board of Pensions Policy on Divestment and Affirmative Investment is available on request from the corporate secretary of the Board of Pensions.

2. *2010 Referral. Item 18-12. Recommendation that the Board of Pensions Develop a Plan to Ensure That Funds from Any Relief of Conscience Churches Do Not Go to Fund Abortions Through Any Avenue (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1313 of the electronic version). [This referral was removed from the consent agenda and was sent to 20. Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundations, and Presbyterian Publishing Company as Item 20-13.]*

*Response:* The scope of such a plan would be far beyond the reach of the Board of Pensions. As contemplated by the 219th General Assembly (2010), such a plan would require that any dollar that passed through a Relief of Conscience employing organization be insulated from paying for an abortion at any time in the future.

While the Board of Pensions is vigilant to ensure that claims that may be for the elective termination of a pregnancy are not paid from the dues remitted by Relief of Conscience employing organizations to the Board of Pensions, the Board of Pensions has no control over funds expended by Relief of Conscience employing organizations for anything other than those dues. Dollars spent by Relief of Conscience employing organizations to purchase goods and services as varied as insurance, utilities, music, and communion supplies may be expended by their next holder for any legal purpose. The Board of Pensions has no means to control these many avenues through which funds from Relief of Conscience employing organizations may go to fund abortions.

3. *2010 Referral. Item 03-26, Recommendation 2. Strongly Urge All Employers of Governing Bodies and Related Entities to Update or Establish Policies, Procedures, and Practices Related to Sexual Misconduct Using the Guidelines Set Out in the Following Sexual Misconduct Manual, Published by the Office of the General Assembly. (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 227 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* The Board of Pensions’ policies on sexual and other misconduct were reviewed in 2010 and 2011 as part of the annual process of reviewing all employment policies, and it follows the intent of the Sexual Misconduct Manual published by the Office of the General Assembly.

4. *2010 Referral. Item 10-10, Recommendation 2.b. Request the Board of Pensions (BOP) to Require That Pension Dues Be Paid on All Effective Salary, Removing the Cap for Those Who Receive Higher Compensation (Minutes, Part I, p. 742 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* Internal Revenue Service guidelines determine the maximum pension accrual amount permitted under law, and the current pension dues of 11 percent of effective salary are already calculated up to that amount.

5. *2010 Referral. Item 10-10, Recommendation 2.d. Requested the Leadership of the Board of Pensions (BOP), the Presbyterian Foundation (FDN), the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC), as well as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, to Join in the Interagency Consultation of Recommendation 2.c. Above, and to Consider the Assembly’s Action on Compensation Within Their Own Boards, Reporting on Such Consideration in Their Agency Reports to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 742 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* The president and chief executive officer of the Board of Pensions participated in the interagency consultation requested in this referral. The Executive Committee of the Board of Pensions, which carries responsibility for the management of executive compensation, considered this item at its December 2010 meeting as requested by the assembly. The committee determined that the current compensation practices of the Board of Pensions to be appropriate.

The board notes that the last independent review committee of the Board of Pensions, elected by the 216th General Assembly (2004), included in its report a section on compensation that began by saying, “The Review Committee found that the BOP is honoring the General Assembly’s compensation guidelines and that compensation philosophy and administrative procedures are appropriate” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 1339).

6. *2010 Referral. Item 10-14. Call Upon the PC(USA) and Its Corporate Financial Entities, Synods, Presbyteries, Its Local Congregations, and Members to Be a Counter Voice to Usurious Practices, and to Prayerfully Consider Moving Money Out of the Financial Institutions Who Exploit Consumers and into Financial Institutions That Practice Responsible Consumer Lending Practices* (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 793 of the electronic version).

*Response:* The Board of Pensions actively supports the ministry of MRTI. Additionally, the Proxy Voting Guidelines of the Board of Pensions include a guideline to vote for proposals to review with respect to practices commonly deemed to be predatory, company credit card marketing, lending and collection practices, and the impact these practices have on borrowers, as long as such reports omit proprietary information and are prepared at reasonable cost. This guideline will be used to vote all proxies that have resolutions on lending practices.

7. *2010 Referral. Item 11-09. Recommendation 4. Request That the Six Entities of the General Assembly Work with the Associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment in Developing Their Six-Year Plan, to Help Implement Cultural Proficiency Policy at All Levels, and to Develop Training and Cultural-Sensitivity Programs* (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 858 of the electronic version).

*Response:* The Board of Pensions is and continues to be committed to a diverse workplace where staff of all backgrounds can feel comfortable and be effective in serving the church. The Board of Pensions is supportive of the principles of cultural proficiency, although our operating model is slightly different: Since the inception of the cultural proficiency initiative, the Board of Pensions

- incorporated the principles into its Mission Statement, Values, and Personnel Policies and Procedures;
- created and maintains a Learning Center that provides equal opportunity for professional development to all employees;
- has a talent development program, extensively used by its diverse population;
- offers tuition reimbursement, the amount of which was increased for 2012;
- performs an anonymous, biennial employee opinion survey last conducted in 2011, the results of which continue to point out that the staff feel that the board has done a good job in being sensitive to cultural issues;
- has employee demographics that indicate a strong representation by both females and minorities in its work population; and
- maintains an annual compliance education calendar that includes diversity training.

In discussing its approach with respective church committees, their responses have been favorable to the board’s efforts to model the values of cultural proficiency.

8. *2010 Referral. Item 11-09. Recommendation 5. Encourage the Entities to Support and Utilize the National Persons of Color Network Database, to Strengthen and Make It Effective* (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 858 of the electronic version).

*Response:* The Board of Pensions has actively supported the development of the National Persons of Color Network database.

9. *2010 Referral. Item 11-09. Recommendation 6. Direct All Entities to Keep Annual Statistics Demonstrating Compliance with the Church’s Minority Vendor Policy* (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 858 of the electronic version).

*Response:* The Board of Pensions does not track expenditures by minority vendor status and notes that discretionary purchasing is a de minimus part of its budget. The Board of Pensions does, however, seek vendors that are equal opportunity employers and encourages the use of vendors that are owned by women and minorities. The Board of Pensions has shared related data in an alternate format with various constituent groups when requested.

10. *2010 Referral. Item 11-09. Recommendation 7. Direct Each Entity to Demonstrate Affirmative Efforts to Increase Racial Ethnic and Female Employee Representation in the Senior Management Categories. When Filling Vacancies at This Level, There Must Be a Racial Ethnic Person and a Female Among the Final Candidates. If They Are Not Among the Final Candidates, the Entity Must Explain Why They Were Not Considered (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 858 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* The Board of Pensions continues to support diverse representation at all levels of its staff and management. To that end, these guidelines have been included in the board's recruiting efforts, both directly and through search firms.

11. *2010 Referral. Item 11-11, Directed the PC(USA) to Refrain from Holding National Meetings at Hotels in Those States Where Travel by Immigrant Presbyterians or Presbyterians of Color or Hispanic Ancestry Might Subject Them to Harassment Due to Legislation Similar to Arizona Law SB 1070/HB2162 (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 879 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* The Board of Pensions monitors the database maintained by the Office of Constitutional Services on the status of immigration legislation in the United States and uses that information when considering meeting locations.

12. *2008 Referral. Item 10-05, Recommendation 13. Board of Pensions Urged to Maintain Its Practice of Providing Benefits Parity for Treatment of Mental Illness (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 1092)*

*Response:* The Mental Health Parity Act of 2008 provides for parity in the application of aggregate lifetime and annual dollar limits on mental health benefits with dollar limits on medical/surgical benefits. A plan that does not impose an annual or lifetime dollar limit on medical and surgical benefits may not impose such a dollar limit on mental health benefits offered under the plan.

The Medical Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) complies in every way with the Mental Health Parity Act.

13. *2008 Referral. Item 15-01. Recommendation 1. Urge the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Expand the Current Definition of Medical Necessity as Found in Article XIII, Section 13.1 (K) of the Benefits Plan to Include Habilitative Services Such as Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Physical Therapy, Which Seek to Promote Healthy Growth and Improve Function for Children with Congenital Developmental Disabilities Such as Down's Syndrome and Autism and Report Back to the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 1359).*

*Response:* In the fall of 2008, following General Assembly, a taskforce was assembled to study the implications of expanded coverage for children with certain developmental disabilities. In addition to Board of Pensions staff members, the task force included the overture advocate, two physicians, and an outside attorney, all three with expertise in the field of developmental disabilities, the board's attorney, and the board's actuary. The range of experiences and professional credentials represented by the task force members was designed to ensure that the Board of Pensions looked at this coverage issue through the eyes of parents, educators, lawyers, clinicians, policymakers, and actuaries. The scope of work undertaken by this group early in 2009 included research and analysis that would provide a framework for determining: (1) which developmental disabilities should be covered; (2) the conditions under which medical coverage should be provided; and, (3) the amount of coverage that should be provided, including appropriate annual or lifetime maximums.

Published resources that guided some of this work included the early intervention guidelines under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the criterion used to establish disability under the Social Security Act, and various state statutes dealing with coverage for children with autism. It was particularly helpful that Highmark, the Board of Pensions' third-party claims processor, was concurrently involved in recasting coverage for many of their fully insured clients in order that they be in full compliance with a Pennsylvania statute mandating coverage for autistic children. Our actuary used both Board of Pensions specific data and more general statistical data on incidence rates and associated treatment cost to forecast the financial impact of expanded coverage to the Medical Plan.

The collaborative and committed work of the task force resulted in the presentation and subsequent approval by the Board of Pensions of a coverage proposal detailing the specific conditions covered and the coverage parameters. The expanded benefits became effective on January 1, 2010. Most affirming to the work of the task force and the resulting Plan changes was the unqualified support of the overture advocate and an unsolicited endorsement by Presbyterian for Disabilities Concerns with concurrence from the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association.

Managing and coordinating the care provided to children diagnosed with these developmental disabilities is a key component of the expanded coverage and has been addressed by ActiveHealth Management (AHM), the Board of Pensions' new health management vendor. The AHM is designing a program specific to the Board of Pensions that has as its focus coordinating and integrating all available services, both community- and school-based, in a way that is completely child-centered.

14. *2008 Referral. Item 15-02, Recommendation 1.-3. Directed the Board of Pensions to Provide Annually a Relief of Conscience Plan Report, and to Confirm Annually with Particular Churches Their Participation in the Relief of Conscience Plan; Beginning No Later Than June 2009, Provide an Annual Relief of Conscience Plan Report; Include This Relief of Con-*



science Plan Report in the Annual Report of the Board of Pensions and Make It Available on the Board of Pensions' Web Site (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 1362–63).

*Response:* The 2008 Annual Report, published to the Board of Pensions' Web site, Pensions.org, on May 13, 2009, includes a Relief of Conscience Plan report on page five. A copy of this Annual Report is incorporated into the Board of Pensions Report to the General Assembly and remains available at Pensions.org.

The Board of Pensions confirmed with particular churches their participation in the Relief of Conscience Plan in a letter dated June 5, 2009. The letter, sent to pastors and clerks of session, confirmed that the Board of Pensions had record of an action taken by the presbytery of jurisdiction to grant relief of conscience to that particular church.

### C. *Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Final Responses to Referrals.*

1. *2010 Referral: Item 03-25. Recommendation 2.a.(1) On Developing a Five-Year Plan to Reduce the Presbyterian Historical Society Annual Per Capita Budget by 10 Percent (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 204 of the print version, p. 226 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* A review of the last five years (2007–2011) of the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) per capita budget and spending indicates that actual per capita spending has been reduced by about 6.8 percent between 2007 and 2011. This is a result of a plan PHS has had in place involving effective cost control measures and supplementary funds development efforts. During those five years, the approved PHS Per Capita budget has decreased about 6.4 percent and PHS has under spent its approved annual per capita budget by an average of about 4 percent per year.

The plan will remain in place to assist PHS to continue to reduce its annual per capita spending and under spend its annual per capita budget as allocated through the present per capita budgeting process of the Office of the General Assembly.

*Rationale:* The mission of the Presbyterian Historical Society of PC(USA) is to collect, preserve, and share the Presbyterian history in the United States. It is part of the Office of General Assembly organization and is funded primarily out of the per capita budget of PC(USA). In 2011, the total PHS budget of \$2.3 million comprised \$1.9 million from per capita and \$0.4 million from other sources (annual fund, grants, endowments, bequests). The breakdown of the total PHS budget by mission function is 15 percent for collect, 35 percent for preserve, and 50 percent for share.

As reflected in the large portion of the budget for the share function, the PHS collection is a very active archive with more than 3,500 formal requests for records information each year. In addition, there are on-line “self service” inquiries via our web site and e-mail. We expect more than 60,000 web site visits in 2012 and more than 100,000 visits by 2014 as we add more access and documents online. The collection is large (more than 28,000 cubic feet) and growing 10 percent every five years. It comprises 85 percent council (church, presbytery, and synod), General Assembly and General Assembly entity records; 10 percent ecumenical body records; and 5 percent personal papers.

Over the last five years (2007–2011), PHS per capita spending has decreased about 6.8 percent—this in the midst of a growing archive, increased number and type of services, and about a 6.4 percent decrease in per capita budget. See chart below. Also see graph (in thousands of dollars) at [coga-final-response-to-referral-phs-actual-expenses.pdf](#) (see also p. 152).

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Approved Per capita Budget	\$2,050,692	\$1,782,697	\$1,934,270	\$1,865,357	\$1,919,243
Actual Expenditures	\$1,971,029	\$1,789,903	\$1,819,640	\$1,756,180	\$1,837,680
PHS Savings (under budget)	\$79,663	-\$7,206	\$114,630	\$109,177	\$81,563
% Saved (% under budget)	3.88%	-0.40%	5.93%	5.85%	4.3%

How has this been accomplished?

- a. Investment (through per capita reserve funds) in cost-saving changes to the physical plant, e.g. movable shelving, energy efficient windows, new roof. Also new cost controls and renegotiation of service contracts and vendor agreements.
- b. Use of new technology to enhance “self service,” e.g. on-line catalog, future placement of documents on-line.
- c. Effective Records Management program—preserve what is called for in the Records Retention schedule.
- d. Some reduced staffing (per capita funded staff down 10 percent [two full-time employees—FTEs] from 2007 level) and staff reorganization to carry out the mission of PHS more efficiently.
- e. Modest success in raising designated and undesignated gifts through PHS funds development efforts.

In using these “tools,” PHS has already developed a plan that reduced its per capita spending over the last five years by about 6.8 percent and under spent its annual budget by an average of about 4 percent per year. The plan will continue to be used to assist PHS to reduce its per capita spending and under spend its annual per capita budget as allocated through the present per capita budgeting process of the Office of the General Assembly.

2. *2010 Referral: Item 18-08: Approve and Delegate to the Appropriate Body a Review of and Possible Revisions to the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with Attention Specifically Given to the Roles and Responsibilities of the General Assembly Mission Council and Its Executive Director, and the Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk—From the Committee on Review of the PC(USA) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 394–95 of the printed version, pp. 1309–10 of the electronic version).*

*Response:* For response to this item, see Item 03-03, COGA recommendation to amend the *Organization for Mission* to clarify the roles of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council.

3. *2002 Referral: Item 02-01, Recommendation 6. COGA Prepare Evaluation of Biennial Assemblies After 219th General Assembly (2010) Through a Special Task Group or Committee Appointed by the Stated Clerk and Executive Director, Report to 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp.26, 159).*

*Response:* For response to this item, see Item 04-01, Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies recommendations.

#### **D. General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Final Responses to Referrals**

1. *2010 Referral: Item 08-01. Recommendation to refer the Covenant to Adopt and Implement the “Lund Principle” and Codicil to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, requesting a report with recommendations by the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Synod of the Northeast.*

*Response:* For response to this item, see Item 09-07, Recommendations Regarding Covenant to Adopt the Lund Principle.

2. *2008 Referral: Item 07-04. Recommendation 2.b. Instructing the OGA and GAMC to Convene Tables to Create Processes and Procedures for the Orderly Exchange of Ministers and the Orderly Transfer of Churches—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 513).*

*Response:* In response to this referral, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations appointed an implementation team to meet with the representatives from the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad (KPCA). The joint implementation team, upon the advice and counsel of Vocation staff of the PC(USA), adapted the existing Orderly Exchange of Ministers document currently developed under the Lutheran Reformed Formula of Agreement. Meetings were also held with the Board of Pensions and the KPCA general secretary to address issues related to participation in the Board of Pensions. Upon the advice and counsel of the Constitutional Services staff, processes for transfer of churches were developed. The joint implementation committee finalized the orderly exchange processes for ministers and congregations in December 2011, and the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations approved the processes and forwarded to the 220th General Assembly (2012) for information. [For text of the Orderly Exchange of Ministers document, see 01-02-gaceir-orderly-exchange-of-ministers.pdf; see also pages 153–64.]

#### **E. General Assembly Committee on Representation Final Responses to Referrals**

1. *2010 Referral: Comment on Item 05-19. Definition of Youth, Overture 90-18. General Assembly Committee on Representation Should Be Asked to Study the Current Age Groups and Nomenclature in Order to Have Consistency Among All Presbyterian Documentation and for the General Assembly Committee on Representation to Make Recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012). (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 226 of the print version, p. 339 of the electronic version)*

*Response:* The General Assembly Committee on Representation studied the matter and does not suggest further action. The ways that programmatic offices (mission and ministries) use age group designations vary according to their need. For example, the Youth Ministry office in the General Assembly Mission Council, describes categories of its constituencies by a number of different means: by school classification (elementary, middle, high and/or grade levels), by specific ages (chronological and developmental), and groupings thereof. Their usage bears almost no connection to the ways demographic data is reported by the assembly. When Research Services report survey data, the age groups used in reporting out are grouped in response to the data itself (using date of birth from respondents to assign to categories) and what is considered to be “useful and detailed enough” for the content of the survey. If the assembly were to direct offices to use one definitive set of age categories for all Presbyterian documents, it would put an artificial and constraining structure on a dynamic expression of mission and ministry. In addition, the financial implications could be sizable if updated materials were required.

2. *2010 Referral: Item 10-07. A Resolution to Explore the Intersection of Gender and Race—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. Direct the Office of General Assembly to Request That Presbyteries Explore Local Resources and Conduct Training in Cultural Proficiency on the Intersection of Race with Gender, Using as a Resource the*

*Book, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, in Recognition of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Decade of Hearing, Singing, and Celebrating the Voices and Contributions of Women of Color.* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 323 of the print version, p. 731 of the electronic version)

*Response:* The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) studied the intersections of race and gender and sponsored a workshop on the topic for mid council leaders at the Big Tent 2 meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, on July 1, 2011. The committee included intersectional content in its Biennial Synod COR Training Event, October 13–15, 2011. At the request of the GACOR, in December 2009, the report was distributed to all presbyteries and synods accompanied by a letter from the Stated Clerk commending it for study and highlighting its intersectional approach. In their normal functions, GACOR seeks to be a continuing resource to councils (above session) and in doing so, encourages training at every council level to encourage diverse and inclusive leadership and equip the body for full participation. The intersections of race and gender are one of the areas that GACOR has particular interest in, as evidenced by their efforts to report data measures in disaggregated forms to make the effects of these intersections more visible.

#### **F. General Assembly Mission Council (Communications and Funds Development Final Responses to Referrals)**

1. *2008 Referral: Item 08-03. Special Offerings Task Force Report, Recommendation 3. That the General Assembly Mission Council Commission an Advisory Task Force for Special Offerings to Review the Possible Role and Functions of Special Offerings and That the Advisory Task Force Make an Annual Report to the General Assembly Mission Council, an Interim Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010) and Final Recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Special Offerings Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 22, 23, 586–615).*

*Response:* The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has completed its work and is bringing a final report with recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) as Item 10-14 being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

2. *2010 Referral: Item 08-08. Review of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches/Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Recommendation 8.f. Request the Director of the General Assembly Mission Council's Mission Interpretation to Dedicate Pages in the Mission Yearbook to Prayer for the Ministry of WCRC/CANAAC Staff and Member Churches—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31–32, 614–24).*

*Response:* The 2012 *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* will encourage readers to pray for the ministry of WCRC/CANAAC by taking the following actions:

- Page 18 will feature a minute for mission on Christian Unity lifting up the ministry of organizations such as WCRC/CANAAC that promote ecumenism and the ministry of the whole church.
- The “Let us Pray” column on that page will list the Web site and staff of WCRC/CANAAC and encourage readers to also pray for member churches.

3. *2010 Referral: Item 09-07. On Affirming the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association. Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Develop and Apply a Funding Strategy for the Continuing Life of PHEWA Before the End of the Fiscal Year 2012 so That It May Continue to Implement GA-Mandated Ministries as an Entity of Networks and to Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) the Results—From the Presbytery of Elizabeth (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 81–82, 660–62).*

*Response:* An ECO account, E052108, was established for PHEWA. Initial approaches considered as a fund raising strategy for PHEWA:

- survey of congregations by research services,
- feasibility study, and
- “direct market” approach.

“Direct market” approach was recommended as the most cost effective way to quickly identify the interest level and capacity of potential donors to PHEWA. This recommendation was presented and approved by PHEWA board of directors. Several interpretive efforts for PHEWA work were launched.

Despite the efforts, the results of the “direct market” mailing were disappointing. The mailing went out on March 28, 2011, and by June 6, 2011—\$10,220, and by December 31, 2011—\$11,820 in donations could be directly attributed to the direct mail campaign. Anecdotal evidence would indicate however, that the mailing did raise awareness of the organization among many congregations, making future fundraising efforts more productive.

The results were discussed at length during PHEWA’s Annual Meeting in 2011. Several observations were made:

- Fundraising for PHEWA must be done in person by people who embrace the mission and have a heart for the ministry. Due to the specialized nature of this ministry, it is the living example of a PHEWA supporter that best communicates the story.

- The PHEWA is a kind of ministry that many individuals will say they support, especially when in group settings. However, for some reason, those public affirmations do not always result in private financial support. The PHEWA may need to be rebranded in order to better communicate the compelling witness of these ministries for individual donors.

- To be successful with potential donors, PHEWA interpreters must be able to communicate stories of transformational impact.

At this time, it seems counterproductive to continue utilizing direct response as a means to raise funds for PHEWA.

The GAMC Communications and Funds Development, PHEWA Executive Director, and PHEWA board members agreed that for the organization to be financially viable and sustainable that it will need to consider the following:

- Increase awareness for the mission and ministry of PHEWA,
- Raising funds will require a targeted and personal approach.

The following efforts have been identified as recommended for the PHEWA 2012 fund raising action plan.

- Follow up with individual board members who made pledges to the effort during the annual meeting in June 2011 to convert pledges to gifts.

- Create marketing materials, including a DVD and a new website.
- Develop referral sources to expand membership and increase donor prospects.

4. *2010 Referral: Item 09-09. On Reinstating “Criminal Justice Sunday” in the PC(USA) Planning Calendar, and Establishing an Office of Criminal Justice Issues. Recommendation. Reinstating Criminal Justice Sunday (a Sunday in February) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Planning Calendar, and Within All Calendar and Schedule Instruments—From the Presbytery of New York City (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 82–83, 666–70).*

*Response:* “Criminal Justice Sunday” has been reinstated in the *Presbyterian Planning Calendar*. It falls on Sunday, January 29, 2012; Sunday, January 27, 2013; and will fall on the last Sunday of January in future years. Worship resources for observing Criminal Justice Sunday are being provided electronically.

5. *2010 Referral: Item 09-19. Recommendation 7. Recommend That GAMC Executive Director Assign Staff to Be Responsible for the Dissemination of General Assembly Policies and Studies Developed by the Three Committees—From the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 84, 682–91).*

*Response:* The advisory and advocacy committees have been assigned a staff member from Communications and Funds Development (CFD) to assist with the dissemination of General Assembly policies and studies developed by these committees as part of CFD’s support for the Executive Director’s Office.

6. *2010 Referral: Item 10-11. Report, Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12). Recommendation 6.c. Urge the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to Include an Emphasis on Public Education in the Presbyterian Planning Calendar—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 36, 772–89).*

*Response:* “Public Education Sunday” has been added to the *Presbyterian Planning Calendar* starting with Sunday, August 25, 2013. *Worship resources for observing a special Sunday emphasis on public education, including a hymn, litany, and prayers, are being made available electronically by the Office of Child Advocacy and Networking (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/publiceducation/>).*

7. *2010 Referral: Item 11-NB. Recommendations Regarding Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster, Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Make a One-Time, Special Fundraising Appeal to Support the Long-Term Recovery of Communities Impacted by the Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 43–44, 881).*

*Response:* A web appeal and e-appeal are scheduled for April 2012. A designated-giving account has also been established and is promoted online and in print materials.

8. *2010 Referral: Item 13-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Restoration of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti. Recommendation 3. Request the Executive Director of the GAMC to Solicit Supplemental Funds to Complement Emergency Assistance by Supporting Medium and Long-Term Development Efforts to Strengthen Haitian Nongovernmental Organiza-*

tions (NGOs) and Grassroots Farmers' Groups so That They Can Implement and Manage Rehabilitation Programs of Their Own Conception and Design, Including Small Scale, Sustainable Agricultural Activities, and to Provide Them with Short- and Long-Term Technical Assistance to Help Them Upon Request (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 69–70, 973–76).

*Response:* Several pre-existing designated-giving accounts managed by the Presbyterian Hunger Program are achieving this objective. These accounts are H000014, H003215, H000020, and H000007.

9. *2010 Referral: Item 19-01. On Designating May 1 Every Year as a Day of Prayer for Healing—From the Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 1361).*

*Response:* “Health Awareness Day and Prayer for Healing” has been added to the *Presbyterian Planning Calendar*. It falls on Sunday, February 19, 2012; Sunday, February 17, 2013; and will fall on a Sunday in mid-February in future years. The Presbyterian Health Network, a volunteer ministry network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA), provides prayer and worship resources as a part of its annual Health Awareness Sunday packet, available electronically (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/phewa/pdfs/health-awareness-sunday-2011.pdf>).

### **G. General Assembly Mission Council, Executive Director's Office**

1. *2008 Referral: Item 09-08. Report, God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, Recommendation 2.j. That the Human Resources Department and the Offices of Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and Other Appropriate Entities, Participate in the PC(USA)'s Goal of Assuring Gender Pay Equity by Conducting a Pay Equity Study Covering the Employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly and Report Results to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 897–923).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by “Gender Pay Equity Study,” below.

The General Assembly Mission Council's Human Resources Department and the offices of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women conducted a pay equity study covering the employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns was consulted during the process.

*General Assembly Mission Council, Gender Pay Equity Study Executive Summary, November 30, 2011*

#### **A. Overview**

In 2010 the following referral of action was submitted from the 219th General Assembly (2010) for action by the Executive Director's Office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):

*2008 Referral: Item 09-08. Report, God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, Recommendation 2.j. That the Human Resources Department and the Offices of Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and Other Appropriate Entities, Participate in the PC(USA)'s Goal of Assuring Gender Pay Equity by Conducting a Pay Equity Study Covering the Employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly and Report Results to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 897–923).*

At the direction of the Executive Director's Office of the GAMC, the Human Resources Department of the GAMC conducted a Gender Pay Equity Study using the following methodology:

- Data used was as of August 31, 2011.
- Data used included Louisville-based employees (including deployed staff) for GAMC in regular full-time and part-time positions.
- Part-time employee salaries were adjusted to full-time equivalent.
- Data cuts compared pay of racial ethnic females on both the basis of salary grades and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) classification, as follows:
  - Pay by EEO of females to males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic females;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females compared to racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females to non-racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females to all males;
  - Pay by salary grade of females to males;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic females;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic males;

—Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to all males.

- Where a detailed analysis showed a higher percentage of pay for females in specific EEO classifications and individual job grade levels, no further analysis was done.
- In cases where there was a 5 percent or greater percentage of females paid lower in a specific EEO classification or individual job grade level, a comparative review of average length of service was conducted.
- Average length of service was calculated by adding tenure in full years for all employees in a specific job group and dividing it by total headcount in that group without regard to years of service (i.e., tenure was not counted for employees with less than one year of service, but their headcount was included for purposes of computing the average).

A detailed analysis of the data cuts revealed the following:

#### B. EEO Classifications

1. In the GAMC, females comprised 60 percent of the workforce as of August 31, 2011. There were a total of 232 females, sixty-seven of whom were racial ethnic females in the seven EEO classifications used by GAMC, as follows:

	Females	Racial Ethnic Females
Administrative Support Workers	109	39
Craft Workers	0	0
Operatives	1	0
Professionals	91	22
Laborers & Helpers	1	0
First/Mid-Level Officials & Managers	27	6
Executive/Senior-Level Officials & Managers	3	0

2. *Pay by EEO of Females to Males:* In this report, the pay of 232 females was compared to that of 105 males in all seven EEO classifications. Overall, the pay was 5.03 percent higher for females than males. The Professional classification was the only one in which pay was lower for females, and in this classification pay for females, on average, was less than that for males by 5.23 percent. Pay for females was 18.59 percent higher than for males in the Administrative Support Workers classification; 1.78 percent higher in the First/Mid-Level O&M classification, and 4.96 percent higher in the Executive/Senior-Level O&M classification. The overall average years of service was approximately eleven years for females and approximately eight years for males. There are many factors that could influence a 5.23 percent higher rate of pay for males with less overall years of service in the Professional classification, which only a review of files and work history could provide.

3. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Females:* The sixty-seven racial ethnic females were compared in this report to 165 non-racial ethnic females. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females in all EEO classifications was 99.41 percent of that for non-racial ethnic females. Pay for racial ethnic females was higher in all three classifications than that for non-racial ethnic females, except for the First/Mid-Level O & M classification where pay for a racial ethnic female was 94.89 percent of that for non-racial ethnic females (5.11 percent less). Further analysis of this job group revealed that the average length of service for racial ethnic females was nine years, compared to over twelve years of service, on average, for the non-racial ethnic females. This could account for the 5.11 percent difference in pay.

4. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Racial Ethnic Males:* The sixty-seven racial ethnic females were compared in this report to twenty-one racial ethnic males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 3.31 percent higher than that for racial ethnic males. In the individual categories, pay for racial ethnic females was 24.72 percent higher than that for racial ethnic males in the Administrative Support Workers category; 7.93 percent less than that for racial ethnic males in the Professionals category, and 6.85 percent less than that for racial ethnic males in the First/Mid-Level O & M category. The average length of service for racial ethnic females in the Professionals classification was approximately twenty one years, compared to approximately nine years for racial ethnic males. The average years of service for racial ethnic females in the First/Mid-Level O&M classification was nine years, compared to approximately seven years for racial ethnic males. A more in-depth review of files and work history would be required to analyze the differences further.

5. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Males:* The sixty-seven racial ethnic females were compared in this report to eighty-four non-racial ethnic males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 3.54 percent higher than that for non-racial ethnic males. In the category of Administrative Support Workers, pay for racial ethnic females was 16.14 percent higher than that of non-racial ethnic males; 3.75 percent less than that for non-racial ethnic males in the Professionals category, and 1.77 percent less than that for non-racial ethnic males in the First/Mid-Level O & M category.

6. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to All Males:* The sixty-seven racial ethnic females were compared in this report to 105 total males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 3.43 percent higher than that for all males. In the

category of Administrative Support Workers, pay for racial ethnic females was 20.43 percent higher than that for all males; 5.84 percent less than that for all males in the Professionals category, and 4.31 percent less than that for all males in the First/Mid-Level O & M category.

### C. *Salary Grade Levels*

The GAMC has twenty-three salary grade levels, “CH – Z”. The following analyzes pay by these levels as follows:

1. *Pay by Salary Grade of Females to Males*: Out of the nineteen grade levels where there were both females and males, eleven of those levels show females paid at a higher salary, on average, than their male counterparts. The highest of these was salary level “GH” where females were paid 11.32 percent higher than males. Of the eight remaining salary levels, males were paid higher than females, on average. In three of those that difference was 5 percent or higher. Further analysis of these three is as follows:

a. *Salary Level CH*: Four males in this salary level are paid, on average, 6.88 percent higher than the one female. The length of service for two of the four males is less than six months. The average tenure of the other two is about fifteen years, which is higher than the twelve years of service for the one female. This could account for the 6.88 percent differential overall.

b. *Salary Level EH*: There were seven employees in this salary level—four females and three males. Females are paid 5.79 percent less than their male counterparts, on average. Only one female and one male have been employed for more than six months. The female has been employed twenty years and the male for eleven years. A more detailed review of the files and work history would be needed to explain the salary difference overall.

c. *Salary Level O*: There were twenty-eight females and twelve males in this salary level. On average, females were paid 5.38 percent less than their male counterparts. The average length of service for females was approximately nine years and for males was approximately nine years. A more detailed review of files and work history would be needed to explain the salary difference overall.

2. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Females*: There were no racial ethnic females in eight of these salary grade levels (“EH”, “N” and “U” through “Z”) as of August 31, 2011. There were non-racial ethnic females in all salary grade levels except for “CH”. Of the fourteen salary grade levels where there were both racial ethnic and non-racial ethnic females, racial ethnic females overall were paid 1.67 percent higher, on average, than non-racial ethnic females. In ten out of fourteen salary grade levels, racial ethnic females were paid higher, on average, than non-racial ethnic females, and salary grade level “Q” is the only one of the remaining four levels where female minorities were paid less than non-racial ethnic females by 5 percent or more (5.91 percent). Further analysis of salary grade level “Q” revealed that the average length of service for racial ethnic females was eleven years compared to approximately fourteen years of service, on average, for the non-racial ethnic female group. This, plus the fact that one of the two racial ethnic females had been employed less than one year, could explain the difference in pay.

3. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Racial Ethnic Males*: There are twenty-one racial ethnic males in eleven of the twenty-three salary grade levels. Of the nine salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and racial ethnic males, racial ethnic females overall are paid 2.13 percent higher, on average than racial ethnic males. In five of the nine salary grade levels, racial ethnic females are paid higher, on average, than racial ethnic males. In salary grade level “GH” racial ethnic females are paid 19.14 percent higher than racial ethnic males. In salary grade levels “CH” and “O” racial ethnic females are paid 6.56 percent and 10.04 percent less, respectively, than racial ethnic males. Further analysis of these two salary grade levels revealed the following:

a. *Salary Level “CH”*: There is one racial ethnic female with twelve years of service in this level and one racial ethnic male with thirteen years of service. A more detailed review of the files and work history is required to determine the reasons for the pay differential between the two.

b. *Salary Level “O”*: There were seven racial ethnic females with an average length of service of approximately seven years in this level, and five racial ethnic males with an average length of service of approximately nine years. Further review of files and work history is required to understand the reasons behind the 10.04 percent difference.

4. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Males*: There are eighty-four non-racial ethnic males in nineteen of the twenty-three salary grade levels. Of the fourteen salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and non-racial ethnic males, racial ethnic females overall are paid 3.29 percent higher than non-racial ethnic males. In eight of the fourteen salary grade levels, racial ethnic females are paid higher, on average, than non-racial ethnic males. In salary grade levels “GH” and “LLH” racial ethnic females are paid 21.47 percent and 11.65 percent, respectively, more than non-racial ethnic males. Salary grade level “CH” is the only one of the remaining levels where female minorities are paid less than non-racial ethnic males by 5 percent or more (6.99 percent). Further review of files and work history is required to understand the difference.

5. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to All Males*: There are 105 total males in nineteen of the twenty-three salary grade levels. Of the fourteen salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and total males, racial ethnic females overall are paid 2.73 percent higher than their male counterparts. In seven of the fourteen salary grade levels, racial ethnic females are paid higher, on average, than all males. In salary grade levels “GH” and “LLH” racial ethnic females are paid 20.3 percent and 11.65 percent higher, respectively, than all males. In salary grade levels “CH” and “O” racial ethnic females are, on average, paid 6.78 percent and 7.06 percent less, respectively, than all males. Further analysis revealed that:

a. *Salary Level “CH”*: See comments above in section C.1.a “Pay by Salary Grade of Females to Males.”

b. *Salary Level “O”*: The average length of service for racial ethnic females in this level is approximately seven compared to approximately nine years of service for all males in this level. The higher length of service for males could explain the salary difference between the two demographic groups.

#### D. Summary

Overall, the comparisons of pay for females in all EEO classifications and salary grades shows positive positioning. In many comparisons average pay for females was greater than that of their counterparts. In those comparisons where their average pay was less, average length of service could be the factor accounting for the difference in some cases. There are several factors other than length of service which could account for pay differences, such as:

- Recent promotions,
- Long tenure in position(s) with lower pay range,
- Performance,
- Overall work history,
- Pay movement which lagged growth in market, etc.

Where differences in pay could not be fully explained through the above analysis, additional reviews of personnel files and work histories should be conducted.

*Office of the General Assembly Gender Pay Equity Study, Executive Summary, November 30, 2011.*

#### A. Overview

In 2010 the following referral of action was submitted from the 219th General Assembly (2010) for action by the Executive Director’s Office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):

*2008 Referral: Item 09-08. Report, God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, Recommendation 2.j. That the Human Resources Department and the Offices of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, and Other Appropriate Entities, Participate in the PC(USA)’s Goal of Assuring Gender Pay Equity by Conducting a Pay Equity Study Covering the Employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly and Report Results to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 897–923).*

At the direction of the Executive Director’s Office of the GAMC, the Human Resources Department of the GAMC conducted a Gender Pay Equity Study on behalf of the Office of the General Assembly (“OGA”) using the following methodology:

- Data used was as of August 31, 2011.
- Data used included Louisville-based employees (including deployed staff) for OGA in regular full-time and part-time positions.
- Part-time employee salaries were adjusted to full-time equivalent.
- Data cuts compared pay of Racial Ethnic females on both the basis of salary grades and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) classification, as follows:
  - Pay by EEO of females to males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic females;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females compared to racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females to non-racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by EEO classification of racial ethnic females to all males;
  - Pay by salary grade of females to males;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic females;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to non-racial ethnic males;
  - Pay by salary grade of racial ethnic females compared to all males.



- Where a detailed analysis showed a higher percentage of pay for females in specific EEO classifications and individual job grade levels, no further analysis was done.
- In cases where there was a 5 percent or greater percentage of females paid lower in a specific EEO classification or individual job grade level, a comparative review of average length of service was conducted.
- Average length of service was calculated by adding tenure in full years for all employees in a specific job group and dividing it by total headcount in that group without regard to years of service (i.e., tenure was not counted for employees with less than one year of service, but their headcount was included for purposes of computing the average).

A detailed analysis of the data cuts revealed the following:

B. *EEO Classifications:*

1. In the OGA, females comprised 73 percent of the workforce as of August 31, 2011. There were a total of forty-nine females, fifteen of whom were racial ethnic females in the five EEO classifications used by OGA, as follows:

	Females	Racial Ethnic Females
Administrative Support Workers	21	9
Professionals	10	2
Laborers & Helpers	0	0
First/Mid-Level Officials & Managers	14	2
Executive/Senior-Level Officials & Managers	4	2

2. *Pay by EEO of Females to Males:* In this report, the pay of forty-nine females was compared to that of eighteen males in all five EEO classifications. Overall, the pay was 4.08 percent higher for females than males. There were two classifications in which the average pay for females was less than that of males—Professionals (-1.42 percent) and Executive/Senior Level O & M (-17.5 percent). Pay for females was 30.57 percent higher than for males in the Administrative Support Workers classification, and 4.68 percent higher in the First/Mid-Level O&M classification. In the Executive/Senior Level O & M classification, the overall average years of service was approximately eleven years for females and approximately fifteen years for males. The higher average tenure of males in this classification could influence the higher rate of pay for males in this classification, but a more thorough review of files and work history would be required to understand all factors supporting the difference.

3. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Females:* The fifteen racial ethnic females were compared in this report to thirty-four non-racial ethnic females. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females in all EEO classifications was 4.03 percent higher than that for non-racial ethnic females. Pay for racial ethnic females was particularly higher (31.61 percent) in the Professionals classification. In the Administrative Support Workers classification racial ethnic females were paid less than non-racial ethnic females by 5.71 percent and racial ethnic females were paid 13.49 percent less than non-racial ethnic females in the First/Mid-Level O & M classification. Further analysis of the Administrative Support Workers group revealed that the average length of service for racial ethnic females was fourteen years while tenure for non-racial ethnic females was approximately fifteen years. This difference may account for the pay difference between these two groups. Further analysis of the First/Mid-Level O & M classification revealed that the average length of service for racial ethnic females was approximately fourteen years, compared to eight years of service, on average, for the non-racial ethnic females. Further analysis will also be needed to understand the pay differential in this classification.

4. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Racial Ethnic Males:* The fifteen racial ethnic females were compared in this report to five racial ethnic males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 4.06 percent higher than that for racial ethnic males. Pay was also higher for racial ethnic females in all individual categories, with the highest positive difference (12.39 percent) in the First/Mid-Level O & M classification.

5. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Males:* The fifteen racial ethnic females were compared in this report to thirteen non-racial ethnic males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 7.5 percent higher than that for non-racial ethnic males. In the category of Administrative Support Workers, pay for racial ethnic females was 26.20 percent higher than that of non-racial ethnic males and 41.45 percent higher than non-racial ethnic males in the Professionals classification. On the other hand, average pay for racial ethnic females was 21.65 percent less than non-racial ethnic males in the First/Mid-Level O & M classification, and 16 percent less than non-racial ethnic males in the Executive/Senior Level O & M classification. The average years of service is about three years for both racial ethnic females and non-racial ethnic males in the First/Mid-Level O & M classification. The average years of service is approximately fourteen for racial ethnic females in the Executive/Senior Level O & M classification and approximately fifteen for non-racial ethnic males. A further review of files and work history is needed to understand the pay differences in both these classifications.

6. *Pay by EEO of Racial Ethnic Females to All Males*: The fifteen racial ethnic females were compared in this report to eighteen total males. Overall, the pay for racial ethnic females was 6.04 percent higher than that for all males. In the category of Administrative Support Workers, pay for racial ethnic females was 26.20 percent higher than that for all males, and 18.59 percent higher for females than all males in the Professionals classification. The same pay differential exists in the Executive/Senior Level O & M classification as identified in B-5 above.

### C. *Salary Grade Levels*

The OGA has ten salary grade levels, “13–22”. The following analyzes pay by these levels as follows:

1. *Pay by Salary Grade of Females to Males*: Overall average pay for females was .60 percent less than that for males. Out of the eight grade levels where there were both females and males, four of those levels show females paid at a higher salary, on average, than their male counterparts. The highest of these was salary level “16” where females were paid 12.07 percent higher than males. Of the four remaining salary levels, males were paid higher than females, on average. In two of those that difference was 5 percent or higher. Further analysis of these two is as follows:

a. *Salary Level “19”*: In this salary range, one male is paid 8.61 percent higher, on average, than nine females. The male’s average length of service is three years compared to the approximately nine years of tenure for the females. A further review of files and work history is needed to understand this pay difference.

b. *Salary Level “21”*: There were two males and two females in this salary grade level and the females are paid, on average, 10.94 percent less than their male counterparts. Only one female and one male have been employed for more than six months. The other female has a slightly longer tenure (eleven years) compared to that of the male (approximately ten years). A more detailed review of the files and work history is needed to explain the difference in average pay.

2. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Females*: There were no racial ethnic females in three of these salary grade levels (“11,” “16” and “22”) as of August 31, 2011. There were non-racial ethnic females in all salary grade levels. Of the seven salary grade levels where there were both racial ethnic and non-racial ethnic females, racial ethnic females overall were paid 2.47 percent higher, on average, than non-racial ethnic females. In two of the seven salary grade levels racial ethnic and non-racial ethnic females are paid at par (100 percent), and in four of the seven levels, racial ethnic females were paid higher, on average, than non-racial ethnic females. In only one salary grade level (“14”) were racial ethnic females paid less (by 10.79 percent) than non-racial ethnic females. Further analysis of this grade level revealed that the average years of service for racial ethnic females was fifteen, compared to an average tenure of twenty-three years for the non-racial ethnic female group. This difference in tenure could account for the average pay differential.

3. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Racial Ethnic Males*: There are five racial ethnic males in three of the ten salary grade levels. Of the two salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and racial ethnic males, racial ethnic females overall are paid 3.42 percent lower, on average than racial ethnic males. In salary grade level “15” that differential is 10.81 percent lower average pay for racial ethnic females compared to racial ethnic males. Further analysis of salary grade level “15” revealed that the average tenure for racial ethnic females was approximately fourteen years, compared to less than eight years for the one racial ethnic male in this level. An additional review of files and work history is required to understand the difference.

4. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to Non-Racial Ethnic Males*: There were thirteen non-racial ethnic males in nine of the ten salary grade levels. Of the seven salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and non-racial ethnic males, racial ethnic females overall were paid 12.88 percent higher than non-racial ethnic males. In salary level “15” the difference was as great as 23.42 percent in favor of the racial ethnic females. In salary level “18” that difference in favor of the racial ethnic females was as high as 53.84 percent. There were three grade levels where pay was on par (100 percent) and there were no levels where racial ethnic females were paid less on average than their non-racial ethnic male counterparts.

5. *Pay by Salary Grade of Racial Ethnic Females to All Males*: There is a total of eighteen males in nine of the ten salary grade levels. Of the seven salary grade levels where there are both racial ethnic females and racial ethnic and non-racial ethnic males, racial ethnic females overall are paid 5.21 percent higher than all males. In four of the salary grade levels, males are paid on par (100 percent) with racial ethnic females, and in no grade levels were males paid higher than racial ethnic females. In salary grade level “18” racial ethnic females were paid 24.93 percent higher than the all-male group.

### D. *Summary*:

Overall, the comparisons of pay for females in all EEO classifications and salary grades show positive positioning. In many comparisons average pay for females was on par or greater than that of their counterparts. In those comparisons

where their average pay was less, average length of service could be the factor accounting for the difference in some cases. There are several factors other than length of service which could account for pay differences, such as:

- Recent promotions,
- Long tenure in position(s) with lower pay range,
- Performance,
- Overall work history,
- Pay movement which lagged growth in market, etc.

Where differences in pay could not be fully explained through the above analysis, additional reviews of personnel files and work histories should be conducted.

2. *2008 Referral: Item 09-12. Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA), Recommendation 1. Create a Task Force to Design a Mechanism for the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the Church That Will (a) Assess the Presence, Participation, and Effectiveness of Women at All Levels of the PC(USA), Both Elected and Employed, (b) Explore and Analyze Attitudes About Women in Leadership, and (c) Describe the Treatment of Women in Leadership Positions, Including How They Are Compensated as Compared with Men—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 961–64).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 10-15, “Design for a Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA),” being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

The Status of Women Task Force was created in 2009 and held its first meeting in 2010. The task force has designed a mechanism for studying the presence, participation, and effectiveness of women at all levels of the PC(USA). The study proposed will analyze the attitudes of women in leadership, describe their treatment, and explore how they are compensated as compared to men.

3. *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies, Recommendation 2. Request the Moderator, Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council to Communicate with Congregations, Presbyteries, and Synods, Seminaries, Campus Ministries, and Conference Centers Asking Them to Recognize the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and Incorporate It in Worship, Conferences, Training Events, and Other Activities—From Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).*

*Response:* The Moderator, the Stated Clerk, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council have invited congregations, presbyteries, mid councils, seminaries, and leaders and members across the church to recognize the “Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.”

4. *2010 Referral: Item 09-19. Recommendation 2. Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), in Formal Consultation with Each of the Two Advocacy Committees, to Review and Revise the Scope of Responsibilities of Each of the Advocacy Committees, and on This Basis Consider How Best to Provide Staff Services—From the Advocacy and Advisory Review Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 84, 682–91).*

*Response:* The executive administrator in the General Assembly Mission Council’s Executive Director’s Office held one consultation each with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to discuss the scope of responsibilities for the committees and the associate for advocacy support and the needs of the committees. The committees indicated that their work had increased in recent years. The executive administrator reported that funding additional staff positions to support the committees would not be possible due to the challenges facing the mission and per capita budgets. Although the two committees now share an associate for advocacy support and an administrative assistant, the committees expressed satisfaction with the performance of the staff and agreed to continue with the current staffing.

5. *2010 Referral: Item 09-19. Recommendation 3. Direct That a Formal Consultation Process Be Used in the Hiring of the Associate(s) for the Advocacy Committees Similar to the Search Process Used for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s (ACSWP’s) Coordinator—From the Advocacy and Advisory Review Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 84, 682–91).*

*Response:* The executive administrator consulted with members of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) throughout the process used to hire the associate for advocacy support, including the development of the position description. One representative from each of the advocacy committees served on the interview team. The team reviewed application materials from individuals, conducted interviews, and made a recommendation to the executive administrator for consideration.

The process used to hire the associate for advocacy support is similar to the one used to hire the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and was consistent with the GAMC *Manual of Operations* and the GAMC Employee Handbook.

6. *2010 Referral: Item 10-10. Report, Neither Poverty No Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church. Recommendation 2.c. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Convene the Leadership of All Six Agencies Related to the General Assembly to Review Together the Fourteen Current Principles of Compensation in the “Report from the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Churchwide Compensation” (213th General Assembly (2001); Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 558–59) and to Explore the Possibility of Setting Ratios for Compensation in Order to Promote Greater Covenantal Unity Within Our One Church and in Our Mission Together—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 35, 742–72).*

*Response:* On April 20, 2011, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council convened the leadership of the six General Assembly agencies for review of the fourteen current principles of compensation in the “Report from the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Churchwide Compensation” (213th General Assembly (2001); *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 558–59).

Each agency shared aspects of its compensation programs, the fourteen principles, and how they have been applied in practice. The consensus was that the principles provide good, biblically, theologically, and ethically based guidance and at the same time appropriate human resource standards that have enabled the agencies to attract, retain, and fairly compensate qualified talent for the work of each agency in service to the church.

The leaders of the six General Assembly agencies also discussed possible ratios for compensation. The proposal to set ratios has been studied by task forces, committees, and boards and has been rejected by the General Assembly. The consensus was that setting ratios would be ill-advised and not in the best interest of the mission of the church. Compensation, to be fair and effective, is much more complex than a single ratio. Leadership of the six agencies agreed that the fourteen principles are a more comprehensive and sound approach to setting compensation rates and policies than setting ratios.

The GAMC’s current compensation practices are designed to align with the fourteen current principles of compensation and to provide good stewardship of the church’s financial resources that reward and fairly compensate staff at all levels.

The GAMC has developed a new compensation program for implementation in 2013 and the program is in compliance with the fourteen principles. The GAMC applies principles of economic justice in the way it administers salaries and benefits to all of its employees.

7. *2010 Referral: Item 11-09. A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recommendation 7. Each Entity Must Demonstrate Affirmative Efforts to Increase Racial Ethnic and Female Employee Representation in the Senior Management Categories. When Filling Vacancies at This Level, There Must Be a Racial Ethnic Person and a Female Among the Final Candidates; if They Are Not Among the Final Candidates, the Entity Must Explain Why They Were Not Considered—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 42, 857–78).*

*Response:* The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) demonstrated affirmative efforts to increase racial ethnic and female employee representation in senior management categories. The GAMC filled two senior management positions in 2010–2011. Female and racial ethnic candidates were considered for both positions. An African American male was hired for one of these two positions.

The search and appointment process for the two senior management positions was guided by, and in accordance with, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s General Assembly Mission Council Employee Handbook.

8. *2010 Referral: Item 18-08. Regarding Review and Revision of the Organization for Mission Regarding Responsibilities of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and Its Executive Director, and the Office of the General Assembly and Stated Clerk. Recommendation 1. Approve and Delegate to the Appropriate Body a Review of and Possible Revisions to the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with Attention Specifically Given to the Roles and Responsibilities of the General Assembly Mission Council and Its Executive Director, and the Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk—From the Committee on Review (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 1309–10).*

*Response:* The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) responded to this in II.C.2. above, which referred to Item 03-03, COGA recommendation to amend the *Organization for Mission* to clarify the roles of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council.

#### **H. General Assembly Mission Council (Mission Ministry) Final Responses to Referrals**

1. *2003 Referral: Item 10-06. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Urge the General Assembly Mission Council, Congregational Ministries Division, to Develop and Produce Processes and Materials for the Incorporation and*

*Reception of New Adult Members Based on The Study Catechism (Full Version)—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 22, 565).*

*Response:* This is proceeding through revitalized efforts on adult catechumenate. The following website contains information and event registration: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/worship/whatwedo-catechumenate/>

2. *2006 Referral: Item 10-05. On Teen Suicide and Self-Injury—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 916–19).*

*Response:* The Office of Ministries with Youth, GAMC, is working to highlight the issues surrounding teen suicide and self-injury and provide assistance to congregations, youth workers, parents, teaching elders and others closely connected to young people by:

a. Promoting, on the Ministries with Youth website, [www.pcusa.org/youthministry](http://www.pcusa.org/youthministry), a permanent link to a new teen suicide prevention resource. The direct link to this new resource is <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/teen-suicide-practicing-prevention-and-pastoral-ca/>. Contained within this new resource are the following:

—An article titled “Teen Suicide: Practicing Prevention and Pastoral Care as the Body Of Christ” which features suggestions for congregations, pastors, youth workers and those caring for young people who have attempted suicide, are dealing with the realities of suicide, or who are actively working to prevent teen suicide in their faith community.

—A document titled “Teen Suicide and Self-Injury: Recommended Resources and Agencies to Provide Information, Assistance, and Education.”

—A document titled “Adolescent Suicide Quick Reference Resource” outlining the issues, statistics, and situations surrounding teen suicide and self-injury, as they are related to the lives of young people and their families.

b. Highlighting World Suicide Prevention Month annually, in August (one month before the actual World Suicide Awareness date of September 10) annually, on the Ministries with Youth website, [www.pcusa.org/youthministry](http://www.pcusa.org/youthministry), and Facebook Group page, a featured article and updated resources listing (see above) to assist congregations and youth workers with preparing lessons, educational opportunities, and awareness rituals appropriate to their individual setting.

c. Providing, at national youth events sponsored by the Office of Ministries with Youth (and recommended to all national GAMC/OGA agencies, networks, or offices sponsoring a national youth event or gathering) educational and pastoral resources aimed at the prevention of suicide, self-injury, depression and serious mental illness, and mental health care for adolescents, and their youth workers. To be launched at the 2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium through the Community Life ministry team.

Working with the Presbyterian Youth Workers’ Association, through their website and monthly e-newsletter, to circulate the above resources related to teen suicide and self-injury.

3. *2008 Referral: Item 07-10. Covenant Agreement with the Moravian Church, Recommendation 3.b. Direct Staff in the General Assembly Mission Council to Explore with Moravian Colleagues Opportunities for Strengthening Mission Partnerships, Joint Evangelism Efforts and Development of Shared Resources, and to Encourage Presbyterian Conferences and Gatherings to Extend Invitations to Moravians for Participation as Appropriate—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 14, 15, 531–38).*

*Response:* Presbyterian Mission staff and staff of the Moravian Church are in conversation about ways to work together to strengthen mission partnerships and to share resources in ways that will further evangelism efforts and create a stronger partnership in the future.

4. *2008 Referral: Item 07-12. Report, The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) Gender, Leadership, and Power Consultation, Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Council to Provide Leadership and Participation in the North American Region with Our Partner WARC Communion and Include a Strategy for a Study Process for Gender, Leadership, and Power in the PC(USA)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 14, 15, 541–44).*

*Response:* In 2009, staff from Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW helped plan the women’s pre-council event of the 2010 Uniting General Council meeting of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) (formerly the World Alliance of Reformed Churches). In 2010, Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW staff participated in the WCRC meeting held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A statement addressing gender, leadership, and power issues in North America was written and presented to the General Council. In April 2011, the PC(USA) hosted the WCRC Justice Reading of Grand Rapids Consultation in Fort Meyers, Florida. Representatives from WCRC member communions reviewed information from the 2010 WCRC General Council meeting from a justice perspective. Five representatives from the PC(USA) participated in developing justice priorities to forward to the WCRC Strategy Planning Task Force. The PC(USA) leaders made recommendations to ensure that the WCRC Strategy Planning Task Force’s report included language on the intersectionality of gender, power, and race in leadership in the church. The GAMC will continue its collaboration with the new organization, as it engages in strategic planning and in its study of gender, leadership, and power in the church

5. *2008 Referral: Item 08-17. On Responsible Purchasing, Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Mission Council Encourage Congregations and Presbyteries to Actively Lobby Their Respective State and Local Governments to Join the Sweatfree Consortium—From the Presbytery of Baltimore (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 22, 24, 712–14).*

*Response:* *Just Purchasing Guide* was created and distributed to congregations and presbyteries that provided the rationale and advocacy steps for state and local governments to join the Sweatfree Consortium <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/just-purchasing-practicing-our-faith-market>.

6. *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” Recommendation 4. Direct the General Assembly Council, in Consultation with Advocacy Committee/or Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, to Plan a Women of Color Consultation That Focuses on the Full Participation and Leadership/Decision-Making Roles of Women of Color of All Ages in Synods and Presbyteries. Plans for Next Consultation Reported to the 219th General Assembly (2010), Report of the Consultation and Recommendations to Be Submitted to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 10-16, the Women of Color Consultation Committee report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies. The Women of Color Consultation Committee, which included representatives from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, and Presbyterian Women, submitted this report following the Women of Color Consultation, which was held in Charlotte, North Carolina, on October 20–23, 2011.

7. *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” Recommendation 9. Direct the General Assembly Council to Develop a Resource/or Use By Congregations, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assembly That Will Provide Tools to Conduct a Gender Equity Audit That Includes Age, Race, and Ethnicity, that Enables Entities Within the Church to Gather Quantifiable Data on Women and Persons of Color’s Presence, Participation, and Influence in Decision-Making Processes—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 965–77).*

*Response:* Resources to provide tools to conduct gender equity audits were developed in the Office of Gender and Racial Justice in the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW ministry area. Two resources were developed, one for congregations and another for mid councils and the General Assembly. These resources are available online at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/gender-justice-ministries/>. Congregations, mid councils, and the larger church are encouraged to use these resources in prayerful discernment and to conduct gender equity audits to assess the status of women in different organizations and entities of the church. These resources include discussion questions for next steps to assist organizations as they implement policies and strategies to achieve gender and racial equality, with the aim of creating a denomination that fully values the gifts of all its members, regardless of gender or racial ethnicity.

8. *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” Recommendation 10. Direct the General Assembly Council, in Consultation with Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, to Expand on the Basic Antiracism Training to Include Modules on the Intersectionality of Race, Gender, and Class, and Provide Focused Training on Internalized Oppression and Privilege with a Timeline as Follows: (a) the Intersections of Race, Gender, and Class by 2010; (b) Internalized Oppression (Race & Gender) by 2012; and (c) White Privilege and Male Privilege by 2014—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).*

*Response:* The antiracism training material has been expanded. A new module on the intersectionality of race, gender, and class was completed in 2010, and a new module on Internalized Oppression (Race & Gender) was completed in 2011. A module on White Privilege and Male Privilege will be completed in 2014.

9. *2008 Referral: Item 10-06. On Supporting Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform, Recommendation 4. Direct That \$25,000 from the Mission Budget of the PC(USA) Be Sent to the Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation (PACT) Network for the Purpose of Holding Ten Regional, One-Day Seminars Supporting Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform, Moneys to Be Allocated on a First-Come, First-Served Basis—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 58, 59, 1133–36).*

*Response:* Thanks to good stewardship by the Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation (PACT) Seminar Funding Screening Committee and partnership with respected organizations in the field of Single Payer Universal Healthcare Reform, PACT and Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare were able to facilitate twelve events from this funding, with a thirteenth and final event under consideration. Significant positive media coverage was obtained for these events and the feedback on immediate and future impact was very positive.

10. *2008 Referral: Alternate Resolution to Item 11-01. On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel, Recommendation 6. Instruct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Report Regularly to the General Assem-*

*bly Mission Council on Its Communication and the Compliance, or Lack Thereof, by Caterpillar, Motorola, and Other Corporations Involved with Regard to General Assembly Guidelines and Concerns for Justice and Human Rights—From the 218th General Assembly (2008) (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 46, 1137–39).*

*2008 Referral: Item 11-27. Report of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Recommendation 4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, to Continue the Corporate Engagement Process, and Report on Its Status with Any Recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 46, 47, 1223–25).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 15-11, General Assembly Mission Council (MRTI) recommendations,” being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

11. *2008 Referral: Item 11-12. On Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally, Recommendation 4. Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council to Direct the Appropriate Offices of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to Work to Strengthen Laws That Prohibit Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 46, 1164–67).*

*Response:* The Human Trafficking Roundtable is comprised of staff from Compassion, Peace and Justice, Presbyterian Women, The Advocacy Committees on Racial Ethnic and Women’s Concerns, World Mission, and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, as well as the volunteer for Presbyterian Men and a member of the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network Leadership Team (a ministry network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association). Members of the Roundtable have presented a number of keynotes and workshops, making Presbyterians aware of laws in place in their states to combat trafficking and advocating for strengthening them where necessary. The roundtable is also monitoring the reauthorization of the federal legislation, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Information on state and federal law can be found on the Roundtable’s website, <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/human-trafficking/>.

The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN) is a member of the NGO Working Group on Human Trafficking at the United Nations that addresses international efforts to address trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children. The PMUN, in partnership with the Office of Child Advocacy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, encourages Presbyterian participation in the Red Hands campaign that seeks international support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. This protocol establishes international law that addresses the trafficking of children in relation to armed conflict.

12. *2008 Referral: Item 11-15. On Support for the Presbyterian Church in Zimbabwe, Recommendation 3. Support the Work of Individual Congregations, Church Governing Bodies, and Ecumenical Groups Within Zimbabwe as Well as the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa—From the Presbytery of Denver (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 47, 1174–76).*

*Response:* The PC(USA) World Mission has appointed a mission co-worker to serve with The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa—Zimbabwe Presbytery. The Reverend Derek Forbes, a member of the Presbytery of Denver, began service in July 2011 in the position of consultant for effective administration. He is working to enhance the presbytery’s accountability, transparency, efficiency, and recordkeeping. This appointment has greatly strengthened the PC(USA)’s ability to support the work of Zimbabwe Presbytery. Regular partnership activities, including visits with The Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa leadership as well as the Presbytery of Zimbabwe, have continued.

13. *2008 Referral: Item 11-18. Report on Human Rights in Colombia, Recommendation 2. Direct the World Mission’s Ministry Area, in Consultation with the Appropriate Entities of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly, to Continue to Monitor the Situation in Colombia, and to Keep the Whole Church Abreast of These Findings; and to Offer Advice and Counsel, as Needed, About How This Denomination Can Continue to Support the Peacekeeping Efforts of Our Partners in Colombia—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 47, 1180–85).*

*Response:* The World Mission’s Ministry Area, in consultation with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, continues to monitor the situation in Colombia through the presence of mission personnel and short-term accompaniers, visits to Colombia, encouraging Presbyterians to travel, and invitations to leaders of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia to come to the U.S.

The World Mission’s Ministry Area is keeping the whole church informed through mission personnel letters, reports from short-term accompaniers, reports from Presbyterians’ trips, and reports from our partners in Colombia. See <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/global/colombia/>; <http://calledtocolombia.org/>; <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=0659f5174d3f0135f20d929f2&id=e5d8e8974f>

The World Mission's Ministry Area offers advice and counsel, as needed, on how to continue to support the peacekeeping efforts of our partners in Colombia. See <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/global/latin-american-ga-statement/>; <http://alcnoticias.net/?lang=688>.

14. *2008 Referral: Item 11-30. Commissioners' Resolution. On Mobilizing Presbyterians for a Significant Response to the Global Food Crisis, Recommendation 2. To Step Up and Speed Up Mission Personnel Deployment, in Response to Overseas Partners Who so Request, to Advise and Accompany Them as to the Kinds of Actions That Could Be Undertaken to Alleviate Hunger in the Short Term Without Creating New Dependencies and/or Compromising Their Countries' Sovereignty and Economy. (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 47, 1226–29).*

*Response:* World Mission has revised the process of preparing and deploying mission personnel to allow mission workers to be deployed as quickly as possible. This new process includes the use of Webinars to begin orientation earlier and an increased number of interview cycles. Additional segments have been added to orientation to specifically address issues of poverty and hunger. World Mission is also preparing resource materials around the critical global issue of poverty, including the root causes of hunger, which will help make Presbyterian networks, congregations, presbyteries and individuals aware of best practices in addressing this issue in ways that will not create new dependencies nor have adverse effects on local economies or social structures.

15. *2008 Referral: Item 12-01. Report, "Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations." Recommendation 2. Encourage the General Assembly Council, Specifically the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry Areas, to Appoint a Task Force to Monitor the Progress of African American Church Growth and Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 12, 1235–37).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 16-03, the "African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force Report." The task force, appointed by the Office of African American Congregational Support, as directed by the 218th General Assembly (2008), collaborated with the Church Growth Strategy Implementation Team of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus. These teams have studied, reviewed, and submitted this report on the implementation of strategies for African American church growth.

16. *2008 Referral: Item 12-08. On Directing the General Assembly Mission Council to Produce Adolescent Human Development Resources—From the Presbytery of Grace (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 12, 13, 1245–47).*

*Response:* The curriculum will launch at APCE in February 2012. Five studies are already available online with the full curriculum to come in February. The web address is: <http://www.informedteens.org/INformed/index2.html>.

17. *2010 Referral: Item 08-08. Review of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches/Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Recommendation 6. Call upon the General Assembly Mission Council's Office of World Mission to Give Priority in Mission Co-Workers Placements in Countries in Which We Have WCRC/CANAAC Partnerships and to Acknowledge These Relationships in All Interpretative Materials—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31–32, 614–24).*

*Response:* World Mission has placed a regional liaison to cover the Caribbean countries. The Reverend Jo Ella Holman lives in the Dominican Republic and serves the countries in which we have WCRC/CANAAC and WCRC/AIPRAL partnerships. World Mission Ministry will give as much priority in mission co-workers placements in countries in which we have WCRC/CANAAC partnerships as its strategic direction permits, and will acknowledge these relationships.

18. *2010 Referral: Item 08-08. Review of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches/Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Recommendation 8.c. Encourage Celebration of Reformation Sunday and Our Reformed heritage as a Major Annual Event. Resources for Such Observances Might Be Made Available Through Presbyterian News Service, Thoughtful Christian, Presbyterians Today—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31, 614–24).*

*Response:* The Office of Theology and Worship put resources for worship and other celebrations on its website at <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/worship/worship-reformationsunday/>.

19. *2010 Referral: Item 08-08. Review of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches/Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Recommendation 6. Call upon the General Assembly Mission Council's Office of World Mission to Give Priority in Mission Co-Workers Placements in Countries in Which We Have WCRC/CANAAC Partnerships and to Acknowledge These Relationships in All Interpretative Materials—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 31–32, 614–24).*

*Response:* World Mission has placed a regional liaison to cover the Caribbean countries. The Reverend Jo Ella Holman lives in the Dominican Republic and serves the countries in which we have WCRC/CANAAC and WCRC/AIPRAL partner-



ships. World Mission Ministry will give as much priority in mission co-workers placements in countries in which we have WCRC/CANAAC partnerships as its strategic direction permits, and will acknowledge these relationships.

20. *2010 Referral: Item 09-04. On Support of Missionary Funding. Recommendation. That the 219th General Assembly (2010) Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council to Continue to Make Missionary Support Among the Highest Priorities in the 2011 and 2012 Budgets in Order to Sustain the Long-Awaited Reversal in the Numbers of Mission Personnel, the 219th General Assembly (2010) Invites Each Presbytery to Participate in Sharing the Costs of One Mission Co-Worker During 2011 and 2012—From the Presbytery of Shenango (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 81, 654–56).*

*Response:* World Mission has partnered with the General Assembly Mission Council Funds Development Ministry Team to reach out to presbyteries and congregations to share in the support of mission personnel sent by the General Assembly Mission Council. World Mission is sharing the stories of our mission personnel in new ways, making use of video, email blasts, and e-newsletters to share the good work that our mission workers are doing around the world. An annual “Mission Connections Live!” effort allows for a focused itineration of mission personnel to presbyteries and congregations around the country. Many mission workers are making use of Skype to interact with congregational Bible studies or with a congregation during worship. World Mission and the Funds Development Ministry Team are also working with individual presbyteries and congregations to help them connect to our mission personnel using their own initiatives. This has produced unique and creative initiatives that can then be shared with other presbyteries. Some presbyteries have created initiatives to increase participation within their presbytery and are receiving logistical help from the Funds Development Ministry Team. Others have “adopted” a specific mission worker and are urging congregations within the presbytery to participate in that worker’s support. In 2010, a total of 163 presbyteries either participated themselves or had a member congregation that participated in this effort.

21. *2010 Referral: Item 09-06. On Reestablishing an Office of Collegiate Ministries as a Vital Part of Ministry and Mission. Recommendation. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Reestablish an Office of Collegiate Ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a Vital and Integral Part of the Ministry and Mission of the Church and Direct That Office to Prepare a Strategy for Mission in Higher Education in Concert with Middle Governing Bodies, Congregations, and, Where Possible, Ecumenical Partners, to Be Presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Presbytery of North Central Iowa (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 81, 658–60). [This referral was removed from the consent agenda and was sent to 16. Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP as Item 16-10.]*

*Response:* This referral is answered by the “Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report” below.

#### Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report

As of January 1, 2011, the Office of Collegiate Ministries was established and staffed with a full-time associate position and a half-time administrative assistant position. The Collegiate Ministries Task Force was formed and prepared the following Strategy for Mission.

#### VISION STATEMENT

“Where there is no vision the people perish.” For decades there hasn’t been a cohesive vision or identity for PCUSA collegiate ministry. A vision statement is the first and significant step to developing and regaining a semblance of organization within and importance to church for collegiate ministries. This simple statement has elements of evangelism, compassion and education—all hallmarks of reformed ministry.

#### WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

This recommendation could have been a directive, but instead was listed as an encouragement with anticipation that it would be given the weight of a directive by the Office of Collegiate Ministry. The intention is that Collegiate Ministries would be engaged in the 1,001 New Worshipping Communities endeavor. As details become available with the 1,001 Worshipping Communities program, Collegiate Ministries would incorporate the details of the program while developing new worshipping communities near campuses that have no PC(USA) presence and transforming existing worshipping communities near college campuses that are currently underserved by the PC(USA).

#### REGIONAL OFFICES

Ministry is contextual. For local collegiate ministries to receive the most excellent and relevant help, the staff members that work with these ministries need to be familiar with their context. Also, with the 101 new ministries being established and renewed, there will hopefully be more ministries established. With the increase in ministry locations, collaboration with and support from regional entities and agencies (mid councils, related schools, camps and conference centers) is essential. The staff will need to be more aware and acquainted with the agencies in the region. For this new model, more centralized staff is not the answer; a regional staff will be more responsive.

## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

It is no secret that many of the traditional funding streams are drying up or being redirected. Many offices are dealing with a reduction in funding; the uniqueness of Collegiate Ministries is the highly restrictive nature of the overall budget. The level of restriction on the budget does not lend itself to creatively moving a program forward. In anticipation of further declines and reductions, the task force recommends that, with the help of Communications and Funds Development, a capital campaign be established to fund the important and ongoing work of the Office of Collegiate Ministries in perpetuity. For the Office of Collegiate Ministry to be able to respond to ministry needs timely and appropriately, both now and in the future, an innovative and productive fundraising effort is essential.

## PCUSA COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

## VISION STATEMENT

*We are a church that reaches, loves and teaches college students to become life-long followers of Jesus Christ.*

## STRUCTURE AND NETWORK

- A stable national office with consistent funding of programs and staff
- Network in covenant with the GAMC
  - Part-time regional coordinators
  - Communications Coordinator
  - Institute a structured, replicable and adaptable collegiate ministry model that can be used by congregations to engage in collegiate ministry
    - Establish a structure to promote establishing local Presbyterian Collegiate Ministries (PCM)
  - A national Presbyterian Collegiate Ministry Advisory Team would work with the Office of Collegiate Ministries to engage local churches and mid-councils to consider establishing a PCM

## RENEW OR START 101 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES / COLLEGIATE CONGREGATIONS

- Identify 101 university communities with the potential for collegiate ministry growth
- Identify 25 Collegiate Congregations
  - Churches located within reasonable proximity to a college campus
  - A church actively involved in living out the Collegiate Ministries vision statement
- Gather Worshiping Communities / Collegiate Congregations
  - Share how Collegiate Ministries vision plays out in a University Church setting
  - Ask congregations to research other churches and campuses in their region
- Classify Worshiping Communities / Collegiate Congregations into 3 categories
  - Those making a solid impact on the campus community through a planned ministry
    - Create a network, collect and organize best practices, get on board
  - Those with potential for such ministry but aren't organized around it or realizing it
    - Offer to partner with congregation using an eighteen-month plan
  - Those that have the right location but not potential without a major overhaul
    - Offer a three-year plan with Church Growth office

## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGY

- Office of Collegiate Ministries
  - Increased funding of OCM budget for an initial five-to-six-year period
  - Five-year Plan
- Presbyterian Collegiate Ministries Network
  - Mainly from OCM budget preliminarily until regions are established
    - Regions will work toward 501(c)3 status for fundraising purposes
  - Regional coordinators will be trained and encouraged to raised funds immediately
  - Proactively work with entities within the church to secure collegiate ministry funds
    - Mid Councils, Foundation, Communications and Funds Development

## RECRUITING AND TRAINING POSSIBILITIES

- Chaplaincy Internships
  - Positions are supported by institutions and responsible to chaplains
- Congregational Internships
  - Positions to be supported by congregation
- Collegiate Ministry Volunteers
  - Program supported by Office of Collegiate Ministries
- Seminary Field Education

01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- Office of Collegiate Ministries will work with Committee on Theological Education to create a proposal to encourage PC(USA) partner seminaries (possibly other seminaries) to create field education placements in campus ministry settings
- Professional Education
  - Develop Master’s level Collegiate Ministry certificate or degree programs with one or more of our partner seminaries
- Continuing Education
  - National & Regional Gatherings
  - Online Opportunities

PCUSA COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES  
STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE  
(Tentative)

May of 2012	Local PC(USA) collegiate ministries are mapped
May of 2012	Identify 25 Collegiate Congregations
May of 2012	Identify 101 campuses with potential for growth
May of 2012	Internship proposals completed
May of 2012	Field Education proposal completed
May of 2012	Certificate/Degree program proposal completed
Upon Adoption	Encourage entities to operate under new vision and brand
July 1, 2012	Online best practices for Collegiate Ministers launched
Summer/Fall 2012	First gathering of first 25 Collegiate Congregations
Fall of 2012	Some internships available at related schools, congregations
Fall of 2012	First quarterly continuing education webinar
Fall of 2012	Communications coordinator identified
October 1, 2012	Two of five regional coordinators identified
January 1, 2013	Two regional coordinators in place
January 1, 2013	Communications coordinator in place
Spring of 2013	Research of Collegiate Congregations completed
Summer of 2013	Potential university churches identified and categorized
Summer of 2013	Gathering of first 25 plus other potential Collegiate Congregations
Summer of 2013	National Collegiate Ministries Gathering
Fall of 2013	Five regional coordinators identified
Fall of 2013	Regional Cohorts established
Fall of 2013	More internships available at related schools, congregations
Fall of 2013	Half seminaries offer CM field education opportunities
January 1, 2014	All regional coordinators in place
Winter of 2014	Regional gatherings of Collegiate Congregations
Winter of 2014	First set of regional gatherings
Fall of 2014	Degree and Certificate programs offered at seminaries
Fall of 2014	Mentoring program for collegiate ministers in place
Fall of 2014	All willing seminaries offer CM field education opportunities
Spring of 2018	Regions start to move to 501(c)3 status
Spring of 2020	All regions are individually incorporated
Fall of 2021	Worshipping communities established on 101 campuses

22. 2010 Referral: Item 09-07. On Affirming the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association. Recommendation 3. That an Extra Commitment Opportunity Fund Account Be Earmarked to Provide Salary and Support for the Position of Executive Director of PHEWA as Described in the Historic Covenant of Shared Ministry Partnership Agreement That Outlines Our Collaborative Ministry—From the Presbytery of Elizabeth (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 81–82, 660–62).

Response: Extra Commitment Opportunity Account #E052108-PHEWA Faith-Based Community Organizer Position (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/give/E052108/>) was created in August 2010.

23. 2010 Referral: Item 09-08. On Supporting Mission and Ministry in North Korea. Recommendation 3. Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to: a. Develop and Publicize a Mission Strategy to Proclaim and Demonstrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the PC(USA)’s Commitment to Caring for the Vulnerable Population in North Korea ... and Thereby Open Up the Way to Reach the People in North Korea with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Future; and b. Use PC(USA) Mission Resources in South Korea to Further Promote Partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) and other Ecumenical Partners to Collaborate on This Mission to North Korea; and c.

*Plan for Fully-Supported PC(USA) Mission Personnel for Mission Work in North Korea in the Future—From the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 82, 662–66).*

*Response:* Funds in the amount of approximately \$28,000 were collected and sent to our ministry partner, the Presbyterian Church in Korea (PCK), for the purpose of purchasing food to be sent to North Korea.

The 2012 *Mission Yearbook* will lift up the mission and ministry in North Korea. Congregations and individuals will be asked to pray for and support these efforts.

Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) accounts have been set up to receive mission giving for projects in North Korea <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/global/north-korea>. Funds have been received and some have been sent to their intended destination. At the same time, government sanctions restricted monies from being sent into North Korea so that there are funds currently being held until the way has been cleared.

In planning for future mission efforts into North Korea, World Mission validated and prioritized a mission coworker three-year teaching position at Pyongyang University of Science and technology (PUST). Pending an approved candidate, this will be the first official, full-time mission assignment for reaching the people of North Korea. Financial support of this position will follow the approved pattern for all mission personnel sent by the PC(USA). As this particular assignment proves successful additional personnel may also be recruited.

24. *2010 Referral: Item 09-08. On Supporting Mission and Ministry in North Korea. Recommendation 4. Inform the PC(USA)'s National and Global Ecumenical Partners of this Action and Encourage Them, and PC(USA) Congregations and Entities, to Participate in Praying for, Raising Awareness of, and Contributing Funds to Feed the Hungry and Bring Hope to the Disabled in This Reclusive Country—From the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 82, 662–66).*

*Response:* World Mission staff members have held meetings with and communications are ongoing with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) to collaborate on this mission. Since citizens of South Korea are not permitted travel into North Korea, efforts fall more heavily upon General Assembly staff. A mission co-worker completed an exploratory visit to Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (PUST) during July 2011 and a teaching assignment in December 2011. Costs related to these assignments were born by the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church (KMPC) office.

In planning for future mission efforts into North Korea, World Mission validated and prioritized a mission coworker three-year teaching position at PUST. Pending an approved candidate, this will be the first official, full-time mission assignment for reaching the people of North Korea. Financial support of this position will follow the approved pattern for all mission personnel sent by the PC(USA). As this particular assignment proves successful additional personnel may also be recruited.

25. *2010 Referral: Item 09-20. On Supporting Young Adults in Mission and Leadership Development in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recommendation. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Provide Budgetary Support in the Amount of \$100,000 (\$50,000 for 2011 and \$50,000 for 2012) for Scholarships for Young Adult Volunteers, Above and Beyond Currently Budgeted Support for the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) Program, for the Costs of Their Service Internationally and Nationally Through the Young Adult Volunteer Program (YAV) of the World Mission Office. These Funds Would Help Cover the Cost of Living Expenses for YAVs, Which Include Housing and Utilities, Health Insurance, and Stipends for Food and Local Transportation. (YAVs Would Continue to Raise Support for Their Year of Service at a Lesser, More Attainable Amount.)—From the Presbytery De Cristo (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 84–85, 691–93).*

*Response:* All young adult volunteers are required to raise funds to offset cost-of-living expenses such as housing, utilities, health insurance, transportation, food, and stipends. Scholarships are provided to young adult volunteers in order to make the amount of fundraising required more attainable for those who would otherwise be unable to participate in the program. In 2011, scholarship assistance totaling \$50,000 was provided to seventeen young adult volunteers, nine volunteers serving internationally and eight serving nationally. Scholarship amounts ranged from \$700–\$6,000. An additional \$50,000 of scholarship assistance will be provided in 2012. The Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program and other programs within World Mission have examined multiple means of treating national YAV site coordinators as mission co-workers in order to implement a pattern of service that fits the specific context of national YAV sites. In cooperation with staff from Communications and Funds Development, World Mission has promoted the financial support of national YAV site coordinators with individuals, congregations, and presbyteries.

26. *2010 Referral: Alternate Resolution to Item 10-01. On Protesting the Blatant Disregard for the Sanctity of Our Lord's Name in Motion Pictures and Public Broadcasting. Recommendation. The General Assembly Strongly Condemns the Gratuitous Trivialization of the Use of the Name of the Lord in the Media and Directs MRTI to Communicate This Condemnation to Any Companies in Which It Owns Stock That Own Media Content or Media Distribution Companies and Asks the Appropriate Office of the General Assembly to Make Available Materials for Use by Local Congregations for Conversations*

*with Children, Youth, and Adults to Help Them Determine the Effects of Media Content for Their Lives—From the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 725–26).*

*Response:* Communications were sent to major media companies and associations by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). Educational materials for use by local congregations on the effects of media content on the lives of children, youth, and adults are posted on the Office of Child Advocacy web site (<http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/child/>). The Office of Child Advocacy also did workshops on the subject at church gatherings.

27. *2010 Referral: Item 10-03. On Urging the United States Congress to Cap Interest Rates on Credit Card Lending. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Urges the United States Congress to Enact Legislation to Cap Consumer Credit Interest Rates Governing Credit Cards, Payday Loans, Auto Title Loans, Home Equity Loans and Other Frequently Usurious Practices, to Support a Consumer Finance Protection Agency Independent of Banks and Other Financially Interested Parties to Ensure That Such Legislation Is Implemented, and to Encourage Publicly-Owned Banks and Credit Unions to Provide More Consumer Choice and More Regional and Local Investment, and to Direct the Stated Clerk and Appropriate General Assembly Mission Council Offices to Communicate This Action to the President of the United States, the U.S. Congress, and State Governors and State Banking Commissions—From the Presbytery of Salem (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 37, 727–29).*

*Response:* The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) has posted on-line and made available in print form the 2006 General Assembly report, “A Reformed Understanding of Usury,” (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/usury.pdf>) along with information on the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. 111- 203, H.R. 4173), the federal statute authorizing the United States Consumer Finance Protection Agency and other provisions of the “Dodd-Frank” bill designed to protect low-income consumers in particular. The ACSWP also consulted with the Office of Public Witness and the Stated Clerk and posted the Stated Clerk’s letter on this subject.

28. *2010 Referral: Item 10-03. On Urging the United States Congress to Cap Interest Rates on Credit Card Lending. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) of the PC(USA) Urges the Credit Industry to Develop Specific Credit Products with Low Interest Rates and Appropriate Maximums That Extend Credit and Credit Counseling to Persons in Poverty—From the Presbytery of Salem (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 37, 727–29).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness (OPW) collaborated with the Office of the Stated Clerk and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to communicate the full content of this overture to national decision-makers. In addition, the OPW joined efforts in late 2010 to support sections of the financial services reform bill, which created a federal consumer finance protection agency.

29. *2010 Referral: Item 10-06. Report, “Violence Against Women on the Mexico-U.S. Border.” Recommendation 1. A Resolution to Study Violence Against Women and Children on the Mexico-U.S. Border: 1) Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to create a study group to examine the issue of violence against women and children along the United States-Mexico border, and in particular the circumstances in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, in consultation with Presbyterian Border Ministry, the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, the Hispanic-Latino National Presbyterian Caucus, Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support Office, Presbyterian Women, ACWC, and presbyteries along the border, seeking concrete actions that the PCUSA, its agencies, congregations and partners, both in the U.S. and in Mexico, can implement to effectively impact this tragic issue within our own church and culture, as well as our neighbors, in a timely manner.”*

*Response:* A study group was formed and included persons from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the National Hispanic-Latino Presbyterian Caucus, Presbyterian Border Ministry, Pasos de Fe, Tres Rios Presbytery, and staff from the Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support Office, the Women’s Leadership Development Office and Presbyterian Women. The National Presbyterian Church of Mexico was also contacted and the team visited with people in El Paso, Texas, Ciudad Juarez, and Chihuahua, Mexico, including the staff of Casa Amiga, a women’s shelter in Ciudad Juarez. Concrete actions to effectively impact this issue within the church and culture were included in bilingual study materials which were created in response to Recommendation 2 and can be found online at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/hispanic> and <http://www.pcusa.org/women>.

30. *2010 Referral: Item 10-06. Report, “Violence Against Women on the Mexico-U.S. Border.” Recommendation 2. A Resolution to Study Violence Against Women and Children on the Mexico-U.S. Border: 2) Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to create bilingual study materials in consultation with the Hispanic-Latino National Presbyterian Caucus and Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support Office for congregations directly dealing with and seeking education around issues of violence against women, including education surrounding issues connected to “machismo” cultures.*

*Response:* The Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support Office of the General Assembly Mission Council, in consultation with the National Hispanic-Latino Presbyterian Caucus, created bilingual study materials directly dealing with violence against women and children. Four videos and a study guide with questions for conversation and suggested actions for con-

gregations and individuals have been created and are posted on the PC(USA)'s website at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/hispanic> and <http://www.pcusa.org/women>.

31. *2010 Referral: Item 10-06. Report, "Violence Against Women on the Mexico-U.S. Border." Recommendation: 3. Direct GAMC to continue their work on the border and denounce violence against women and children on the Mexican-United States border.*

*Response:* The GAMC continues its work on the Mexico-U.S. border, despite the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico's decision to break ties with the PC(USA), and we denounce violence against women and children on the border and around the world. Over the years, Presbyterian Border Ministry has assisted visiting mission teams up and down the border region, helping them to become more aware of the causes of violence against women, children, and the citizens of Mexico, particularly those in Ciudad Juarez. This has led to advocacy on the part of some groups to appeal to the U.S. government to take responsibility for arms trafficking and pressure the Mexican government to take responsibility for violence against women, particularly in Juarez. Churches on both sides of the border at Juarez, Mexico, and in El Paso, Texas, continue to pressure local and state authorities to investigate cases of violence against women and children and to utilize radio, correspondence, and rallies to highlight this important issue. A study group supported by staff in Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW met in El Paso, Texas, in 2011, examined issues of violence against women and children along the United States-Mexico Border, and created bilingual resources containing suggestions for action and encouragement for the church to continue a vigilant witness against violence on the Mexico-U.S. border. Resources are available on the PC(USA)'s website at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/hispanic> and <http://pcusa.org/women>.

32. *2010 Referral: Item 10-11. Report, Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12). Recommendation 4.b. Calls Upon Our Elected State and Local Officials to Reform the Way That Public Education Is Currently Financed from an Approach Based Largely on Property Taxes, Which Perpetuates and Exacerbates Class and/or Racial Disparities in Poor, Urban and Rural School Districts, to an Approach That Provides an Equitable Allocation of Moneys to School Systems According to the Financial Needs That Schools Require in Order to Attain Agreed Minimum Standards in the Provision of Instructional Inputs, Qualified Teachers, and Physical Facilities—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 36, 772–89).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been working with local presbytery partners to empower advocacy on these public education issues at the state and local level. In particular, the OPW has been working with staff from the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy, where they are actively working on state-level public education advocacy.

33. *2010 Referral: Item 10-11. Report, Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12), Recommendation 6.b. Develop and/or Provide Appropriate Study Materials for Individual and Congregational Use to Stimulate Dialogue and Action on the Concerns Identified in Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12)—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 36, 772–89).*

*Response:* A four-session study guide for the policy paper was developed by the Office of Child Advocacy and Networking and is included in both print and online versions of the paper (<http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/publiceducation/>). It is designed to introduce participants to the policy, with the intended outcome of moving Presbyterians to take action to improve access to a quality education for all children.

34. *2010 Referral: Item 10-11. Report, Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12), Recommendation 7. Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) and Other Appropriate Entities of the General Assembly to Communicate Items 7.a. Through 7.c. to the President of the United States and Members of the U.S. Congress—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 36, 772–89).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been actively involved in ecumenical efforts to lift up the issues of justice and equity in public education. In summer 2010, the OPW signed onto the National Council of Churches' "Joint Organizational Statement on the No Child Left Behind Act." In May 2011, the OPW endorsed The Student Bill of Rights Act, introduced by Representative Chaka Fattah (Pa.). In addition, the OPW has participated in meetings with the U.S. Department of Education to push the principles contained in the "Loving Our Neighbor" Report, and to challenge President Obama's Race to the Top programs.

35. *2010 Referral: Item 10-11. Report, Loving Our Neighbors: Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12), Recommendation 8. Direct the Presbyterian United Nations Office and Other Appropriate General Assembly Entities to Communicate to the United Nations and Other International Bodies the Concurrence of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the UN Declaration on Human Rights That Declares Education to Be a Basic Human Right Essential to Human Development Because It Enhances Capacities, Improves Opportunities, and Widens the Range of Choices—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 36, 772–89).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN) submitted a written statement to the United Nations Economic and Social Council for the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and

commitments in regard to education.” This statement affirmed the PC(USA) commitment to education as a basic human right. It was distributed to United Nations (UN) member states through the UN secretariat. The PMUN facilitated the Presbyterian presence at the 2011 Commission on the Status of Women that focused on access to for women and girls. Presbyterian participants affirmed to the commission the PC(USA) commitment to education as a basic human right.

36. *2010 Referral: Item 10-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Ending Violence with Impunity Against Women and Girls. Recommendation 3. Directs the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO), the Presbyterian United Nations Office, and Other Appropriate General Assembly Entities to Urge the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to Proceed Without Further Delay in the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 38, 790–92).*

*Response:* Letters have been sent to the president and Senate calling for the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

37. *2010 Referral: Item 10-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Ending Violence with Impunity Against Women and Girls. Recommendation 4. Directs the General Assembly Mission Council’s (GAMC’s) Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area, Through the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network (PADVN), the Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian United Nations Office, and Other Entities Working on Gender Justice Issues to Join with the World Mission Ministry Area in Engaging and Collaborating with Ecumenical and Global Partner Churches to Establish Guidelines for Relationships That Encourage Equal Participation of Both Men and Women in Ministry and Leadership, Making It Clear at the Same Time That Impunity from Violence and Abuse Is Not Acceptable Within Related Reformed Communities (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 38, 790–92).*

*Response:* World Mission and Presbyterian Women were sponsors of the 2011 Presbyterian/Reformed African Women Leaders Gathering, Tumekutana, held from October 15–19 in Kigali, Rwanda. The event focused on the theme of “Women as Agents of Peace, Healing and Reconciliation”. The women looked at violence within all levels of society: violence in the home, violence in the community, inter-ethnic violence as well as violence experienced within the church. At this meeting a pledge to uphold the WCRC policy statements to ensure equal participation of women was made to encourage equal participation of both men and women in ministry and leadership. The following commitments were among those made by the women in the conference testament:

“We commit ourselves:

“a. To set up strategies for mobilizing women to cooperate with, support each other and speak out with a common voice against all forms of injustices so that as women, we can reclaim our God given place in creation.

“b. To urge our Churches to ensure gender equality in theological education and ordination, and to implement the guidelines on gender-justice of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

“c. To develop a process of bringing concerns to the attention of the Tumekutana Executive Committee to allow for concerted support including prayers and advocacy.” [*The process for advocacy set up by the committee was to inform the women’s desk of the WCRC and ask for support in dealing with the concerns.*]

World Mission has communicated to all African partner churches and organizations that PC(USA) World Mission affirms both the testament of the Tumekutana women and the statements on gender of the WCRC.

38. *2010 Referral: Item 10-13. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Renewing the Commitment to the Use of Inclusive and Expansive Language for God and the People of God. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) Directs the Office of Theology Worship and Education, the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area, and the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry Area to Renew Efforts Throughout the Denomination to Promote the Use of Inclusive and Expansive Language for God and the People of God and to Ensure Distribution, Electronically or Otherwise, of the Brochure, “Well Chosen Words: Inclusive Language with Reference to the People of God—Expansive Language with Reference to God” (PDS #72-700-99-003) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 38, 792–93).*

*Response:* Theology, Worship, and Education produces materials using such language and has promoted the use of “Well-Chosen Words” in its materials devoted to teaching people about worship and writing liturgy at <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/worship/worship-education-materials/>.

39. *2010 Referral: Item 10-14. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Usury. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) Calls Upon The PC(USA) and Its Corporate Financial Entities (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Board of Pensions, Funds of the General Assembly Mission Council, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Stated Clerk’s Office), Synods, Presbyteries, Its Local Congregations, and Members to Be a Counter Voice to Usurious Practices, and to Prayerfully Consider Moving Money Out of the Financial Institutions Who Exploit Consumers and Into Financial Institutions That Practice Responsible Consumer Lending Practices. We Call*

*Upon MRTI to Report on Their Evaluation of This Strategy to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 37–38, 793–94).*

*Response:* The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), in conjunction with ecumenical partners, has engaged several major financial institutions regarding community reinvestment, mortgage lending for multifamily and single family housing, mortgage servicing and foreclosure avoidance, credit and debit cards, payday lending, and rapid tax refunds. In addition to on-going dialogues, shareholder resolutions were filed, and proxies were voted in favor of other resolutions addressing these subjects. At this time, the corporate engagement process is productive enough that no recommendation on severing financial ties to particular financial institutions is being made.

40. *2010 Referral: Item 11-03. On Making Resources Available Regarding Destruction and Loss of Coastal Wetlands. Recommendation 1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Environmental Ministries Office, to Make Educational Resources Available Concerning Coastal Land Loss—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41, 810–12).*

*Response:* The Office of Environmental Ministries has posted on its web site basic information on the loss of coastal wetlands (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/environment/>).

41. *2010 Referral: Item 11-03. On Making Resources Available Regarding Destruction and Loss of Coastal Wetlands. Recommendation 4. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Examine the Role of Corporations and Institutions in the Destruction and Restoration of the Wetlands and Report Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41, 810–12).*

*Response:* The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) engaged two major oil corporations, Exxon Mobil and ConocoPhillips, in conjunction with the Episcopal Church through dialogue, proxy voting, and shareholder resolutions. This engagement is ongoing.

42. *2010 Referral: Item 11-03. On Making Resources Available Regarding Destruction and Loss of Coastal Wetlands. Recommendation 5. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to Advocate with Members of the United States Congress to Take Measures to Restore Land Lost Due to Coastal Erosion in Southern Deltaic Regions of Louisiana—From the Presbytery of South Louisiana (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41, 810–12).*

*Response:* In numerous letters and advocacy visits with decision-makers, frequently in the context of broader Gulf Coast restoration and recovery, the Office of Public Witness has urged federal investments wetlands restoration and wetlands reservation.

43. *2010 Referral: Item 11-06. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call. Recommendation 8. That the Church at Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly Levels, and in Cooperation with Colleges, Universities, and Seminaries, Sponsor Regular Educational and Summer Conference Events on Gun Violence and Its Prevention, in Order to Raise the Awareness of the Faith Community and Call It to Informed Action—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830–46).*

*Response:* Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area continues to partner with various areas of the church to encourage educational events on gun violence and its prevention in order to raise awareness in the church and call it to informed action. Due to the lack of funding for this project, regular events could not be guaranteed but only encouraged. Various events have been offered to all ages and the promotion of the event encouraged to our academic institutions. This has been accomplished in the following ways:

- a. Encouraged students to attend the Big Tent 2 workshop and pre-conference event held in Indianapolis in June 2011.
- b. Utilized Facebook and other social media to promote the online resources and events offered elsewhere in this referral.
- c. Promoted online resources through our various collegiate networks.
- d. Worked with Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities in its promotion of resources to the college community.
- e. Worked with Committee On Theological Education and its promotion to our seminaries.

44. *2010 Referral: Item 11-06. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call. Recommendation 11. That the Church Direct and Support Its Washington Office and Other Advocacy Bodies to Continue to Advocate for the*



*Policies Previously Approved by PC(USA) General Assemblies and That Can Receive Wide Public Support to Do Items 11.a. Through 11.g.—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830–46).*

*Response:* Guided by policies of the PC(USA) General Assemblies, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations is working with the World Council of Churches and other faith-based organizations to advocate on the international arms trade treaty that will address issues related to arms transfers.

45. *2010 Referral: Item 11-06. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call. Recommendation 12. Following the Recommendations of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, to Support Laws to “Require Judges and Law Enforcement to Remove Guns from Situations of Domestic Violence, as Well as from People Whose Adjudicated Mental Illness, Drug Use, or Previous Criminal Record Suggests the Possibility of Violence,” and to Increase Police Training in Nonviolent Proactive Intervention—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830–46).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness is presently advocating against the passage of The National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act, H.R. 822, which is the first major gun bill taken up and passed by the House since the January 8, 2011, Tucson shootings and would force states to allow dangerous, violent, and untrained gun owners from out-of-state to carry loaded, hidden guns in virtually every state. This bill is significant in that it would potentially expand already weakened state laws to remove guns from situations of domestic violence, as well as from people whose adjudicated mental illness, drug use, or previous criminal record suggest the possibility of violence.

46. *2010 Referral: Item 11-06. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call. Recommendation 13. To Urge the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Develop a Corporate Engagement Strategy for Working with Corporations in Which the Church May Be Invested That Are Producers or Distributors of Weapons That Do Not Comply with Its Policies on Gun Violence Prevention, Recommending Shareholder Proposals and Divestment Actions Appropriate to the Integrity and Effectiveness the Church Seeks—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830–46).*

*Response:* The investing agencies of the PC(USA) represented on the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) are the Presbyterian Foundation, New Covenant Funds, and the Board of Pensions. None held stock in gun manufacturers during the past two years.

47. *2010 Referral: Item 11-06. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call. Recommendation 14. That the Compassion, Peace, and Justice and Racial Ethnic Ministries Areas Include in Their Ongoing Strategic Reflection Means Through Which Church-Wide Faithfulness to These Commitments Can Be Monitored, Supported, Encouraged, and Resourced, in Order to Strengthen Especially Those Congregations Most Exposed to Gun Violence, and That Appropriate Resources Continue to Be Made Available to Help in Worship, Pastoral Care, and Public Policy Work—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830–46).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has partnered with “Heeding God’s Call,” a faith-based movement that was started by members of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, to prevent gun violence. There are “Heeding God’s Call” chapters in Baltimore, Md., Harrisburg, Pa., Philadelphia, Pa., and Greater Washington, D.C., and new chapters being proposed in a number of cities. Together we are building public awareness of gun violence and helping local faith communities take action to prevent it. The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program sponsored a day-long seminar at the 2011 Big Tent entitled “Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call.” In addition, the 2011 Peacemaking Offering bulletin insert and DVD featured the topic of gun violence prevention. A Gun Violence Prevention Congregational Toolkit has been produced and is downloadable on the Peacemaking website (<http://game.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/>). In addition, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is producing an hour-long video addressing the aftermath of gun violence following the January 8, 2011 mass shooting in Tucson, Arizona.

48. *2010 Referral: Item 11-11. Commissioners’ Resolution. Regarding a Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need. Recommendation 4. Instruct the Washington Office to Advocate Vigorously for Comprehensive Immigration Reform That Includes a Path to Citizenship and Recognizes the Critical Role That Immigrants Play in the Health of the U.S. Economy as well as Border Stabilization (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 40, 43, 879–82).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness is working in collaboration with the Office of Immigration Issues and the Inter-religious community on Capitol Hill to vigorously advocate for Immigration Reform. We have signed on to letters pressing for the passage of the DREAM Act and engaged in congressional visits to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.

49. *2010 Referral: Item 11-NB. Recommendations Regarding Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster. Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Work in Partnership with Local Impacted Communities, and to Initiate and Support an Ecumenical, Long-Term Response to the Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster; This Response May Include Items 2.a. Through 2.f. (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 43–44, 881).*

*Response:* The Compassion, Peace and Justice offices of Environmental Ministries, Office of Public Witness, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Environmental Ministries, Self-Development of People, and Presbyterian Hunger Program have maintained contact with communities impacted by the Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster, and continue to evaluate strategies for long-term response. A special appeal on the second anniversary of this tragic event is anticipated. The income will be used to fund the feasible elements of this referral.

50. *2010 Referral: Item 11-NB. Recommendations Regarding Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster. Recommendation 5. Direct the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) to Communicate with Oil and Natural Gas Companies Engaged in Offshore Exploration, Drilling, and Production Urging Them to Conduct a Thorough Review of Their Operations to Make Certain That They Are in Compliance with Their Own Health, Safety, and Environmental Standards and All Governmental Regulatory Requirements so That the General Public Can Be Assured That Similar Disasters Will Be Prevented (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 43–44, 881).*

*Response:* The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) communicated by letter with oil corporations engaged in offshore exploration, drilling, and production about their safety and environmental practices in the wake of the Deep Water Horizon oil disaster.

51. *2010 Referral: Item 11-NB. Recommendations Regarding Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster. Recommendation 6. Direct the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., to (a) Communicate with Congress and the Executive Branch the Need to Reconstitute a Robust Program of Oversight and Compliance to Ensure That Health, Safety, and Environmental Standards Are Followed to Protect Workers, Communities, and the Environment, and (b) Urge Congress and the Executive Branch to Hold BP and Other Responsible Parties Morally and Financially Accountable for This Disaster and for the Socio-economic and Environmental Recovery (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 43–44, 881).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been active in ecumenical and coalitional efforts to make the federal government respond adequately and responsibly to the Deep Water Horizon Oil spill. From July 2010 to December 2010, the OPW signed six letters to Congress and/or the Administration encouraging such action, including the establishment of a Citizen's Advisory Council. Staff of OPW have also participated in meetings with decision-makers on this topic. An ecumenical effort to bring clergy in to D.C. to lobby their own members of Congress resulted in bringing a PC(USA) pastor from the Gulf Coast to meet with her members of Congress on these issues.

52. *2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 1. Call Upon the United States Government to Do Items 1.a. through 1.e.—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 2.a. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to Take the Following Actions in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners and, Where Appropriate, Asking the General Assembly Mission Council to Assign Responsibilities to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, or Other Entities of the General Assembly Mission Council to Communicate to the United States President and Congress That the PC(USA) Opposes the War in Afghanistan—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 2.b. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to Take the Following Actions in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners and, Where Appropriate, Asking the General Assembly Mission Council to Assign Responsibilities to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, or Other Entities of the General Assembly Mission Council to Further Urge the President of the United States and Congress to Commit the U.S. Government to the Use of Peaceful Means in the Pursuit of National Interests, Concentrating Upon Diplomacy, International Collaboration, Interfaith Dialogue, Material Aid for Education, Reduction of Poverty, and the Broadening of Political Enfranchisement in Afghanistan—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*Response:* In response to the three referrals above, letters were sent to the president and Congress urging them to take these steps. The Office of Public Witness (OPW) joined the Faith Roundtable on Afghanistan. Through this group, OPW worked in collaboration with other denominations as well as organizations such as Sojourners and Network to call for aid, not war, in Afghanistan. The group strategized on best advocacy messages, shared information from on the ground as well as current work.

53. *2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 2. e. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to Take the Following Actions in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners and, Where Appropriate, Asking the General Assembly Mission Council to Assign Responsibilities to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, or Other Entities of the General Assembly Mission to Call Upon the United States Government to Provide Adequate Healthcare and Rehabilitation, Including Psychiatric Care, Trauma Therapy, and Substance Abuse Programs for Members and Veterans of Its Armed Forces—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 2. f. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to Take the Following Actions in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners and, Where Appropriate, Asking the General Assembly Mission Council to Assign Responsibilities to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, or Other Entities of the General Assembly Mission to Ask the United States Government to Tabulate Afghanistan War Casualties Among All Parties, Civilian and Military, and Make a General Inventory of Destruction so That the Human and Material Costs of War May Be Assessed and the Moral Obligations of Reconstruction and Restitution Be Kept Before the Conscience of the Nation—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*Response:* Letters were sent to the president and Congress urging them to take these steps.

*54. 2010 Referral: Item 13-02. On the War in Afghanistan. Recommendation 2. g. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to Take the Following Actions in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners and, Where Appropriate, Asking the General Assembly Mission Council to Assign Responsibilities to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Washington and UN Offices, or Other Entities of the General Assembly Mission to Provide Congregations and Presbyteries with Materials Appropriate for Studying the Effects of the Present War in Afghanistan and of Non-Combative Actions the United States Might Take in Pursuit of the Region's Stability, Prosperity, and Peace—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (Minutes, 2010, Part I. pp. 65, 66–67, 946–49).*

*Response:* Resources related to the effects of the war in Afghanistan and possible non-combative actions that the United States might take were distributed electronically by various programs in Compassion, Peace and Justice (<http://www.pcusa.org/blogs/swords-plowshares/topic/afghanistan/>).

*55. 2010 Referral: Item 13-04. On Partnering for Peace in Sudan. Recommendation 2. Support the Formation of New Covenant-Based Partnerships by PC(USA) Presbyteries with Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS) or the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SPEC), Making Arrangements Through the PC(USA) General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), World Mission Ministry Area, with Presbyteries Reporting Results to the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council by July 1, 2011, for Review by the General Assembly Mission Council and Thereafter, Publication on Appropriate Web Sites, All for the Purposes of the Proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ for the Salvation of Humankind, the Preservation of the Truth, and the Maintenance of Divine Worship—From the Presbytery Trinity (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65–66, 952–54).*

*Response:* The Africa Office of World Mission sent letters inviting those presbyteries that had hosted International Peacemakers from Sudan, as well as the “home” presbyteries of PC(USA) mission coworkers serving in Sudan, to initiate covenant-based partnerships with presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan or the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church. In addition, as congregations and presbyteries have expressed interest in supporting PC(USA) mission efforts in Sudan, the Africa Office has responded with encouragement and offers of assistance to initiate presbytery partnerships with these Sudanese denominations.

*56. 2010 Referral: Item 13-05. On the Protection of Religious Minorities. Recommendation. That the 219th General Assembly (2010), Through Its Proper Offices Singly, or in Conjunction with Other Denominations and Faiths, Through Our Appeal to Them, to Jointly Encourage the United Nations to Use Its Valuable Influence, and Through Its Diplomatic Channels, to Exhort the Religious and Political Leaders of Nations with Christian and Other Religious Minorities to Moderate Extreme Behavior and Protect Its Religious Minorities from Such Harm, and Encourage Mutual Respect and Forbearance—From the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 71, 954–56).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN) participates in the Non-governmental Organizations Working Group on Religious Freedom at the United Nations. The PMUN has engaged in advocacy with representatives of specific member states and has established a relationship with the office of the U.S. ambassador at large for religious freedom. Opportunities for individuals and groups to advocate for the creation of a special envoy to promote religious freedom in parts of the Middle East and South Asia were provided.

*57. 2010 Referral: Item 13-08. On Assisting with a Process for Negotiation of a Peace Accord in Colombia. Recommendation 5. Direct Appropriate Offices of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to Work with Ecumenical Partners to Monitor and Post Periodic Updates on the Impact of United States Military Use of Seven Military Bases in Colombia—From the Presbytery of Chicago (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 70–71, 960–63).*

*Response:* The base agreement is unimplemented due to a ruling in late 2010 by the Colombian Constitutional Court. With the assistance of the Colombia Accompaniment Program and our ecumenical partners, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Office of Public Witness has monitored developments since this ruling. Updates have been shared through presentations made by visitors from our partner, the Presbyterian Church in Colombia, and in electronic communication tools (<http://www.pcusa.org/blogs/swords-plowshares/topic/colombia/>).

*58. 2010 Referral: Item 13-10. Report, Commitment to Peacemaking. Recommendation 9. Recognizing That the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program Maintains a List of Those Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and Other Entities That*

*Have Adopted the “Commitment to Peacemaking” in Order to Serve Them in Their Peacemaking Efforts, Requests That a Report Be Made to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Number of Sessions That Have Adopted the Commitment to Peacemaking—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 965–66).*

*Response:* The Commitment to Peacemaking has been adopted by 4,361 sessions as of November 23, 2011.

*59. 2010 Referral: Item 13-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Restoration of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti. Recommendation 1.a. Direct the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council to Write to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to Convey the Reservations of Presbyterians Regarding the Strategy Adopted by USAID to Restore Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti, and to Request That USAID (i) Involve Hired Haitian Horticultural Students, Haitian Farmers, and Small Farmer Associations in the Planning of Local Agricultural Projects; and (ii) Prioritize Support to Grassroots Farmers’ Associations, Including Women’s Associations, Designed to Establish a Sustainable Small Farm Agriculture in Preference to the Introduction of Commercial and/or Industrial Farming Practices (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 69–70, 973–76).*

*Response:* A letter from the Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council was sent to the administrator of USAID to convey the reservations of Presbyterians regarding USAID’s strategy in Haiti. The letter requested that USAID involve Haitian horticultural students, Haitian Farmers and Small Farmer Associations in the planning of local agricultural projects and that USAID prioritize support to grassroots farmers’ associations, including women’s associations, to establish sustainable small farm agriculture in preference to the introduction of commercial and/or industrial farming practices.

*60. 2010 Referral: Item 13-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Restoration of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti. Recommendation 1.b. Direct the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council to Write to Former President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive to Request That the Interim Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti (ICRH) Adopt More Transparent Processes and Greater Accountability to the People of Haiti, Including Systematic Consultation with the Haitian People Regarding Development Plans That Will Affect Their Lives and the Future of Their Country (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 69–70, 973–76).*

*Response:* A letter from the Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council was sent to Former President Bill Clinton and the prime minister of Haiti to request that the Interim Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti (IRH) adopt more transparent processes and greater accountability to the people of Haiti, including systematic consultation with the Haitian people regarding development plans that will affect their lives and the future of their country.

*61. 2010 Referral: Item 13-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Restoration of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti. Recommendation 2. Inform the PC(USA) Membership and the Leadership of the Church to the Potentially Problematic Nature of Agro-Business Initiatives Being Planned for Haitian Land, Including So-Called Marginal Land, Based on Bio-Fuel Production Schemes, Especially Those Relying on Foreign Hybrid and/or GMO Seeds, or the Unproven Industrial Plantation of Jatropha (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 69–70, 973–76).*

*Response:* Wide education of Presbyterians continues about GMO (genetically modified seeds)/hybrid seeds and the potential negative impact of industrial agriculture initiatives on Haitian land, including Presbyterian Hunger Program Bible study (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/hunger/presbyterian-hunger-program-bible-study>), the development of a Food Sovereignty page on the Presbyterian Hunger Program website (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/joininghands>), the development of a video in cooperation with Agricultural Missions, and Mission Co-worker Mark Hare’s blogs and videos. Jean-Baptiste Chavannes (Haiti mission partner), Mark Hare (mission co-worker), and Presbyterian Hunger Program visited numerous Presbyterian congregations and presbyteries to do presentations on this issue. This education has resulted in hunger networks and congregations writing to USAID and to Former President Bill Clinton protesting the importation of hybrid seeds into Haiti that undercut the cost of local seed and violate the goals of the Haitian farming movement to build a strong, local food economy.

*62. 2010 Referral: Item 13-12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Restoration of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti. Recommendation 4. Direct the PC(USA) to Work Collaboratively with Other Denominations and Ecumenical Institutions to Ensure That (a) Haiti Is Increasingly Able to Feed Itself; (b) the Value of Reinstating Tariffs as Transitional Protection for Recovering Local Agriculture Is Given Due Consideration; (c) Exports Are Secondary to Creating Viable Food Economies for Haitians; (d) Emergency Food Aid to Haiti Is Monitored and Managed in Such a Way That It Provides Incentives (and Not Disincentives) for Local Food Production; (e) Mechanisms Are Created for Haitian Farmers to Make Their Voices Heard as They Advocate for Themselves to the Haitian Government, the ICRH, USAID, and Other International Organizations That Are Directly Involved in the Haitian Reconstruction (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 69–70, 973–76).*

*Response:* General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) staff worked with Agricultural Missions and the Inter-Faith Working Group on Trade and Investment to promote policies that ensure that Haiti’s agricultural production is food-focused for Haitians, including trade policies. The GAMC staff has worked to strengthen Haitian farmers’ organizations in advocacy, education, and funding, both through FONDAMA and the Peasant Movement of Paypay (MPP) (PC(USA) partners). Funds

were raised to support the purchase of tools and indigenous seeds in order to avoid dependence on a foreign seed supplier and to enable farmers to feed refugees fleeing into the region. During reconstruction phase, funds were used to support eco-village construction to provide housing and livelihood to landless families. Two presbyteries, Scioto Valley and Peaks, are weighing the creation of partner-networks to work with Haitian farmers on advocacy issues tied to agro-business initiatives and the protection of indigenous seed in the United States and in Haiti.

The GAMC staff accompanied Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, the director of the Haiti's largest farmers' organization, MPP, in meetings with USAID, members of the Black Caucus, and other congressional leaders to oppose the donation of hybrid seeds to Haiti and the implementation of industrial agriculture, including the cultivation of jatropha, an indigenous hardy plant found in Haiti. Mark Hare, mission co-worker, and recruitment for a Joining Hands new mission position in Haiti provide more opportunities to deepen the work to address these root causes of hunger in Haiti.

63. *2010 Referral: Item 13-14. Commissioners' Resolution. On Restoration of Democracy in Madagascar and Honduras. Recommendation 2. Directs the Washington Office and the Presbyterian United Nations Office to (a) Advocate for Consistent Monitoring of Human Rights/Civil Liberties Standards and of Laws Designed to Limit Financial or Other Interference in the Affairs of Other Nations by Private Interests, and to Support Independent Judiciaries and Other Parties Seeking Transparency, Anti-Corruption Measures, and Protection or Restoration of Freedom of Speech and Association, Including Labor Organization; (b) Identify Opportunities for Presbyterians to Advocate on Behalf of Democracy and on Behalf of Our Sisters and Brothers in Honduras and Madagascar (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 71, 977-79).*

*Response:* The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations facilitated a meeting between PC(USA) mission co-workers related to Madagascar and staff of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. The ministry also provided opportunities for Presbyterians to engage in advocacy on behalf of democracy in Madagascar.

The Office of Public Witness (OPW) facilitated numerous meetings with Congress and the administration on Madagascar. The OPW arranged for a meeting with Senator Chris Coons, chair of the Africa Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and colleagues in World Mission. Madagascar and the issues involving the coup were highlighted as one of our main concerns. Communication has continued with Senator Coons' office. Letters outlining the concerns stated in the resolution have been sent. Request for a Senate and a House hearing have also been made. The OPW arranged for the Reverend Hubert Rakotoarivony, a minister ordained in the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM), and Dan Turk, mission co-worker serving in Madagascar, to meet with the offices of the chairs and ranking members of both the house and senate Africa Subcommittees. The OPW also arranged for a meeting with relevant staff at the State Department. An action alert was sent out to PC(USA) members on the situation in Madagascar.

64. *2010 Referral: Item 13-14. Commissioners' Resolution. On Restoration of Democracy in Madagascar and Honduras. Recommendation 3. With Regard to Madagascar, the 219th General Assembly (2010) Directs the Stated Clerk and Appropriate Programs of the General Assembly Mission Council to Call Upon the President of the United States and Leaders of the Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations Committees to (a) Appeal to Both the De Facto Government and to the United Nations to Ensure the Security of Pastors and Members of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) and to Protect Religious Liberty and Freedom of Association, Including Free Speech; (b) Support Multilateral Dispute Resolution Procedures Initiated by Regional Bodies (Such as SADC and the AU) and by the United Nations, and to Engage with France and China to Secure the Restoration of Civil Freedoms and Environmental Protection; (c) Press for the Release of Political Prisoners; the End of Intimidation, Harassment, and Violence Against Opponents of the New Regime; and the Free Use of Airwaves by Church-Related and Other Radio Stations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 71, 977-79).*

*Response:* Based on this policy and in consultation with Presbyterian World Mission staff and PC(USA) mission co-workers, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations has engaged in advocacy on Madagascar with representatives of member states serving on the Security Council.

The Office of Public Witness (OPW) facilitated numerous meetings with Congress and the administration on Madagascar. The OPW arranged for a meeting with Senator Chris Coons, chair of the Africa Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and colleagues in World Mission. Madagascar and the issues involving the coup were highlighted as one of our main concerns. Communication has continued with Senator Coons' office. Letters outlining the concerns stated in the resolution have been sent. Request for a Senate and a House hearing have also been made. The OPW arranged for the Reverend Hubert Rakotoarivony, a minister ordained in the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM), and Dan Turk, mission co-worker serving in Madagascar, to meet with the offices of the chairs and ranking members of both the house and senate Africa Subcommittees. The OPW also arranged for a meeting with relevant staff at the State Department. An action alert was sent out to PC(USA) members on the situation in Madagascar.

65. *2010 Referral: Item 13-14. Commissioners' Resolution. On Restoration of Democracy in Madagascar and Honduras. Recommendation 4. With Regard to Honduras, the 219th General Assembly (2010) Directs the Stated Clerk and Appropriate Programs of the General Assembly Mission Council to Call Upon the President of the United States and Leaders of the Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations Committees to (a) Work to Suspend the Current Policy of Supporting the Coup Government Despite Opposition from Most Other Countries in the Region; (b) Urge the Organization of American States, the*

*United Nations, and Nongovernmental Organizations to Push for the Restoration of Protection for Opposition Political Leaders, Labor Leaders, Journalists, and Church Leaders Supporting Democracy and Protesting the Expansion of Privileges for Economic Elites; (c) Urge a Review of the U.S. Policy Direction in Honduras and Latin America from a Human Rights and Economic Justice Standpoint (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 71, 977–79).*

*Response:* The Stated Clerk has written the letters requested in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and people involved in these regions.

In coalition with the Latin America Working group and the Honduras subcommittee, the Office of Public Witness has worked ecumenically through sign on letters, action alerts, and meetings with members of congress and other relevant offices and institutions, to call for the listed actions concerning Honduras. (Please see the Latin America Working group blog <http://lawg.org/component/taxonomy/term/summary/163/68> )

66. *2010 Referral: Item 14-03. MRTI Report of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to Continue the Corporate Engagement Process with Identified Companies Doing Business in the Region, as Follows: (a) That the Engagement with Motorola, ITT, United Technologies, and Hewlett-Packard Be Continued, Together with Ecumenical Partners, as Part of MRTI's Regular Work Plan, in Accordance with the Previously Identified Positions and Priorities of the General Assembly, and Subject to Ordinary Reporting to Each General Assembly and Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Its Work Including Appropriate Recommendations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 985–93).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 15-11, MRTI Report of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

67. *2010 Referral: Item 14-07. On Iraq. Recommendation C. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Empower and Equip Presbyteries and Congregations as They Respond to the Spiritual and Material Needs of Iraqi Refugees Arriving in the United States, Including Increased Collaboration Between Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the Office of Middle Eastern Congregational Support to Provide a Holistic Approach to This Outreach Ministry; and Also Direct the GAMC to Work Proactively with Our Regional Partners as They Respond to the Ongoing Needs of Iraqi Refugees in the Host Countries in the Middle East—From the Presbytery of Providence (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 51–52, 1018–21).*

*Response:* Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been increasing its support to refugees across the U.S., including increasing its budgeted support and the number of services it has been providing. In partnership with Office of the General Assembly's Office of Immigration Issues (OGA), PDA is working with its network of Asylum Support Agencies and aiding new agencies with their assistance to asylum seekers, including a new emphasis in finding safe, secure shelter for recently released detainees. In addition, for the first time, PDA has partnered with OGA's Office of Immigration Issues, the Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women and World Mission to organize a consultation among congregations that assist with refugee resettlement, new immigrant congregations, their host congregations and their presbyteries, including significant representation from the Iraqi refugee community, focused on the needs of newly arrived and resettled refugees and sharing information and resources in reaching those involved in this vital ministry. The PDA has been active in attending meetings with the Iraq Partnership Network and that network was represented at the refugee resettlement consultation.

68. *2010 Referral: Item 14-08. Breaking Down the Walls. Recommendation 3.a. Directs the General Assembly Mission Council to Set 2010–2012 as a Time of Presbyterian Prayer and Action for the Middle East, Including: Travel Opportunities with a Particular Emphasis on Visits with the Christian Communities, Study of Reformed Theological Understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and of Historical Understandings That Encompass Various Narratives and Verifiable Sources, Itineration Throughout the U.S. by Middle Eastern Christian Partners, Local Dialogues and Shared Projects with American Jews and Muslims, Participation in the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program (EAPPI) in Palestine and Israel of the World Council of Churches, and Robust Publicity and Promotion of These Activities—From the Middle East Study Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 1021–1119).*

*Response:* A website has been developed to promote 2010–2012 as a Time of Prayer and Action for the Middle East (<http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/middleeastwitness/>). The website draws together the various resources that were requested as part of this witness:

- a. travel opportunities with a particular emphasis on visits with the Christian communities,
- b. study of Reformed theological understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of historical understandings that encompass various narratives and verifiable sources,
- c. contact information for Middle Eastern Christian mission partners to itinerate and speak throughout the U.S.,
- d. information about local dialogues and shared projects with American Jews and Muslims,

e. information regarding participation in the ecumenical accompaniment program (EAPPI) in Palestine and Israel of the World Council of Churches.

69. *2010 Referral: Item 15-09. Recommendation. That the 219th General Assembly (2010) Convene a Conversation Within the Larger Church to Develop a Comprehensive Strategy for Addressing the Concern for Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership at All Levels of the Church That Would Include and Be Led by No Less Than Two Representatives Appointed or Elected by Each of the Following Groups: the PC(USA) Hispanic/Latina/o Caucus, the PC(USA) Office of Vocation, the Advisory Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Committee on Theological Education, and the General Assembly Mission Council. Other Groups and/or Appropriate Individuals May Be Invited into the Conversations with All Individually Responsible for Reporting to Their Respective Groups and Corporately Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Committee on Theological Education (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 6, 7, 1164–65).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Recommendations and Rationale, Recommendations A.1.–4., B.1.–3., C.1. –3., D.1.–2., and E., being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

70. *2010 Referral: Item 15-13. Commissioners' Resolution. On Assisting the Emmanuel Church of Tirana in Planting Churches and Forming a New Reformed Denomination in Albania (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 6, 7, 1181–83).*

*Response:* Communication and collaboration with the Presbytery of Santa Barbara is ongoing to build the capacity of the Emmanuel Church of Tirana and assist with plans for training lay leaders and pastors and establish new congregations in Albania. World Mission is in the process of hiring a regional liaison for the Balkans to oversee and coordinate GAMC mission involvement in Albania.

71. *2010 Referral: Item 16-12. Report of the Special Committee on the Belhar Confession. Recommendation. To Direct the Office of Theology and Worship to Create a Fully Inclusive Language Version of the Belhar Confession for the Web Similar to the Inclusive Language Version of the Confession of 1967 (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 8, 9–10, 1213–19).*

*Response:* The Office of Theology and Worship put a fully inclusive language version of the Belhar Confession is available on its website at <http://gamec.pcusa.org/ministries/theologyandworship/confession/>.

72. *2010 Referral: Item 19-05. Becoming an HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action. Recommendation 4.b. Direct the Appropriate Entities of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), in Consultation with the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN), the Racial Ethnic Caucuses of the PC(USA), the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), to Develop: (1) Denominational Standards Defining the Marks of HIV And AIDS Competent Congregations and Ministries, in Accordance with PC(USA) Policies and in Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners in HIV And AIDS Ministries; and (2) A Study Guide That Provides Pastors, Church Educators, Elders, Deacons, Mission Workers, Youth and Young Adults, and Lay Persons with Practical Examples of How to Discuss and Thoughtfully Examine, with Cultural Proficiency and Sensitivity, HIV and AIDS Issues, Including the Role of Social Structures Examined in This Report, as Well as the Role of Responsible Sexual Behaviors, Through Bible Studies, Worship, Liturgy, Preaching, Pastoral Care, and Social Justice Advocacy—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72–73, 1370–1404).*

*Response:* In consultation with the International Health and Development Office in World Mission and the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy produced a print booklet form of the 2010 policy with a study guide and several resources linked to the primary practical resource, a DVD produced by PAN. This booklet has been publicized for World AIDS Day and at several PC(USA) events, and can be downloaded on-line (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/becoming-an-hiv-and-aids-competent-church>).

73. *2010 Referral: Item 19-05. Becoming an HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action. Recommendation 4.i. Direct the Presbyterian Washington Office (PWO) and the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO) to Advocate to the Appropriate National and International Tribunals Items 1 Through 6—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72–73, 1370–1404).*

*Response:* The Office of Public Witness (OPW) brought in a 2011 Summer Fellow who worked exclusively on HIV/AIDS issues. He represented the OPW at numerous briefings and congressional hearings. The OPW also collaborated with the Office of the Stated Clerk and the International Health and Development Office in World Mission to write a letter to members of Congress and the Administration on this topic.

The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations participated in the UN's 2011 General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS and has engaged in advocacy in other appropriate settings.

74. *2010 Referral: Item 19-06. On Full Access to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment Services in U.S. Correctional Facilities. Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Allocate the Resources Necessary for the*

*Washington Office, in Partnership with Other Programs, to Host a Briefing for a Grassroots Audience That Addresses the Changing Face of HIV/AIDS in America, and Underscores the Need for Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment Services in All Correctional Facilities—From the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 73, 1405–06).*

*Response:* In March 2011, the Office of Public Witness (OPW) hosted its first annual Compassion, Peace and Justice Training Day, at which it offered a panel discussion and briefing for a grassroots audience on “the Changing Face of HIV and AIDS in the U.S.” Panel participants included a local service provider, a representative of a national minority AIDS advocacy organization, local pastors at churches that are engaged in robust HIV/AIDS ministries, and a pastor whose focus is on the occurrence and response to disease in U.S. correctional facilities.

The OPW also brought in a 2011 Summer Fellow, who focused exclusively on HIV/AIDS. He developed two plans for ongoing outreach and ministry. The first was a plan for developing a resource for ministers engaged in prison ministries so that they will have more information about some of the issues facing inmates with whom they come in contact. In addition, the Fellow proposed a plan to work with the Presbyterian AIDS Network to develop a resource on these issues geared toward youth.

The OPW also collaborated with the Office of the Stated Clerk to write a letter to all state governors urging comprehensive HIV treatment services in correctional facilities.

### **I. General Assembly Mission Council Shared Services Final Response to Referral**

*2010 Referral: Item 11-09. A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recommendation 6. Direct All Entities to Keep Annual Statistics Demonstrating Compliance with the Church’s Minority Vendor Policy—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 42, 857–78).*

*Response:* The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) gathers data annually from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) year-end financials to confirm ongoing compliance with the church’s Minority Vendor Policy.

### **J. Office of the General Assembly Final Responses to Referrals**

1. *2008 Referral: Item 03-16. Joint COGA/GAC Budget Proposals, Recommendation 3. That the Stated Clerk and the General Assembly Council Share, in Partnership with the Middle Governing Bodies, Educational Materials with the Whole Church, so That All Will Have a Better Understanding of the History, Values, and Uses of the Per Capita Budget (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 35, 167).*

*Response:* The Office of the General Assembly assembled and distributed a per capita brochure in early 2011 to mid councils and congregations. It was designed so that mid councils could add interpretive materials to the brochure. The brochure was updated in January 2012 and is currently in use for the purpose of interpreting the uses of per capita throughout the system.

2. *2010 Referral: Item 03-29. Changes to the Session Annual Statistical Report. That the Office of the General Assembly Make Necessary Changes to the Session Annual Statistics Report (SASR) Form as May Be Needed to Conform with the Revised Form of Government, Should the Revised Form of Government Be Approved by the Assembly and Adopted by a Majority of the Presbyteries, and That the OGA Report Such Changes to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 56, 79, 205).*

*Response:* The reporting of “inactive members” was removed from the form. The inclusion of “Other Participants” will appear on the 2012 report form.

3. *2010 Referral: Item 04-01, Recommendations 3 and 4. On Amending G-12.0100 and D-5.0101 Regarding Synod Function (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 28, 29, 207).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 05-13, Recommendation to Amend Sections G-3.0109, G-3.0404, D-5.0101, D-5.0106, D-5.0203, D-5.0206, D-6.0101, and D-6.0202 of the *Book of Order*,” being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

4. *2010 Referral: Item 10-10, Report: Neither Poverty Nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church. Recommendation 2.f. Request the Office of Vocation to Encourage Discussion of Solidarity Concerns; Invite Presbytery- and Synod-wide Planning Approaches (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 35, 742).*



*Response:* The Office of Vocation, directing presbytery and synod leaders to the report, invited leaders to engage in presbytery- and/or synod-wide planning to consider just models of compensation for pastoral ministry in small and struggling congregations and to include congregations with the smallest budgets, tent-making pastors, and underemployed teaching elders in such planning. Leaders were also invited to discuss ways synods, presbyteries, and congregations can include solidarity concerns regarding just compensation in the ministry of current congregations as well as in new ministries and congregations and to share those insights with other presbyteries and synods through on-line communities.

#### **K. Office of Vocation Final Response to Referral with Recommendations**

*2010 Referral: Item 06-19. On Establishing a Process to Evaluate the Current Call System—From the Presbytery of New Covenant (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 47, 477).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 07-19, Report of the Office of Vocation on the Process to Evaluate the Current Call System being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

#### **L. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Final Responses to Referrals**

1 *2006 Referrals: Item 13-10: On the Development of a Denominational E-Hymnal; and Item 13-11: On a New Denominational Hymnal for Corporate Worship (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 1142–43).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by Item 20-09, Recommendation Regarding New Presbyterian Hymnal, being presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

2. *2010 Referral: Item 10-10, Recommendation 2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Convene the Leadership of All Six Agencies Related to the General Assembly to Review Together the Fourteen Current Principles of Compensation in the “Report from the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Churchwide Compensation” (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 558–59) and to Explore the Possibility of Setting Ratios for Compensation in Order to Promote Greater Covenantal Unity Within Our One Church and in Our Mission Together.*

*Response:* On April 20, 2011, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council convened the leadership of the six General Assembly agencies for review of the fourteen current principles of compensation in the “Report from the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Churchwide Compensation” (213th General Assembly (2001); *Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 558–59).

Each agency shared aspects of its compensation programs, the fourteen principles, and how they have been applied in practice. The consensus was that the principles provide good, biblically, theologically, and ethically based guidance and at the same time appropriate human resource standards that have enabled the agencies to attract, retain, and fairly compensate qualified talent for the work of each agency in service to the church.

The leaders of the six General Assembly agencies also discussed possible ratios for compensation. The proposal to set ratios has been studied by task forces, committees, and boards and has been rejected by the General Assembly. The consensus was that setting ratios would be ill-advised and not in the best interest of the mission of the church. Compensation, to be fair and effective, is much more complex than a single ratio. Leadership of the six agencies agreed that the fourteen principles are a more comprehensive and sound approach to setting compensation rates and policies than setting ratios.

The PPC’s current compensation practices are designed to align with the fourteen current principles of compensation and to provide good stewardship of the church’s financial resources that reward and fairly compensate staff at all levels.

3. *2010 Referral: Item 11-09: A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recommendation 7. Each Entity Must Demonstrate Affirmative Efforts to Increase Racial Ethnic and Female Employee Representation in the Senior Management Categories. When Filling Vacancies at This Level, There Must Be a Racial Ethnic Person and a Female Among the Final Candidates; if They Are Not Among the Final Candidates, the Entity Must Explain Why They Were Not Considered – From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 42, 857–78)*

The PPC has practiced affirmative efforts to increase racial ethnic and female employee representation at every occurrence of recruitment and hiring of a new external candidate for employment hired at PPC during the last two years. This was further reported to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns committee in 2011 and during PPC’s General Assembly review process. Since PPC’s staff has decreased in size over the last several years there have been few opportunities to add additional staff to increase diversity. The PPC lost a racial ethnic member of senior staff and has not replaced that person yet but intends to do that as financial circumstances allow.

The PPC also recruits through the Robert Bohl racial ethnic intern program. A racial ethnic woman was active in this program in 2011. She has been offered permanent employment as an acquisitions editor with PPC and is currently consider-

ing that opportunity in a favorable light. She is completing her Ph.D. and is expected to decide whether to accept PPC's offer of employment no later than January 2013, and perhaps sooner.

4. *2010 Referral: Item 10-14. Commissioners' Resolution. On Usury. Recommendation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) Calls Upon The PC(USA) and Its Corporate Financial Entities (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Board of Pensions, Funds of the General Assembly Mission Council, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Stated Clerk's Office), Synods, Presbyteries, Its Local Congregations, and Members to Be a Counter Voice to Usurious Practices, and to Prayerfully Consider Moving Money Out of the Financial Institutions Who Exploit Consumers and Into Financial Institutions That Practice Responsible Consumer Lending Practices. We Call Upon MRTI to Report on Their Evaluation of This Strategy to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 34, 37-38, 793-94).*

The PPC and its board of directors have instructed our investment advisers to practice responsibly social investing in all instances.

## Item 01-03

[The assembly approved Item 01-03 with amendment. See p. 2.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 219th General Assembly (2010) approve the following list of referrals of business:

### 00 PLENARY

- 00-01 Report of the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee 2012.
- 00-02 General Assembly Nominating Committee 2012 Nominations.
- 00-03 Committee Structure.

### 01 BUSINESS REFERRALS

*The moderators and vice moderators of the assembly committees, as a group, shall function as the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall function as the moderator and vice moderator of this committee as well. This committee shall report to the assembly for its action at the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.*

- 01-01 Docket.
- 01-02 Plenary Consent Agenda.
- 01-03 Referrals to Assembly Committees.
- 01-04 Suspend Standing Rules.

### 02 BILLS AND OVERTURES

*Docket of the assembly and referrals of business to assembly committees after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules C.4.b.); appeal of persons denied the right to speak at a public hearing (Standing Rule E.5.b.); review requests for distribution of material to commissioners (Standing Rule E.6.c.); review requests from agencies to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings during assembly meeting (Standing Rule E.6.d.); recommend approval of time limits on debate (Standing Rule F.1.b.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly Minutes (Standing Rule F.1.c.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly Minutes (Standing Rule F.1.d.); review protests, determine if entered in the Minutes, prepare response if needed (Standing Rule F.1.e.); report on assembly committee requests for establishment of special committees or commissions (Standing Rule K.1.a.-b.).*

### 03 GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

*Consider matters related to: Meetings of the assembly; per capita budget; standing rule amendments; operation of the Office of the General Assembly; statistics; publishing of reports; General Assembly Nominating Committee process; special committees; commissioners and advisory delegates credentials/leaves of absence.*

#### For Plenary Action

- 03-01 On Amending Standing Rule F.6.c. Regarding Nominations from the Floor—From the Presbytery of Boston.
- 03-02 On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Forward Only Per Capita Funds Received to Their Synods and the General Assembly—From the Presbytery of Detroit.
- 03-03 Amendment to the *Organization for Mission* Clarifying the Roles of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of GAMC—COGA & GAMC.
- 03-04 Site of the 223rd General Assembly (2018)—COGA.
- 03-05 Amend Section IV.C.2. of the *Organization for Mission*—COGA.

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 03-06 Amend Section IV.C. of the *Organization for Mission* Regarding Committee on Representation—COGA.
- 03-07 Amend Section IV.C.5. of the *Organization for Mission* Regarding the General Assembly Nominating Committee—COGA.
- 03-08 Election of Associate Stated Clerks—COGA.
- 03-09 Amend Section IV.C.3.a. of the *Organization for Mission*—COGA.
- 03-10 Amend Standing Rule K.1.c.—COGA.
- 03-11 Confirm Election of Presbyterian Historical Society Board Members—COGA.
- 03-12 Joint COGA/GAMC Budget Proposals—COGA/GAMC.
- 03-13 A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—ACREC.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 03-A Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.
- 03-B Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society.

### **Information**

- 03-Info General Assembly Nominating Committee Agency Summary—GANC.
- 03-Info General Assembly Per Capita Payments by Presbytery—COGA.
- 03-Info General Assembly Agency Minister Salaries Report.

## **04 REVIEW OF BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES**

*Consider matters related to: The report of the General Assembly Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 04-01 Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

### **Information**

[No items.]

## **05 MID COUNCILS REVIEW**

*Consider matters related to: Mid council boundaries; mid council-related referrals; the report of the Mid Council Commission.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 05-01 On Amending G-3.0301, G-3.0403c., and G-3.0502e. to Enable Flexible Boundaries within or Beyond the Bounds of an Existing Presbytery—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.
- 05-02 On Creating a Committee on Synod Boundaries—From the Presbytery of St. Andrew.
- 05-03 On Amending G-5.05a Regarding a Session's Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 05-04 On Amending G-5.0401 Regarding a Union Presbytery's Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 05-05 On Adding G-3.0301d to Clarify the Right of Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 05-06 On Amending G-5.05a, Joint Congregational Witness—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 05-07 On Amending G-5.0401, Conflicting Mandatory Provisions between Constitutional Standards of Union Presbyteries—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 05-08 On Amending G-3.0403c. and G-3.0502e. to Bring Flexibility to the Ways Presbyteries Relate to Each Other—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.
- 05-09 On Extending the Mid Council Commission or Establishing a Successor Administrative Commission—From the Presbytery of San Diego.
- 05-10 On Delaying Actions Regarding the Creation of Non-Geographic Presbyteries Until at Least 2016—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 05-11 On Transferring the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley to the Presbytery of Geneva—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.
- 05-12 Mid Council Report to the 220th General Assembly—From the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils.
- 05-13 On Amending the *Book of Order* Regarding Synod Functions—OGA.
- 05-14 Interpretation of G-3.0403c—From the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly—ACC.
- 05-15 On Transferring the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, from the Presbytery of Charlotte to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina—From the Presbytery of Charlotte.
- 05-16 On Transferring Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, California, from the Presbytery of Sacramento to the Presbytery of Stockton—From the Synod of the Pacific.

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 05-17 On Transferring Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Elizabeth to the Presbytery of Eastern Korean—From the Synod of Northeast.
- 05-18 On Transferring Four Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.
- 05-19 On Transferring Two Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.

### Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

- 05-A to  
05-P Review of Synod minutes.

### Information

[No items.]

## 06 CHURCH POLITY

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (Chapters 1 and 3), Form of Government Chapters I, III–IV, VI (except as covered by the Mid Council Commission) with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; amendments to the Rules of Discipline with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice.*

### For Plenary Action

- 06-01 On Amending F-1.01, God’s Mission—From the Presbytery of Utah.
- 06-02 On Amending D-10.0101–.0102 to Clarify the Duties of an Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Detroit.
- 06-03 On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of National Capital.
- 06-04 On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of Saint Andrew.
- 06-05 [Item 06-05 became Item 20-11. There is no Item 06-05.]
- 06-06 On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 06-07 On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 06-08 On Amending F-1.0403, Unity in Diversity—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.
- 06-09 On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 06-10 On Amending G-1.0503 Regarding Business at Congregational Meetings—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.
- 06-11 On Amending G-2.0401 Regarding the Congregational Nominating Committee—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.
- 06-12 On Amending G-1.04 to “Add Special Consideration for Membership for Families Serving Yoked Churches”—From the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.
- 06-13 On Amending F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 to Eliminate the List of Those Whom We Refuse to Discriminate Against—From the Presbytery of Western New York.
- 06-14 On Amending G-1.0101, The Mission of the Congregation—From the Presbytery of Grace.
- 06-15 [Withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace on June 9, 2012.]
- 06-16 On Amending G-3.0301, Composition and Responsibilities—From the Presbytery of North Puget Sound.
- 06-17 On Amending F-1.0403 “Unity in Diversity” and G-2.0401 “Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons” to Ensure Participation—From the Presbytery of Grace.
- 06-18 On Amending D-3.0101b(2)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly—COGA
- 06-19 Amending G-3.0104—From the Manager, Polity Guidance and Training—ACC

### Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[No items.]

### Information

- 06-Info Governing Bodies Statements of Compliance with Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions—OGA.
- 06-Info General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Roster and Decisions—OGA.
- 06-Info Report on Proposed Amendments—OGA.

**07 CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY**

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to Chapter II of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; recruiting, enlistment of persons to service of church. Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 07-01 On Amending G-2.0104b to Make It Consistent with the Constitutional Questions in W-4.4003—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas.
- 07-02 On Amending G-2.0104b to Clarify Standards for Ordination—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 07-03 On Amending G-2.0104a to Include Standards Regarding Sexual Behavior—From the Presbytery of Central Florida.
- 07-04 On Amending the *Book of Order* Concerning the Titles Used for Those in Ordered Ministries—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.
- 07-05 On Amending G-2.0104a to Include “Repentance of Sin” and “Means of Grace”—From the Presbytery of San Jose.
- 07-06 On Replacing G-2.0104b with the Language of G-6.0106b in the Former Form of Government—From the Presbytery of Washington.
- 07-07 On Reevaluating the Process by Which Ordination Exams Are Written, Administered, and Graded—From the Presbytery of Cascades.
- 07-08 On Adding G-2.0104c Allowing Operational Manuals to Require Adherence to Certain Theological and/or Behavioral Expectations—From the Presbytery of South Alabama.
- 07-09 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.
- 07-10 On Adding New Section G-2.0106 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Pertaining to Ordinations—From the Presbytery of Stockton.
- 07-11 On Adding G-2.0106, Freedom of Conscience for Councils—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.
- 07-12 On Amending G-2.0104b to Clearly State the Authority of Scripture as the Most Important Basis for the Ordination of an Office of the Church—Presbytery of Wyoming.
- 07-13 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Albany.
- 07-14 [Item 07-14 became Item 06-17. There is no Item 07-14.]
- 07-15 [Withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace on June 9, 2012.]
- 07-16 On Affirming Statements in the *Book of Order* to Guide Councils in Examining Candidates for Ordination or Installation—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.
- 07-17 On Honoring Christ in Our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of Sacramento.
- 07-18 On Committing Ourselves to Respectful Dialogue with Those Who Hold Differing Convictions—From the Presbytery of Chicago.
- 07-19 Report of the Office of Vocation on the Process to Evaluate the Current Call System to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—COGA.
- 07-20 Clarification of Wording in G-2.0702—From the Interim Associate for Preparation for Ministry/Exams in the Office of Vocation, Office of the General Assembly/General Assembly Mission Council—ACC.
- 07-21 Authoritative Interpretation on 10-A. Pastor Will Not Moderate Session—From Associate Presbytery Pastor/Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Los Ranchos—ACC.
- 07-22 Question as to Whether G-2.0104b Has Been Amended—From the Session, First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tennessee—ACC.
- 07-23 Regarding the Structure of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee—PCCEC.
- 07-24 On Honoring Christ in Our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

**Information**

[No items.]

**08 AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW**

*Consider matters related to: The report of the General Assembly Task Force to Review Authoritative Interpretations.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 08-01 Report of the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order*.
- 08-02 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-3.0306 Regarding Laboring Inside the Bounds of a Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

**Information**

[No items.]

**09 ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS**

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to Chapter V of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; matters dealing with relationships with, and attitudes toward, other religious movements or bodies; conversations with other Presbyterian denominations; nominations for ecumenical advisory delegates; nominations for delegations to corresponding churches; reports of corresponding bodies.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 09-01 On Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Mission Partnership Between the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.
- 09-02 Invitation of Churches to Send Ecumenical Advisory Delegates to the 221th General Assembly (2014)—GACEIR.
- 09-03 Review of the World Council of Churches—GACEIR.
- 09-04 On Participation in the Eighth Round of Reform/Catholic Dialogue—GACEIR.
- 09-05 Delegates to Church World Service and National Council of Churches—GACEIR.
- 09-06 Delegates to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches—GACEIR.
- 09-07 Recommendations Regarding Covenant to Adopt the Lund Principle—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations—GACEIR

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 09-A Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.

**Information**

- 09-Info Christians and Jews, People Of God: A Contribution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the Interfaith Conversation.

**10 MISSION COORDINATION**

*Consider matters related to: Mission programs authorized by General Assembly; PC(USA) vision and mission goals; Organization for Mission and General Assembly Mission Council Manual of Operations; mission budget; audits; churchwide compensation.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 10-01 On Recognizing Bloomfield College as a Racial Ethnic College—From the Presbytery of Newark.
- 10-02 On Instituting a Special Offering Designated to Native American Ministry for a Period of Three Years—From the Presbytery of Inland Northwest.
- 10-03 On Supporting Young Adults in Mission and Leadership Development for the Future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Presbytery of Western New York.
- 10-04 [Item 10-04 became Item 11-20. There is no Item 10-04.]
- 10-05 On Maintaining the Integrity of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.
- 10-06 On Retaining the Peacemaking Offering as an Independent Offering Appropriate to World Communion Sunday—From the Presbytery of Albany.
- 10-07 Revision to the General Assembly Mission Council Manual of Operations—GAMC.
- 10-08 Name Change for the GAMC—GAMC.
- 10-09 2013–2016 Mission Work Plan—GAMC.
- 10-10 Changes to the *Organization for Mission*—GAMC.
- 10-11 Amendment to *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A, Regarding Disbursement of Funds—GAMC.
- 10-12 ACREC Name Change—ACREC.
- 10-13 [Item 10-13 became Item 16-07. There is no Item 10-13.]
- 10-14 Special Offerings—GAMC
- 10-15 The Methodology Task Force Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Design for a Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA).
- 10-16 Women of Color Consultation Committee Report—GAMC.
- 10-17 Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report.
- 10-18 Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church—GAMC.
- 10-19 On Restoring the Objectives of the One Great Hour of Sharing—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 10-A Minutes, General Assembly Mission Council.
- 10-B Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corp.
- 10-C Audit

**Information**

- 10-Info Report of the General Assembly Mission Council on Current Task Forces, Work Groups, and Ad Hoc Committees—GAMC.
- 10-Info Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Report of Progress—From the General Assembly Mission Council—GAMC.
- 10-Info Domestic Mission Task Force Report—GAMC.
- 10-Info Report of Changes to the Appendices of the GAMC Manual of Operations—GAMC.

**11 SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: Concerns of church in national affairs; national military matters; matters relating to righteousness and justice of persons/organizations. Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 11-01 On Economic Justice in These Troubled Times—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- 11-02 On Calling for an End to Poverty Zone Development and for the Advocacy of Fair Development—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 11-03 On Endorsing “A Fifty Year Farm Bill”—From the Presbytery of Heartland.
- 11-04 On Strengthening Connections with Racial Ethnic Churches—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.
- 11-05 On Calling for an End to the Practice of Corporal Punishment in Homes, Schools, and Child Care Facilities—From the Presbytery of Grace.
- 11-06 On Instructing MRTI to Report to GAMC on the Corporate Practices of Publicly Traded Corporations That Operate For-Profit Prisons—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.
- 11-07 On Support of the United States Environmental Protection Agency—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 11-08 A Resolution on Racism, Incarceration, and Restoration—ACREC.
- 11-09 World of Hurt, Word of Life: “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction”—ACSWP.
- 11-10 A Resolution on Workers’ Rights and Income Inequality—ACREC.
- 11-11 A Resolution to Recognize the Call to Prophetic Witness in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—ACREC.
- 11-12 A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters—ACWC.
- 11-13 A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—ACWC.
- 11-14 A Resolution Commending Study of the 2011–2012 *Horizons* Bible Study and the Accra Confession—ACWC.
- 11-15 A Resolution to Encourage Participation in the Words Matter Project—ACWC.
- 11-16 A Resolution to Ensure Implementation of Updated and Detailed Safe Child Policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—ACWC.
- 11-17 Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer—From the Climate for Change Task Force.
- 11-18 A Resolution on Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault—ACWC.
- 11-19 On Advocating for Trade Reform and Accountability—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.
- [11-20 A Statement on the Housing and the Mortgage Crisis—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

**Information**

- 11-Info Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) Agency Summary.
- 11-Info Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Agency Summary

**12 IMMIGRATION ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: The church’s response to U.S. immigration policies and related issues.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 12-01 On Rescinding the 219th General Assembly (2010) Action Regarding a Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians (Item 11-11)—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.
- 12-02 On Taking Action Concerning the Place and Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.
- 12-03 On Taking Action Concerning the Place, Plight, and Contributions of Immigrant People in Our Country, Neighborhoods, and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.
- 12-04 On Advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.
- 12-05 On the Plight of Indonesian Christian Immigrants and the Passage of the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act—From the Presbytery of Newark.
- 12-06 On Adopting a Statement and Call to Action Regarding Immigration—From the Synod of the Southwest.
- 12-07 On Beginning Active Exploration in Communities to Seek Answers on How to Be Church Together with Immigrant Communities—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 12-08 On Approving a Statement Urging Congregations to Commit Two Years to Building Relationships with Refugees Living in Our Neighborhoods and Towns—From the Presbytery of Chicago.
- 12-09 A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality—ACREC.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

### **Information**

[No items.]

## **13 CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to the Form of Government, Rules of Discipline, and Directory for Worship related to marriage and civil unions; referrals defining marriage.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 13-01 On Amending W-4.9000 to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.
- 13-02 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.
- 13-03 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Boston.
- 13-04 On Amending W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.
- 13-05 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.
- 13-06 On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of New York City.
- 13-07 On An Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9001, Christian Marriage—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.
- 13-08 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse.
- 13-09 On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.
- 13-10 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Redwoods.
- 13-11 On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of the Redwoods.
- 13-12 On Confirming the Current Definition of Marriage and Any Current Authoritative Interpretations of Marriage in W-4.9000-.9001—From the Presbytery of Charleston Atlantic.
- 13-13 On Amending W-4.9001 Regarding Marriage and G-4.0208 Regarding Exceptions—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.
- 13-14 Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Session, Rutgers Presbyterian Church, New York, New York—ACC.
- 13-15 [Item 13-15 became Item 07-17. There is no Item 13-15.]
- 13-16 [Item 13-16 became Item 07-18. There is no Item 13-16.]

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

### **Information**

[No items.]

## **14 PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: Peacemaking, international military affairs, and the arms race except matters touched upon by the Middle East Peacemaking Issues Committee; international matters; human rights; plight of refugees worldwide; international economic justice; global evangelism and education.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 14-01 On Supporting the United Nations—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- 14-02 On Support for the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)—From the Presbytery of Boston.
- 14-03 For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World—ACSWP.
- 14-04 Human Rights Update—ACSWP.
- 14-05 Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness, an Interim Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Peace Discernment Steering Team.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 14-A Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

### **Information**

- 14-Info Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) Agency Summary.



**15 MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: Peacemaking, international military affairs and the arms race primarily involving the nations of the Middle East; Middle East monitoring committee; MRTI recommendations concerning Middle East nations.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 15-01 On Recognizing that Israel's Law and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against Palestinian People—From the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley.
- 15-02 On Boycotting Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories and Hadiklaim (an Israeli Date Growers Cooperative)—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.
- 15-03 On Divestment from Caterpillar—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.
- 15-04 On Supporting a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the U.S.-Iran Issues—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- 15-05 On Ethical Investment and Divestment—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.
- 15-06 On Responding to the Call from Palestinian Christians for Economic Solidarity—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.
- 15-07 On Rejecting the Use of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction Policies in Peacemaking Efforts Between Israelis and Palestinians—From the Presbytery of National Capital.
- 15-08 On Approving the GAMC's Recommendations on Selective Divestment Made by MRTI—From the Presbytery of the Palisades.
- 15-09 On Human Rights and Religious Freedom of Arab Christians and Other Palestinian Citizens—From the Presbytery of San Jose.
- 15-10 On Pursuing a Creative Course of Action Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.
- 15-11 MRTI Report on Engagements with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank—GAMC.

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

**Information**

- 15-Info Middle East Monitoring Group Report.

**16 CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP**

*Consider matters related to: Items concerning evangelism, outreach, and church growth as they relate to congregations and councils of the church; church transfers, PILP.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 16-01 Nominees to the PILP Board of Directors—GAMC.
- 16-02 1,001 Worshipping Communities—GAMC.
- 16-03 African American Church Growth Strategy Report—GAMC.
- 16-04 Confirm Reelection of President of the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program—PILP.
- 16-05 General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.
- 16-06 Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth.
- 16-07 Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century.]

**Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 16-A Sam and Helen Walton Awards—GAMC.
- 16-B Recognize Women of Faith Awards—GAMC.
- 16-C Minutes, Presbyterian Church Investment and Loan Program.

**Information**

[No items.]

**17 THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to the Directory for Worship and Chapter II of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; authority and interpretation of Scripture; Christian educators; theological institutions; celebration of Lord's Supper requests.*

**For Plenary Action**

- 17-01 On Undertaking a Parenting Initiative Called the "Institute for Effective Parental Leadership"—From the Presbytery of Long Island.
- 17-02 On Amending the "Setting of the Service" of Ordination and Installation for Teaching Elders (W-4.4002)—From the Presbytery of New Castle.

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 17-03 Covenant Between the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and Auburn Theological Seminary—COTE.
- 17-04 New Trustees Elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions—COTE.
- 17-05 Permission for Theological Institutions to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—COTE.
- 17-06 Approve Presidents of Theological Seminaries—COTE.
- 17-07 Nominees to the Mountain Retreat Association Board of Directors—GAMC.
- 17-08 Approve List of Colleges, Universities, and Secondary Schools—GAMC.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 17-A Award for Excellence in Theological Education—COTE.
- 17-B Minutes, Committee on Theological Education.
- 17-C Celebrate Bicentennial Celebrations of Union Presbyterian Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary—COTE.

### **Information**

- 17-Info Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary.

## **18 CONFESSIONS OF THE CHURCH**

*Consider matters related to: Amendments to The Book of Confessions. The report of the General Assembly Heidelberg Catechism Committee.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 18-01 On Amending *The Book of Confessions* to Include the Confession of Belhar—From the Presbytery of National Capital.
- 18-02 On Setting Aside Time to Study *The Book of Confessions* in Preparation for a Celebration in 2016—From the Presbytery of the Cascades.
- 18-03 Report of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

### **Information**

[No items.]

## **19 REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES**

*Consider matters related to: Review of the work of the General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committees as Scheduled [2012: ACC, ACL, COR] (See Organization for Mission, Section IV.D.2.).*

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 19-A Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation.

### **Information**

- 19-Info General Assembly Committee on Representation Agency Summary.
- 19-Info Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) Agency Summary.
- 19-Info Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) Agency Summary.
- 19-SelfStudy General Assembly Committee on Representation Self-Study Report 2012.
- 19-SelfStudy Advisory Committee on the Constitution Self-Study Prepared for the 220th General Assembly (2012).
- 19-SelfStudy Advisory Committee on Litigation Self-Study.

## **20 BOARD OF PENSIONS, FOUNDATION, AND PPC**

*Consider matters related to: Report of Board of Pensions; business related to the church's pension, annuity, and medical plans; other forms of such programs, including government or private retirement programs; business related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 20-01 Withdrawn by the Presbytery of San Diego on May 22, 2012.
- 20-02 On Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Medical Benefits Plan That Will Not Pay for Abortions Except to Save the Life of the Woman—From the Presbytery of Washington.
- 20-03 On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Consider the Possibility of Adding to the Disability Benefits the Option of Partial Disability Benefits—From the Presbytery of San Gabriel.
- 20-04 On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Switch Mental Health Providers—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska.
- 20-05 BOP Amendments to Articles of Incorporation—BOP.
- 20-06 Churchwide Gifts Program and New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN.
- 20-07 Confirm Directors of the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN.
- 20-08 Confirm Reelection of President of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—PPC.

## 01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

- 20-09 New Presbyterian Hymnal—PPC.
- 20-10 General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC).
- 20-11 On Amending G-2.0804 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Regarding the Benefits Plan—From the Presbytery of Stockton.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

- 20-A Board of Pensions Report on Amendments to the Benefits Plan.
- 20-B Minutes, Board of Pensions.
- 20-C Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
- 20-D Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

### **Information**

- 20-Info Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Agency Summary.
- 20-Info Report of the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN.
- 20-Info The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 2010–2011 Agency Summary.

## **21 HEALTH ISSUES**

*Consider matters related to: Health, managed care, disabilities, abortion.*

### **For Plenary Action**

- 21-01 On Instructing MRTI to Study and Report Corporate Practices of Health Insurance Companies and Possible Divestment of Same—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.
- 21-02 On Instructing the General Assembly to Take Action to Implement the PC(USA)'s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.
- 21-03 On Providing Just Access to Reproductive Health Care—From the Presbytery of Albany.

### **Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary**

[No items.]

### **Information**

[No items.]

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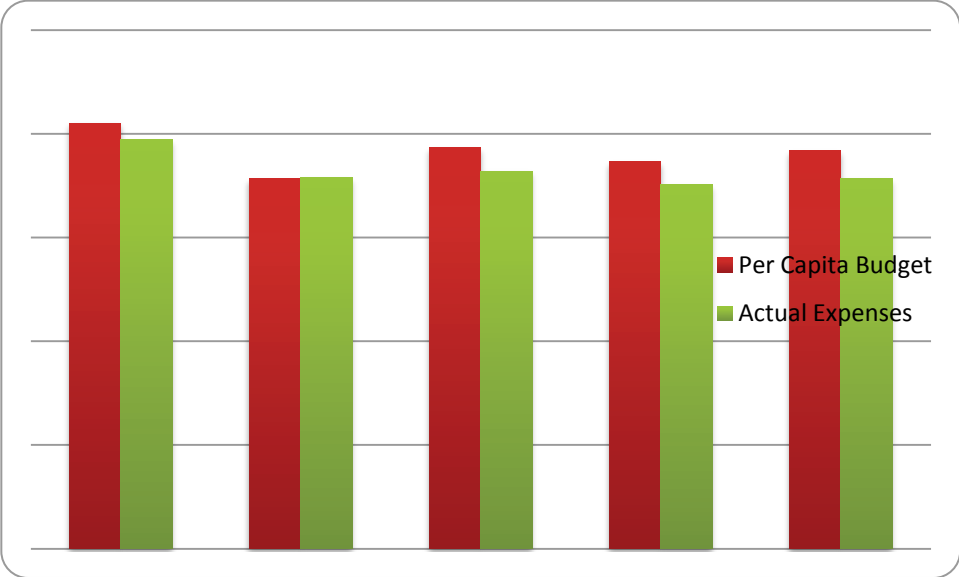
## **Item 01-04**

[The assembly approved Item 01-04. See p. 2.]

**The Assembly Committee on Business Referrals recommends that Standing Rule A.2.a. be suspended in order to receive late business.**

- Board of Pensions Report, March 14, Item ;
- Joint GAMC/COGA Budget Proposal, April 16;
- General Assembly Per capita Payments by Presbytery, Five Year Per Capita Report, April 26;
- Advisory Committee on Litigation Agency Summary, May 4;
- Advisory Committee on Litigation Self-Study, May 4;
- Ecumenical Delegation Nominations, May 11;
- Stated Clerk Nominating Committee Report, May 13;
- GAMC Budgetary and Financial Recommendations, May 14;
- Structure of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates, May 15;
- Audit, May 31;
- Middle East Monitoring Group Narratives and Bibliography, May 31;
- General Assembly Minister Salary Information, June 1.

PHS Actual Expenses vs. Per Capita Budget 2007–2011



*Principles, Policies, and Procedures for the  
Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers  
of the Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elders)*

**Under Covenant Agreement Between  
the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and  
the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**



Prepared by Joint Implementation Committee of KPCA and PCUSA

Approved by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

2012

**THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
THE KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
AND  
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

*“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:1–6 (NRSV)*

## **I. History of Relationship**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] and the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (KPCA) are denominations with common roots and commitments in the Reformed tradition. The emotional ties are the legacy of their mission history. Protestant Christianity in Korea began through the sending of U.S. Presbyterian missionaries to Korea in 1885. Over the past century, Presbyterians in Korea have demonstrated phenomenal growth despite their difficult experiences of suffering. They have become genuine partners in mission and ecumenical engagement not only in Korea and Asia, but also throughout the world.

In the middle of the 1960s, the U.S. immigration law changed, opening the doors for many Koreans to immigrate to the United States. This started a new page in the history of Korean Presbyterians. Unfortunately, the PC(USA) was unprepared to welcome and accept the large number of Korean Presbyterians into its life. While some Koreans joined the PC(USA), some felt the need to establish an independent Korean Presbyterian Church in the United States. Each of these organized groupings of Korean American Presbyterian churches has contributed to the growth and development of the Presbyterian witness in the United States through its unique gifts and calling.

After many years of informal cooperation between leadership of the two churches, the 204th General Assembly (1992) of the PC(USA) and the 17th General Assembly (1992) of the KPCA authorized the establishment of the Joint Committee on Presbyterian Cooperation Between the PC(USA) and the KPCA. Over the past thirty years, the joint committee has focused its work in the areas of ministries and education, global mission, peace, justice, reconciliation, and church polity. Of particular note is the opportunity that Korean Americans born and raised in the United States present for our churches to move from immigrant-focused ministries to ministries directed toward future generations. The work of the joint committee has been important in shaping the relationship between the PC(USA) and the KPCA. The joint committee believes that God is calling us to move to a deeper relationship between the KPCA and the PC(USA) and to request our General Assemblies to declare covenant relationship between the two churches. Covenant relationship establishes a formal mutual commitment in our ecclesial and missional life together. The nature of covenant relationship is a call to mutuality based upon core theological principles.

## **II. Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation**

A. As churches within the Reformed tradition, each holding membership in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, we recognize each other as churches in which the gospel is preached, sacraments are rightly administered according to the Word of God, and the mission of Jesus Christ is lived out.

B. Baptism marks us as belonging to Christ and Christ's church. According to Scripture, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). To that end, we recognize the baptism of each of our churches and welcome one another's members as brothers and sisters in Christ. We recognize that it is Christ that has showed us the way of self sacrificing love and given to us the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to remember this love and to be fed with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. We encourage the sharing in the Lord's Supper together in all arenas of the church.

C. Christ has entrusted the ministry of the gospel to all of his disciples, calling us to follow him in the way of love, righteousness, peace, and justice. Ordination is the act by which men and women are set aside for particular ministries of the Church. We identify and name these ministries as deacon, elder, and minister of the Word and Sacrament. We recognize that the calling and setting aside of persons for service in the church and the world is for the sake of the mission of Christ. We recognize the authenticity of one another's ordination of ministers, elders, and deacons.

D. The church lives to fulfill the mission of God in the world. The church does not live for its own sake, but seeks to witness to the saving work of Jesus Christ, the transformative power of the gospel, justice and reconciliation in all areas of its life and witness. God's gift of unity strengthens the witness of the church. While divisions within the church cannot destroy the mission of the church, they do serve as distractions to the message and the mission of the church. We recognize that the mission of our churches is strengthened by

commitment to work cooperatively in the areas of congregational support, resource and leadership development, national and global mission.

### **III. Covenant Commitments**

A. We covenant to support one another through prayer, dialogue, and continued cooperative work. Through mutual affirmation and admonition, we covenant to an honest relationship in which our joys are celebrated, our trials are shared, and disagreements are addressed with the goal of strengthening this covenant. We will seek to affirm the witness of our churches and when necessary speak loving words of correction for the edification of the body of Christ.

B. While we recognize each other's ministries as authentic, we covenant to develop a process of orderly exchange of ministers. This provision will be governed by the principle that the presbyteries decide who shall be members and approve calls for service in churches. This process will allow for ministers to share in the ministry of each other's churches, identify processes for transferring ministers, and the procedures for ministers to be dually affiliated. This process will only apply to ministers who are in good standing and include processes for discipline in accordance with our individual polities.

C. We recognize that we are one family and our congregations have common roots. Many Koreans within the PC(USA) and in the KPCA have shared roots in Korea. We covenant to develop a process of orderly transfer of congregations. This process will encourage, where feasible, congregations to share together in ministry and to be dually affiliated. We covenant to develop a process that seeks to strengthen the witness of our churches and not to contribute to divisions within the body of Christ. This process will be developed in a way that respects our individual polities.

D. We recognize that there is much we share in mission together. We covenant to continue to work together in the following areas of mission and pray that other areas may also emerge—curriculum development; second generation and youth and young adult ministry; congregational support and leadership development; women's leadership and resource development; global mission and justice and reconciliation in the world.

### **IV. Enabling Acts**

A. This covenant will be forwarded to our General Assemblies through the appropriate channels in each of our churches for action by 2008. Ecumenical Statement Approved by the PC(USA) 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2008 and the KPCA 33<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly in 2008.

B. Our assemblies will be asked to enter into covenant relationship, make the necessary constitutional amendments to enable this covenant, and to forward it to presbyteries for ratification. Approved by Majority Vote of PC(USA) and KPCA presbyteries, effective June 28, 2009.

C. Upon the ratification by presbyteries, covenant relationship will be established and a service of worship celebrating and formally entering into covenant relationship will be held by 2010.

D. A covenant implementation committee will be established to shape and support the covenanting process and to make recommendations that enable us to live fully into this covenant.

### **V. Prayer for the Future**

We offer thanksgiving to you O God, Creator of the Universe, Lord of all peoples. You sent the gospel to Korea through the work of Presbyterian missionaries. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you have nurtured the faith of Koreans in the midst of difficult sufferings and we witnessed the growth of the church in Korea and amongst Korean Presbyterians in the United States. We recognize that while there has been a separation because of human limitations, you have continued to work in and through each of our churches. You have taken our differences in culture, custom, and language and made us one family in Christ. We are grateful that you are bringing us to this time of deeper relationship and seek your guidance and blessing as we make this covenant between the Korean Presbyterian Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for now and generations to come. Amen

*"Now to him who by the power at work at within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."* Ephesians 3: 20–21 (NRSV)

The following document is the result of collaborative work done by the denominations participating in the *Covenant Agreement*. It is intended both for those interested in serving in a congregation of a covenant partner denomination as well as judicatory leaders seeking guidance in the implementation of such service.

## **The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elders)**

**Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad**

**and**

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

### **Background and Affirmations**

Through adoption of the *Covenant Agreement*, the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad (KPCA) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)], entered into a covenant relationship. Among other things, this agreement means that **the denominations recognize each other's ministries as authentic** and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

Orderly exchange (provisions for availability) of ordained ministers is for the sake of participation by both denominations in the mission of God, and can be an important sign of our unity in Christ. This particular provision **seeks to allow and encourage the more effective use and deployment of ordained leaders in order to enhance our shared ministry and mission**. It encourages those in our denominations who are responsible for the deployment of ordained ministers to draw on the available ministers of the other denomination to meet mission needs.

Ordained ministers in one denomination may be invited or may express their desire to serve in the other denomination; **they do not have a right to serve in the other** denomination. The orderly exchange of ordained ministers is understood to be **at the invitation of the receiving denomination and subject to that denomination's polity and procedures**.

**Orderly exchange is extended service in ministries in the covenant partner denomination while membership remains constant in a minister's own denomination**. The policies and procedures described here are developed by the two denominations for orderly exchange.

**The transfer of ministerial membership is a permanent movement of membership from one denomination to another. A minister seeking to transfer membership must meet the requirements of the denomination to which he or she seeks to belong**.

Under orderly exchange, the existing polity of each denomination continues to be respected. It is important, however, that provisions parallel each other as much as possible and that each denomination be familiar with and conversant about the provisions of the other. The denominations will need to nurture both national and regional relationships in order to enhance the orderly exchange of ministers and to find ways to celebrate visibly our covenant.



## Principles of Agreement

Seeking to promote greater understanding between the covenant partners, representatives of the two denominations offer the following principles to guide implementation efforts.

1. An ordained minister of a one partner denomination **may be eligible to engage in extended service in any position open to a minister in the other covenant denomination** except as noted otherwise in the polity of either denomination.
2. Orderly exchange involves an “inviting” presbytery and a “sending presbytery”. It is very important that both presbyteries be involved from the beginning of the orderly exchange process to assess the suitability of a minister for particular service and to establish a relationship of accountability and support which will foster effective ministry for Christ.
3. In evaluating the suitability of ordained ministers for service, **sending presbyteries will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in the Covenant and the mission needs of the inviting presbytery.**
4. **Inviting presbyteries shall approve service only in consultation with, and with the concurrence of, the sending presbytery.** When granting concurrence for an ordained minister to serve in the partner denomination, the sending presbytery will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in the Covenant.
5. It is important to the faithful and orderly exchange of ordained ministers between the denominations that one who would serve in a congregation of another denomination first be formed and educated for ministry in one's own denomination, and have experience in serving in that denomination's ordained ministry. Such experience and grounding in one's own denomination are seen to be essential prior to serving in a setting of another denomination; **therefore, such service is not intended for a first call.**
6. To be eligible to serve in the partner denomination, an ordained **minister will demonstrate to the inviting presbytery knowledge of and an appreciation for the history, polity, practices of ministry, and discipline of that denomination.**
7. **Placement, supervision, and evaluation procedures of the inviting presbytery shall be observed.** All parties will respect the authority of the inviting presbytery and its responsibility for the ministry of its congregations.
8. **The minister remains accountable to the sending presbytery for continuation of ministerial status.** All parties will respect the authority of the sending presbytery and its responsibility for the ministry of its minister members.
9. Responsibility for pastoral care of ordained ministers is shared by the inviting and sending presbyteries.
10. In a disciplinary review or judicial process, the ordained minister remains under the jurisdiction of the sending presbytery, but the inviting presbytery may be asked to participate as appropriate.
11. Each denomination will develop a provision whereby an ordained minister may be granted full participation in the inviting presbytery, which may include privilege of voice and vote. If service is in a local congregation, this would include moderating the session. We encourage presbyteries to grant such privileges in order to enhance the ministry.
12. An ordained minister serving the partner denomination will continue to participate in the pension and benefits program of their denomination of membership.

**For those who seek to serve there are four basic steps to follow:**

- 1) Read the “Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” carefully.
- 2) Contact your presbytery for authorization to make yourself available for service under the process.
- 3) After you have been authorized by your presbytery for service under orderly exchange and presbytery to presbytery contact has been made, contact a leader of the partner presbytery in the region you wish to serve and follow that denomination’s procedure.
- 4) Contact a congregation directly only after being directed to by the appropriate person from that congregation’s presbytery. That contact may include a PC(USA) Personal Information Form or resume. (Sample PIF and Stated Clerk attestation form to be attached.)

As the “Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of the Word and Sacrament” makes clear, **the process is for the sake of the mission of God**. It is not for the convenience of those who may wish to serve in another denomination. It is always to be understood to be at the *invitation* of the inviting denomination.

**THE PROCESS OF DENOMINATIONAL TRANSFER**

The purpose of the covenant agreement is not to encourage ministers to transfer their membership from one partner to another, but rather to share leadership for a time of service in order to strengthen the ministry of Christ. That process is one of lending and borrowing leadership.

However, we recognize that some ministers will seek to transfer membership and presbyteries will need information in order to guide that process in a way that respects the integrity of each denomination and the partnership of our covenant. For that reason, information about transfer procedures is given here.

When a minister seeks to transfer from one denomination to another, a written letter of standing will be provided by the sending presbytery to the receiving presbytery. When such a letter is not provided, the transfer will not occur. Additional consultation may occur between the sending and receiving presbyteries.

**Transfer of a KPCA minister into the PC(USA)**

Ministers of the KPCA will have to meet the requirements of the PC(USA) Form of Government G-2.0505. Essentially these requirements will be the same as those for ministers of other denominations, but the process does allow for an exception to the examination requirements if the minister has been ordained more than five years.

**Transfer of a minister member of the PC(USA) to the KPCA**

A PCUSA minister may transfer ministerial membership to the KPCA under the PC(USA) Form of Government provisions of G-2.0509. A minister may not be transferred if any disciplinary matter is pending.

**Transfer of a PC(USA) ministers into the KPCA**

Ministers of the PC(USA) will have to meet the requirements of the KPCA Constitution Chapter 5, Article 29 on “Calling of a Pastor of other Denominations.” These requirements are essentially the same as those for ministers of other denominations.

**Transfer of a minister member of the KPCA to the PC(USA)**

A minister may request transfer of ministerial membership to the PC(USA) under the KPCA Constitution Chapter 5, Article 32 on “Transferring of Pastors.” Such a minister will remain on the rolls and under the authority of his/her presbytery until notice is received from the receiving presbytery that the minister has been enrolled. A minister may not be transferred if any disciplinary matter is pending.

*Principles, Policies, and Procedures for  
the Orderly Transfer of Congregations*

**Under Covenant Agreement Between the  
Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and  
the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**



Prepared by the Joint Implementation Committee of KPCA and PCUSA

Approved by the PCUSA General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

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A. This covenant will be forwarded to our General Assemblies through the appropriate channels in each of our churches for action by 2008. Ecumenical Statement Approved by the PC(USA) 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2008 and the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly in 2008.

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C. Upon the ratification by presbyteries, covenant relationship will be established and a service of worship celebrating and formally entering into covenant relationship will be held by 2010.

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*“Now to him who by the power at work at within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”* Ephesians 3: 20–21 (NRSV)

The following document is the result of over 30 years of dialogue between the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The goal of this agreement is to lead our denominations and congregations towards closer, healthier relationships that strengthen and further the mission of Jesus Christ. This agreement is not to be used for the purposes of separation based upon dissent.

## **ORDERLY EXCHANGE OF CONGREGATIONS**

### **1. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Receiving Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad Churches**

The process for receiving a KPCA congregation is found in G-3.0205, “The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district. The presbytery has ~~the~~ responsibility and power to a. *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard*. This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members...” The process for dismissal from the KPCA is found in Art. 67, par. 7—“The duties of the Presbytery are as follows...To establish local churches, to divide or merge them, or to dissolve them if necessary, to organize the Session, to approve the calls of the Pastors, and to supervise evangelical and educational work and financial management.”

- a. Prior to consulting with a KPCA congregation, the PCUSA presbytery should consult with the KPCA presbytery of membership to assure that the KPCA congregation has been in conversation with the KPCA regarding the congregation’s desire to join a PCUSA presbytery.
- b. Such consultation between the presbyteries shall include at least:
  1. The determination of a plan for the pastor to transfer membership (KPCA, Art. 32; PCUSA G-2.0505 see also p. 8 of Orderly Exchange document)
  2. An agreement about what will happen to the real property. Since the KPCA *Book of Order* contains no explicit trust clause, agreements will have to be reached about any reversionary interest the KPCA presbytery may retain in property.
  3. A time line for such transfer and reception of the congregation.
  4. A plan for the congregation’s integration into the PCUSA presbytery.

### **2. Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad Receiving Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Churches**

The process for dismissing a PCUSA congregation to a KPCA presbytery is found in G-3.0205 “The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district. The presbytery has ~~the~~ responsibility and power to: a. *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard*. This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members...” The process for receiving such congregations is found in Art. 67, par. 7 The process for receiving such congregations is found in Article 67, paragraph 7 “The duties of the Presbytery are as follows...To establish local churches, to divide or merge them, or to dissolve them if necessary, to organize the Session, to approve the calls of the Pastors, and to supervise evangelical and educational work and financial management.”

- a. Prior to consulting with the KPCA presbytery, the congregation shall consult with the PCUSA presbytery of membership regarding the congregation’s desire to join a KPCA presbytery.
- b. Such consultation shall include at least:
  1. the determination of a plan for the pastor to transfer membership (PCUSA G-2.0509. When a teaching elder accepts or continues membership of any character in another denomination, except as provided in this Constitution, the presbytery shall record the fact and delete the teaching elder’s name from the roll.” KPCA, Art. 29 see also p. 8 of Orderly Exchange document)

2. An agreement regarding property in which a reversion shall exist in favor of the PCUSA presbytery, should the congregation ever desire to be dissolved or dismissed from the KPCA presbytery.
3. A time line that includes consultation between the PCUSA presbytery and the KPCA presbytery regarding such dismissal.
4. A plan for the orderly dismissal to the KPCA presbytery.

### 3. **Dual Affiliation Congregations.**

The process of dual affiliated congregations will be developed in the future. It is important that our two denominations live for a period of time with the orderly exchange of congregations before developing procedures for dual affiliation.



## Item 02-01

### A. Referral of Commissioners' Resolutions

1. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Directing the Board of Pensions to Rescind Decision Regarding "Same-Gender Domestic Partner" Benefits Before January 1, 2013.* Declined: Issue was considered at 219th General Assembly (2010). Standing Rule A.8.f. (Vote: 23-0)
2. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Directing the Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry Area to Share Stories of Great Commission Congregations.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP (16). (Vote: 23-0)
3. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Promoting the Opportunity to Host Christmas International House.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination (10). (Vote: 23-0)
4. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Establishing a Code of Ethics for Elected Commissioners and Elected/Appointed Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03). (Vote: 23-0)
5. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Appointing Two Seasons of Prayer to Seek the Will of Almighty God in This Year's Election.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (11). (Vote: 23-0)
6. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Prayer and Action for Syria.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues (15). (Vote: 23-0)
7. *Commissioners' Resolution. Regarding Safe Communities for Everyone.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues (12). (Vote: 23-0)
8. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Compassionate Treatment of Veterans Suffering from PTSD, TBI, and/or Other Mental Afflictions Rising from Military Service.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Health Issues (21). (Vote: 23-0)
9. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Funding for Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) for AIDS Competency Training.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Health Issues (21). (Vote: 23-0)
10. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Prolonged Solitary Confinement in U.S. Prisons.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (11). (Vote: 23-0)
11. *Commissioners' Resolution. On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues (12). (Vote: 23-0)
12. *Commissioners' Resolution. On the Scriptural Case for Overtures.* Decline: This proposal seeks to restrict a constitutional right, to overture General Assembly, by a standing rule. (Vote: 19-4)
13. *Commissioner Resolution. On Shared Benefits Plan.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (20). (Vote: 23-0)
14. *Commissioners' Resolution. Designating as an Honored Name, the Reverend Elijah Parish Lovejoy.* Referred to Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03). (Vote: 23-0)
15. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Calling the Church to a New Way Forward on the Issue of Pregnancies and Abortion.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Health Issues (21). (Vote: 23-0)
16. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Inviting the Community to Attend Presbyterian Churches.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP (16). (Vote: 23-0)
17. *Commissioners' Resolution. On Alternate Giving Options for Union Members.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (11). (Vote: 23-0)
18. *Commissioners' Resolution. On a Green Church Ecumenical Network.* Referred to Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (09). (Vote: 23-0)

### B. Referral of Items Pulled for Business Referral Report 01-02:

1. *01-02, II.B.2. 2010 Referral Item 18-12 Recommendation that the Board of Pensions Develop a Plan to Ensure That Funds from Any Relief of Conscience Churches Do Not Go to Fund Abortions Through Any Avenue.* Referred as information to the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (20)
2. *01-02, II. H.21. 2010 Referral Item 09-06 "Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report."* Referred as information to the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP (16).

C. *Referral for Information:*

*Board of Pensions Referral in Progress. 2010 Referral Item 18-06 Extending Benefits to Same-Gender Spouses and Domestic Partners.* Referred as information to the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundation, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (20).

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**Item 02-02**

[The assembly approved Item 02-02. See p. 6.]

**The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends the following, including the order of committee reports, as an adjustment to the docket:**

**Wednesday, July 4:**

8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service  
 10:00 a.m. Committees Roundtable Discussions  
 Lunch Break

2:00 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 4**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Stated Clerk's Orientation II
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee Reports

Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (9)  
 Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (3)  
 Assembly Committee on Confessions of the Church (18)

5:30 p.m. Announcements  
 Closing Prayer  
 Recess  
 Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 5**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting

Commissioning of New Missionaries

- Assembly Committee Reports

Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Ed. (17)

Announcements  
 Closing Prayer  
 Recess

**Thursday, July 5:**

8:30 a.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 6**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Ecumenical Greeting
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)

Memorial Minute for Silas Kessler, Moderator of the 175<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, UPCUSA

- Assembly Committee Reports

Assembly Committee on Review of GA Permanent Committees (19)  
 Assembly Committee on Mid Council Issues (5)  
 Assembly Committee on Church Polity (6)

10:00 a.m.

11:15 a.m. Worship  
 Recess  
 Lunch Break

02 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

- 1:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 7**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
  - Ecumenical Greeting
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAssembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (11)  
Memorial Minute for William Lytle, Moderator of the 190<sup>th</sup> General Assembly UPCUSA
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAssembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundation, & Pres. Pub. Corp. (20)  
Assembly Committee on Middle East Peacemaking Issues (15)
- 3:00 p.m. Announcements  
Closing Prayer
- 5:30 p.m. Recess  
Dinner Break
- 7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 8**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAnnouncements  
Closing Prayer  
Recess
- Friday, July 6:**
- 8:30 a.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 9**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
  - Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
  - Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
  - GANC Report
  - Moderator Bolback's nominations to GANC (00-04)
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAssembly Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies (4)  
Assembly Committee on Immigration Issues (12)
- 10:00 a.m. Worship
- 11:15 a.m. Recess  
Group Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 10**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and OverturesMemorial Minute for Howard Rice, Moderator of the 191<sup>st</sup> General Assembly UPCUSA
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAssembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues (13)  
Assembly Committee on Church Growth and PILP (16)
- 1:50 p.m. Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry (7)
- 3:30 p.m. Assembly Committee on Review of Authoritative Interpretations (8)  
Announcements  
Closing Prayer
- 6:00 p.m. Recess  
Group Dinner
- 7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer  
**BUSINESS MEETING 11**
  - Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
  - Assembly Committee ReportsAssembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (14)  
Assembly Committee on Health Issues (21)  
Announcements  
Closing Prayer

02 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Recess

**Saturday, July 7**

9:00 a.m.

Opening Prayer

**BUSINESS MEETING 12**

- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Introduction of Presbytery of Detroit Committee on Local Arrangements

11:00 a.m.

Closing Worship in Plenary

II. For Information

*General Assembly Minutes*

The minutes of the 220th General Assembly (2012) for Saturday, June 30, 2012, through Tuesday, July 3, 2012, have been reviewed and found to be in order. These minutes are posted on PC-Biz under the business for Committee 2 (Bills and Overtures) and two copies are posted on the bulletin boards across from the registration booths.

## Item 03-01

[The assembly approved Item 03-01 with amendment. See pp. 10, 78–79.]

*On Amending Standing Rule F.6.c. Regarding Nominations from the Floor—From the Presbytery of Boston.*

The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to amend General Assembly Standing Rules F.6.c(2) and F.6.c (3)(d) on the procedures for nominations from the floor of the assembly as follows:

1. Amend F.6.c.(2) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

*“(2) When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented [~~and stating the person’s reason for challenging the nomination presented by the nominating committee~~], as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk. *The availability of the pertinent information provided by the person challenging the nominating committee’s nominee shall be announced to the assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor.*”*

~~2. Amend F.6.c.(3)(d) as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]~~

~~“(d) *The election shall take place no earlier than twenty-four hours following the nominating speeches. Without further discussion or debate, the General Assembly will move to vote.*”~~

### *Rationale*

The election of church members to service on the constituent bodies of the General Assembly is one of the most important functions of the General Assembly, one which can shape the actions and direction of our church for many years after the assembly has adjourned. For this reason, the procedures of the General Assembly Nominating Committee are quite thorough, and ensure that those whose names ultimately are presented to the assembly are among those best suited to the various tasks, with due concern for talents, experience and considerations of broad inclusivity. The General Assembly Nominating Committee’s process provides for the gathering of information from a variety of sources, including personal statements and the confidential appraisals of three references.

In addition to the names submitted for election by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the Standing Rules of the General Assembly also provide for procedures by which a commissioner may offer a nomination from the floor of the assembly as an alternative to any particular nomination from the committee. This process is an appropriate expression of good Reformed polity, and an implementation of the principle that “the election of . . . persons to the exercise of . . . authority” is in the “society” (i.e., the voting body) (F-3.0106).

While affirming the importance of floor nominations in the life of the church, it is also important to note that such nominations come to the assembly without benefit of the scrutiny that is given to those whose names are brought by the General Assembly Nominating Committee. Congregations and lower councils are often able to consider nominations with the benefit of significant knowledge of the individuals involved, but in a body as large as the General Assembly it is probable that few if any of the voting commissioners will be personally familiar with those for whom they are voting. For this reason, the vast disparity in the information available about the two candidates becomes significant.

Any attempt to subject a floor nominee to a vetting process similar to that used for those nominated by the committee would be violative of the principle of free election. There are, however, other measures that can be implemented to encourage full, thoughtful, and informed decisions by all commissioners. Those presented in this overture seek to accomplish these ends:

1. Notify commissioners in a timely fashion that a contested vote is pending.
2. Gather additional information for the voting commissioners’ use, in particular a statement from the commissioner making a floor nomination of the reason for challenging the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s nominee.
3. Extend the time available to commissioners during the assembly to reflect on the nominating speeches and to gather additional information that they feel they need prior to voting.

## Item 03-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-02 with comment. See pp. 10, 79.]

*On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Forward Only Per Capita Funds Received to Their Synods and the General Assembly—From the Presbytery of Detroit.*

The Presbytery of Detroit overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the last paragraph of G-3.0106 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“Each council above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds *received* to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to sessions within their bounds, but in no case shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be compromised.”

**Comment: That the recommendation be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) for deliberate consideration and recommendation to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with comment.**  
**Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) makes this referral because the difficulty of presbyteries raising and transmitting per capita funds goes beyond the scope of the original overture.**

### *Rationale*

Per capita apportionments are a traditional means of funding General Assemblies, and have evolved over the years into a method for supporting various ecclesiastical and administrative expenses of presbyteries and synods. The term per capita refers to the fact that the amount apportioned is based on the membership of the presbytery.

Some presbyteries have funded their own ecclesiastical and administrative expenses by apportioning per capita to their congregations, to which they add the apportionments from their synod and the General Assembly. Other presbyteries pay all of these expenses from their general mission budget.

Since *The Presbytery of Detroit v. Westminster Church Port Huron* in 1976, presbyteries have been forbidden from punishing churches for their failure to pay per capita apportionments. The matter has been addressed and litigated many times over the years, and the prohibition has never been removed, so that a presbytery has no way to require its churches to pay when they refuse as a means of objection to grievances. The position has been taken that per capita apportionments are benevolences, and presbyteries do not have the authority to require a session to pay any benevolence (*Minihan, et al., v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley*, Remedial Case 216-1, *Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 348).

The wording of the per capita provision has always required presbyteries to pay the apportionments to their synods and the General Assembly regardless of whether it has been received by the congregations. Some presbyteries have recently decided to submit only per capita funds received to their synod and the General Assembly. Other presbyteries have continued to pay these apportionments whether or not received by their churches.

In recent years increasing numbers of congregations have declined to pay per capita apportionments as a way of expressing dissatisfaction with actions of the church, frequently for actions of the General Assembly. Since presbyteries are required to pay the full apportionment to higher governing bodies from its mission budget when not received, the effect is to reduce the amount available for the mission of the presbyteries to their own regions. In effect, it forces presbyteries to pay from what may be benevolence monies (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 701) to their synods and the General Assembly. In those cases where the presbytery's per capita has also been withheld, the effect is to double the cost to the presbytery.

In these days where budgets are very constrained at all levels, and where presbyteries under the new Form of Government are called to support their congregations, the effect of the requirement to pay per capita apportionments for the ecclesiastical expenses of their synods and the General Assembly is to reduce their ability to support their congregations. The result is that the General Assembly, which is the often source of the disaffection, is unaffected while the presbyteries are placed under severe pressure. The intention that the presbyteries play important parts in generating missional congregations is damaged.

Since some presbyteries are already paying only what they have received, the effect is that those presbyteries that are loyal to the rules of our polity are penalized. To remove the penalty for faithfulness seems equitable. Moreover, where it is forbidden for presbyteries to require the payment of benevolences, it also should be forbidden for higher governing bodies to require presbyteries to pay from their benevolences.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-02**

*Advice on Item 03-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 03-02.

*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that Item 03-02 is ambiguous and unclear and will cause confusion in the church. By proposing the insertion of the word “received” to modify “per capita funds” it appears to make the erroneous assumption that presbyteries use uniform procedures to raise funds to meet their per capita responsibilities. The lack of uniformity in presbytery methods for raising per capita means that for some presbyteries the insertion is meaningless or would create no change, but for others it would create the misperception that a presbytery’s responsibility is limited to a single stream of income that it calls “per capita,” such as the designated gifts sent in response to the presbytery’s statement to the churches of the amounts of per capita needed.

A presbytery may use unrestricted funds to meet its responsibility to raise the per capita funds requested by the synod and General Assembly (*Request 99-1, Minutes, 1999, Part I, p. 107*). It should be obvious that all restricted or unrestricted funds that a presbytery possesses are or were received at some time. It is not clear how this amendment would identify the per capita funds received. If it is a mere bookkeeping decision of how much of the undesignated receipts of the presbytery are to be allocated to per capita, without regard for the amounts requested by the General Assembly and synod, the presbytery would be acting in disregard of the unity and interdependence of the councils of the church.

... These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller. (*Book of Order, F-3.0203*)

The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers (F-3.0203). Through their members and elected commissioners, lower councils participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils, and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and fair employment practices, and matters of equitable compensation.

The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ, and should strengthen the church’s witness to the mission of God. (*Book of Order, G-3.0106*)

This item is very similar to an overture the General Assembly received in 2004 (Item 03-17). At that time the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) reminded the assembly of the relevant authoritative interpretations concerning per capita, pointed out that the overture erroneously assumed that presbyteries used identical practices in raising per capita funds, and identified the options available to the assembly. The options the ACC identified at that time were: to disapprove the overture (which was the ACC’s recommendation at that time); to approve the overture; to propose a constitutional amendment that would give the presbyteries the power to require the sessions to pay per capita (and that would necessarily limit the authority of the session to determine the distribution of the church’s benevolences); to remind presbyteries of the flexibility available under the 1999 authoritative interpretation and to remind sessions of their respective covenantal responsibilities; or to direct that a comprehensive study be conducted of the funding system at work in the denomination.

The same options are available to the 220th General Assembly (2012), with the sole exception that no item of business before this assembly proposes a constitutional amendment giving presbyteries the power to require sessions to pay per capita.

**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-02**

*Comment on Item 03-02—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) respectfully urges the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 03-02.

*Rationale*

The earliest reference to per capita in our North American tradition comes from a 1734 statement to ministers:

...tis unanimously [sic] agreed by all the members of ye Synod, yt every Ministr. Shall either seasonally propose the affair, and read the Synod’s Lettr. To their respective Congregations and appoint a Day for a publick Collection, if there be occasion for such a Step to carry on ye Design, or oblige themselves to pay out of their own proper Estates ten shillings into the Fund; and yt every Presbry take Care yt their respective members observe an ord. Made in ye year 1736....

In the nearly 300 years since that statement, the Presbyterian church has reiterated a stewardship of responsibility and community that involved per capita.

Per Capita is a fundamental way in which all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are connected through their participation in the work of the wider church. The *Book of Order* (G-3.0106) says of per capita that it “demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence.”

There have been many challenges over the years to the notion of per capita and the role of the presbytery in its collection (GAPJC decisions in 1976, 1986, 1992, 2002, 2003, and 2004 and General Assembly actions in 1998, 1999, and 2002). In that 1999 action, the General Assembly determined:

[A] presbytery has the responsibility to remit per capita allocations to synod and General Assembly, even though a congregation does not pay the per capita allocated to it by the presbytery.... as long as funds are available within the presbytery. (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 107)

The 218th General Assembly (2008) affirmed that per capita

exists to allow the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian: our theological identity, our connectedness, our system of governing bodies that allow elders and ministers together to discern the mind of Christ, our ecumenical connections that make us part of the church universal, and our core structures that keep us together as a church. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 165).

As these statements points out, in addition to the General Assembly, per capita is also a stewardship tool for synods and many presbyteries.

Key to understanding per capita is a fundamental knowledge that the presbytery is the only direct link between the stewardship decisions of a session and the General Assembly and synod. The General Assembly is neither equipped nor authorized to solicit per capita directly from congregations whose membership is in presbyteries.

Removing the responsibility for per capita collection from the duties of a presbytery irrevocably breaks that link between the General Assembly and the session. A presbytery could neglect the promotion of per capita, or even counsel, without consequences, that each session withhold its per capita.

While our mid councils have to balance support for congregations with support for the larger church, and we understand that this is a tough position, nevertheless one necessary for the financial stability of our presbyteries since per capita is the primary means of funding for the ministry of many of our presbyteries.

The theological essence of per capita gets lost when the link that the presbytery provides between the General Assembly and the congregation becomes an arbitrary function of pass-through accounting instead of covenantal responsibility.

Further, the COGA concurs with the advice written by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC).

## Item 03-03

[The assembly approved Item 03-03. See pp. 10, 79.]

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend the *Organization for Mission* to clarify the roles of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council as follows:**

1. Amend Section IV.B.2. by adding a new section, “p.,” to the list of Stated Clerk functions to read as follows:

“p. *Serve as primary spokesperson for General Assembly actions, unless the General Assembly has directed otherwise.*”

2. Amend Section V.G.1. by adding a new section, “j.,” to the list of Executive Director responsibilities to read as follows:

“j. *Serve as primary spokesperson for General Assembly Mission Council policies and programs.*”

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *Item 18-08: Approve and Delegate to the Appropriate Body a Review of and Possible Revisions to the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with Attention Specifically Given to the Roles and Responsibilities of the General Assembly Mission Council and Its Executive Director, and the Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk—From the Committee on Review of the PC(USA) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 394–95 of the printed version, pp. 1309–10 of the electronic version).*



The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed that the *Organization for Mission* be reviewed with attention to the roles and responsibilities of the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council. The 219th General Assembly (2010) felt that unclear roles were an impediment to collaboration, and sought this review in order to eliminate confusion.

A review has been conducted, and there is very little overlap. These two amendments will make the role of each office clearer, in accordance with the request of the 219th General Assembly (2010). The specific focus of the request was to state that it is the role of the Stated Clerk to speak with one voice for the General Assembly. This recommendation achieves that purpose, while also noting that it is the function of the GAMC Executive Director to speak on behalf of GAMC policies and programs.

## Item 03-04

[The assembly approved Item 03-04. See pp. 10, 79.]

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) accept the invitation of the Presbytery of the Giddings-Lovejoy for the 223rd General Assembly (2018) to meet in St. Louis, Missouri, June 16–23, 2018.**

### *Rationale*

Standing Rule I.1.d. gives instructions for rotating the place of the meetings of the General Assembly between four areas of the United States. Under the plan assemblies are scheduled for Pittsburgh (2012—Area D), Detroit (2014—Area C), Portland, Oregon (2016—Area A). This rotation places the 223rd General Assembly in Area B, which includes the Synods of the Sun, Lakes and Prairies, and Mid-America. Possible convention cities were identified in this area and the presbyteries represented by those cities were contacted about invitations.

The Department of General Assembly Meeting Services then sent requests for proposals to the convention bureaus of those cities whose presbyteries also offered invitations. After review, three cities provided opportunities worth further investigation: St. Louis, Kansas City, and Milwaukee. All three cities offered very attractive possibilities

After site visits were made, ten criteria for evaluation were developed, including financial commitments, ease of facility use, hotel convenience, and the spiritual and emotional impact of a particular site on commissioners and advisory delegates.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly heard a recommendation from GAMS and is excited to recommend St. Louis for much that it offers. The convention center has ample space on two levels for the plenary sessions, worship, committee meetings, exhibit hall, group meals, offices, and other functions of the assembly. Participants will find it easy to navigate the building. The center is currently completing work to upgrade the meeting space and public areas.

The Renaissance Hotel, a historic renovation, is located across the street, offering 800 rooms in the assembly block (almost half of the total number needed), and ample space for most of the sponsored meals and other optional activities that make up the assembly schedule. Several other hotels are located within walking distance of the convention center; hotel shuttles will not be needed.

Washington Ave. west of the convention center is an up-and-coming area, with a variety of locally owned restaurants and shops. Other downtown attractions include the Gateway Arch, World Series Championship baseball, a Blues museum (under construction), a one-of-a-kind City Museum, and parks for General Assembly participants when they have free time.

St. Louis is centrally located with good access by interstate and rail. The airport is located thirteen miles from downtown, with light rail service to downtown (\$3.75 one-way). Southwest is the major airline for St. Louis, keeping fares the lowest of the three cities considered.

The assembly last met in St. Louis in 1988. The dates will conflict with Father's Day (June 17), but miss Pentecost (May 20) and the July 4th weekend.

Overall we believe that St. Louis and the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy offer the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) an outstanding location for holding a General Assembly and that commissioners, advisory delegates, staff, and visitors will be excited to be in St. Louis.

## Item 03-05

[The assembly approved Item 03-05. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend Section IV.C.2. of the *Organization for Mission* by inserting new text as “19.” to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

**“19. On behalf of the General Assembly, bring forward according to G-6.02 any such questions requiring an interpretation of the Constitution that may arise from the work of the General Assembly.”**

### *Rationale*

The *Book of Order*, G-6.02, outlines the process for interpreting the Constitution. The third paragraph of G-6.02 states “All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk . . .” [emphasis added]. The new language in the *Organization for Mission* would give the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly the authority to bring on behalf of the General Assembly any questions for interpretation that arise from the work of the assembly.

Without this authority to fulfill the deliberative process outlined in G-6.02, questions arising from the work of the assembly itself would have to be brought before one assembly for referral by that assembly to the following assembly. With this authorization, COGA can bring to the next assembly at the request of any of the six agencies, permanent committees, and special task forces of the church such concerns as they encounter in fulfilling their mission.

## Item 03-06

[The assembly approved Item 03-06. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in concurrence with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend Section IV.C. of the *Organization for Mission* by inserting a new Section “5.” and re-numbering current Sections “5.–7.” as “6.–8.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

### **“5. General Assembly Committee on Representation**

**“a. As provided for in the *Book of Order*, G-3.0103, council above the session shall establish committees on representation to fulfill the following function: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.**

#### **“b. The committee shall**

**“(1) Advise the assembly and all entities created by and accountable to the General Assembly with regard to diversity and inclusiveness in its elected and employed leadership.**

**“(2) Reflect in its membership the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.**

**“(3) Assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee (see Standing Rule C.1.c).**

**“(4) Evaluate each General Assembly session and share that evaluation with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.**

**“(5) Participate in any review and/or revision of the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.**

**“(6) Make recommendations to the assembly regarding inclusion of leaders for emerging communities and concerns as well as methods of decision-making that increase participation and representation, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.**

**“(7) Review the work and impact of committees on representation at councils below the General Assembly in accordance with the functions and commitments assigned in the *Book of Order*, G-3.0103.**

**“(8) Assist the church to build an ethos of inclusion and involvement of all persons in the decision-making, sharing power across differences.**

- “**5. 6. General Assembly Nominating Committee [Text remains unchanged in this section.]**
- “**6. 7. Board of Directors for the Presbyterian Historical Society [Text remains unchanged in this section.]**
- “**7. 8. Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations [Text remains unchanged in this section.]**

*Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) is an advisor to the General Assembly and its leadership with regard to the representation and participation of its bodies. The GACOR has an official advising role to Moderators in the selection of General Assembly committee leadership and would like the Standing Rules to reflect that same consideration and access for Moderator appointments. This addition would allow GACOR to faithfully execute its constitutional mandate “to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, [and] to advocate for diversity in leadership...in accordance with ...F-1.0403” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103). The General Assembly Committee on Representation routinely consults with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) about its processes, slates of nominees, and contacts and recruits persons from underrepresented groups, seeking more diverse pools of qualified candidates. But those activities do not yet include consultation on the appointment process for special committees and commissions. Moderator appointments are becoming a more frequently used means for leadership selection. Rather than be negotiated with each Moderator, GACOR would like to formalize the consulting process by making this Standing Rule change. It would help all involved be able to plan for cooperation and collaboration.

## Item 03-07

[The assembly approved Item 03-07. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following amendment to Section IV.C.5. of the *Organization for Mission* so that it will be in accordance with current *Book of Order* provisions and Standing Rule K.1.c. The text shall read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“**5. General Assembly Nominating Committee**

“~~The~~ *There shall be a General Assembly Nominating Committee responsible for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the General Assembly. The Moderator of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee, shall appoint persons to serve on special commissions and special committees. These nominations and/or appointments shall be made in accordance with the* ~~shall be composed as provided for in~~ *Book of Order, G-13.0111 G-3.0111 and F-1.0403.*”

*Rationale*

Current language: “The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall be composed as provided for in *Book of Order*, G-13.0111.”

The *Organization for Mission* refers to prior *Book of Order* provisions. This amendment corrects the *Organization for Mission* to be in accordance with current *Book of Order* provisions as well as with the appropriate Standing Rule K.1.c.

## Item 03-08

[The assembly approved Item 03-08. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, with the concurrence of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Elect the Reverend Andrew Black to a first, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.
2. Elect the Reverend Jill Hudson and the Reverend Marcia Myers to a second, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.

*Rationale*

The Standing Rules of the General Assembly at H.2.d. states the following:

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The terms of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly. (*Manual of the General Assembly*, Standing Rule H.2.d., p. 40)

These three people give exemplary service as leaders of the major departments of the General Assembly, are in good standing as teaching elders, and are faithful Christian leaders who serve the church with “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.” The Stated Clerk enthusiastically nominates these three persons for election as Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## Item 03-09

[The assembly approved Item 03-09. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in concurrence with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend Section IV.C.3.a. of the *Organization for Mission* as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

**~~“a. The members of this committee shall be composed as provided for in~~ *The Book of Order, G-13.0112a G-6.02, provides for the establishment of an Advisory Committee on the Constitution. The committee is composed of nine (9) voting members who shall be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church.”***

### *Rationale*

The *Book of Order*, G-6.02, states that “... The General Assembly shall provide by its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.” Prior to the adoption of a new *Book of Order*, the qualifications of members were described at G-13.0112a. This amendment places the description of qualifications in the *Organization for Mission*, which is approved by the General Assembly.

## Item 03-10

[The assembly approved Item 03-10. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in concurrence with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend Standing Rule K.1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

**~~“c. Any commission or special committee authorized by the General Assembly, unless otherwise designated, shall be appointed by the Moderator in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The Moderator is also authorized to fill by appointment any vacancies that may occur in any such commissions or committees. No teaching elder, ruling elder, or other person shall be appointed to serve on more than one such commission or committee except by consent of the General Assembly.”~~**

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) is an advisor to the General Assembly and its leadership with regard to the representation and participation of its bodies. The GACOR has an official advising role to Moderators in the selection of General Assembly committee leadership and would like the Standing Rules to reflect that same consideration and access for Moderator appointments. This addition would allow GACOR to faithfully execute its constitutional mandate “... to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, [and] to advocate for diversity in leadership ... in accordance with ... F-1.0403” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103). The General Assembly Committee on Representation routinely consults with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) about its processes, slates of nominees and contacts, and recruits persons from underrepresented groups, seeking more diverse pools of qualified candidates. However, those activities do not yet include consultation on the appointment process for special committees and commissions. Moderator appointments are becoming a more frequently used means for leadership selection. Rather than be negotiated with each Moderator, GACOR would like to formalize the consulting process by making this Standing Rule change. It would help all involved be able to plan for cooperation and collaboration.

## Item 03-11

[The assembly approved Item 03-11. See pp. 10, 79.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) confirm the election of the following persons as members of the Board of the Presbyterian Historical Society:

### Three-Year Term—Class of 2015:

Jane Carl, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—1st term  
Deborah Kramm, New York City, New York—1st term  
Robert Morris, Moorestown, New Jersey—1st term

### Four-Year Term—Class of 2016:

Betty Bergstrom, Chicago, Illinois—2nd term  
Joan Fong, Fremont, California—1st term  
Lisa Small, Sewickley, Pennsylvania—1st term  
Paul Watermulder, Burlingame, California—2nd term  
Louis Weeks, Williamsburg, Virginia—2nd term

## Item 03-12

### *Joint COGA/GAMC Budget Proposals*

[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 1. See pp. 10, 79.]

1. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012) incorporate into the *Minutes* the 2010 and 2011 Per Capita Apportionment Budget and Statement of Activities.

2. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012)

[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 2.a. See pp. 10, 79.]

- a. Approve the Revised 2012 Budget totaling \$13,626,330.

[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 2.b., with amendment. See pp. 78, 79–80.]

b. Approve the total Expenditure Budget for 2013 totaling [~~\$13,871,111~~] [\$14,164,979] and for 2014 totaling [~~\$14,199,728~~] [\$14,358,930].

[See Attachment A, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_a](#) (or page 195), and Attachment B, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_b](#). (or pages 197–205)]

[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 3. See pp. 10, 80.]

3. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve that an amount of \$1,384,030 be designated from the 2013 per capita budget (about half the cost of the General Assembly meeting), and be reserved for use in the year of the General Assembly meeting (2014).

[See Attachment A, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_a](#) (or page 195), and Attachment B, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_b](#). (or pages 197–205)]

[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 4., with amendment. See pp. 78, 80.]

4. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve a per capita apportionment rate of [~~\$6.80~~] [\$6.87] per active member for 2013, and a rate of [~~\$6.98~~] [\$7.02] to be effective for 2014.

[See Attachment B1, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_b1](#) (or page 196).]

*Rationale for Recommendations 1.–4.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) continue to be grateful to the whole church for their faithfulness in meeting their per capita obligations (about 94 percent collection rates). We believe that these funds have enabled the General Assembly to carry out its core ecclesial functions so that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can carry out its ministry in faithfulness to Scripture and our Constitution.

Building the Per Capita Budgets for 2013 and 2014 continues to be a challenge. The total revenue level is impacted by variables as diverse as a slow-moving economy, stock market fluctuations, value of assets held, levels of membership loss, and the ability of presbyteries to fully meet their per capita obligations. Most of these factors impact the overall per capita budget negatively. On the expenditure side, challenges include added costs due to increase in number of commissioners to the General Assembly since 2010, as well as added costs to carry out an assembly at different locations.

Given these dynamics, both GAMC and OGA faced the reality that major reductions would be necessary unless there was to be a very substantial increase in the per capita rate, which we determined would create a real hardship in the church. In order to hold to a minimal increase in the per capita rate, hard choices had to be made relative to staffing levels, the consolidation of expenses, and limiting merit increases to staff compensation. In fact, the OGA and GAMC made several adjustments reducing the previously approved budget for 2010 by almost \$816,000, and are now proposing a revised budget for 2012 with a net reduction of almost \$440,000 (before allocating \$200,000 for outstanding per capita). We are also proposing an increase in the per capita rate of 17 cents for 2013, and 18 cents for 2014, keeping the increase below the inflation rate of 3 percent each year. We have budgeted to utilize reasonable amount of reserves each year and estimated under-expenditures, in order to keep per capita rate increases to the minimum.

The details behind these calculations can be found on the attached sheets. We believe that such restraint in the increase in the per capita rate and the expenditure level are necessary for the well-being of the church and the fiscal integrity of the Per Capita budget. We would encourage a similar spirit of restraint by commissioners as you consider other proposals that might have financial implications at the 220th General Assembly (2012).

**[The assembly approved Item 03-12, Recommendation 5. See pp. 10, 80.]**

**5. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the attached allocation of designated funds for OGA, and GAMC task forces, totaling \$1,654,035 for 2012, \$1,418,223 for 2013, and \$1,609,961 for 2014.**

**[See Attachment C, which can be found at [coga-gamc-budget\\_financials\\_attachment\\_c](#) (or page 206).]**

*Rationale for Recommendation 5.*

The allocation of designated funds are reserved for specified expenditure planned to augment the per capita budget so that steep increases to the per capita apportionment rate may be cushioned. The primary items include part of the Presbyterian Historical Society operations, General Assembly session, Ordination Examinations, the production and distribution of OGA publications, and OGA/GAMC task forces. The sources of these funds are mostly from independently generated revenue, including gifts and endowments. Some meetings and conferences generate revenue for expenses independent of the per capita budget and are accounted through the designated funds.

**Item 03-13**

*A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

**The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**[The assembly approved Item 03-13, Recommendation 1. See pp. 10, 80.]**

**1. Direct the six PC(USA) agencies to submit their six-year cultural proficiency plans to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) no later than December 31, 2012, if they have not done so already.**

**[The assembly approved Item 03-13, Recommendation 2., with amendment. See pp. 10, 80.]**

**2. Direct the ~~[associate for organizational diversity, education, and recruitment (ODER)]~~ [General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), Human Resources Department,] to assist the six agencies in developing their six-year plans, in consultation with ACREC and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).**

[The assembly approved Item 03-13, Recommendation 3., with amendment. See pp. 10, 80.]

3. Direct the ~~[Office of General Assembly (OGA) staff for the agency review committees]~~ [committee on review of the General Assembly agencies] to provide for meaningful participation by ACREC in the six-year agency review committees, including providing timely notice of meetings and communicating with ACREC staff.

[The assembly approved Item 03-13, Recommendation 4. See pp. 10, 80.]

4. Direct that cultural proficiency and antiracism training be mandatory for all employees of all six agencies, and provide periodic or continuing education courses or training in this area, which will be monitored by ACREC.

[The assembly approved Item 03-13, Recommendation 5. See pp. 10, 80.]

5. Direct that the cultural proficiency standard and assessment procedures be included in the OGA's Agency Review Manual.

### *Rationale*

#### I. Introduction and Overview

In the context of a global Christian church that is more multiethnic and multicultural than ever before, it is imperative that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) not only stand firm in its commitment to “give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment,” but also take definitive action to transform its denomination into one that reflects the cultural vibrancy that exists on God’s earth (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103; see also F-1.0403).

The denomination years ago made a pledge to live into these commitments by creating a climate of cultural proficiency within its structure. Cultural proficiency (CP) provides standards to assess healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and behaviors, and is a catalyst for ultimately changing attitudes about true diversity and inclusiveness. With that as a framework, the PC(USA)’s General Assembly has been instructing the denomination’s six main agencies to acknowledge the need for cultural proficiency and to incorporate its tenets into their day-to-day operations.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) report *Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), directed the six corporate agencies related to the General Assembly (GA) to utilize the tools of cultural proficiency, or other comparable processes, to develop and sustain healthy organizational cultures that support diverse workforces. The benchmarks used are (1) employment of a workforce that is at least 20 percent racial ethnic and 40 percent women, established in the 1985 Church wide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, and (2) the 1984 Minority Vendor Policy, which established that church agencies purchase at least 10 percent of goods and services from businesses owned by persons of color and by women. Subsequent reports have sought to further strengthen that GA mandate and in 2010, the 219th General Assembly approved the following:

In order to ensure significant change in the area of Cultural Proficiency (CP), and to continue consultations between the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the executive officers of the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly (GA)—General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), formerly known as General Assembly Council (GAC); Office the General Assembly (OGA); Presbyterian Board of Pensions (BOP); Presbyterian Foundation (FDN); Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., (PILP); and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC)—the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommends that the 219th General Assembly (2010) approve the following actions:

1. Continue to support the work of the Climate for Change Task Force as it examines and moves toward formulating final recommendations for the 220th General Assembly (2012) for the church’s Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity, Cultural Proficiency, and minority vendor policies.
2. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) to revise the cultural proficiency assessment tool, with consultation from human resource directors of each entity and from the associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment (formerly the associate for Cultural Proficiency).
3. Direct that the “Standards for Review of General Assembly Agencies” include the preparation, review, and evaluation of a written, six-year plan for the implementation of cultural proficiency or comparable approach to organizational change with each of the six entities of the General Assembly.
  - a. The ACREC will write the portion of the Agency Review Manual dealing with the assessment and review of cultural proficiency or a comparable approach of the six agencies.
  - b. The six-year plan pertaining to cultural proficiency or a comparable approach and its implementation will be reviewed and monitored by ACREC on an ongoing basis, with statistical results and updates from each agency reviewed by ACREC biennially.
  - c. At the first meeting of each of the agency review committees, a member of ACREC will be invited to brief the committee on the importance of “Creating a Climate for Change” and cultural proficiency. In addition, each agency review committee will consult with ACREC, through the participation of an ACREC member, regarding the six-year plan for cultural proficiency for each agency under review. Greater participation by ACREC on the agency review committee will be permitted if needed or requested.
4. Request that the six entities of the General Assembly work with the associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment in developing their six-year plan, to help implement cultural proficiency policy at all levels, and to develop training and cultural-sensitivity programs. This six-year plan should include:

## 03 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

a. commitment to *Book of Order*, G-4.0403: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its merging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church.

b. a stated policy for increasing diversity, which should be developed in consultation with the Cultural Proficiency Task Force to ensure consistency with the task force's final recommendations;

c. measurable targets and goals that integrate cultural proficiency policy, training and cultural sensitivity programs in areas of education for purposes of mobility and advancement, performance, recruitment, hiring, mentoring, and retention;

d. production of biennial reports giving employment profile (salaries, occupations, separations, new hires, promotions, in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and disabilities).

5. Encourage the entities to support and utilize the National Persons of Color Network database, to strengthen and make it effective.

6. Direct all entities to keep annual statistics demonstrating compliance with the church's Minority Vendor Policy.

7. Direct each entity to demonstrate affirmative efforts to increase racial ethnic and female employee representation in the senior management categories. When filling vacancies at this level, there must be a racial ethnic person and a female among the final candidates. If they are not among the final candidates, the entity must explain why they were not considered. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 336-37)

## II. Summary of Findings

### In response to 2010 recommendations

- ACREC learned from the PC(USA) attorney and others that it is illegal to collect data pertaining to the employment of the disabled and data identifying employees or vendors as Middle Eastern. More discussion is needed as to how the church can address the concerns of the General Assembly to include and accommodate the disabled in the workplace as part of the "diversity of the church's membership," and the concerns of the Middle Eastern Caucus for full participation of Middle Easterners in PC(USA).

- Additional time is needed in drafting the six-year plan and the cultural proficiency tool.

- The new *Book of Order* does not change the church's commitment to diversity and to full participation of the church's membership. The six-year plans need to reflect the language of the new *Book of Order*. See specifically G-3.0103 and F-1.0403.

- The ACREC supports and adopts the recommendations and rationale of the 2012 Climate for Change Task Force report, which will be filed by the task force. The recommendations and rationale are incorporated in this report for reference.

- The cultural proficiency standard and the assessment and review process (attached to this report as Appendices A and B) are to be included in the Office of the General Assembly's Agency Review Manual, as revised July 2010, for the six PC(USA) agencies.

### General Findings

- The agencies were more sensitive to cultural proficiency requirements in this cycle of review. Some agencies made intentional efforts to seek racial ethnic candidates to fill vacancies in upper management positions, and at least one used the Diversity in Leadership Network (formerly the National Persons of Color Network database) to look for candidates.

- Greater attention is needed to incorporate accountability measures pertaining to implementing cultural proficiency programs and fostering diversity for management.

- Greater priority by all agencies, particularly GAMC and OGA, should be given to the integration of cultural proficiency standards and process into the institutional church-wide review process.

- Antiracism (AR) and cultural proficiency (CP) training are offered in all agencies, but in many cases this training is optional. Making AR and CP training mandatory demonstrates that this is a priority in the agency and the church.

- Some agencies do not understand the idea of cultural proficiency and seemed confused as to how to establish measurements. Establishing a church-wide understanding of cultural proficiency and periodic training to all employees, including upper management, will help alleviate this problem.

- The agencies could benefit greatly by human resources directors meeting together to discuss best practices, which could also lead to a church-wide approach to diversity. The associate ODER could be the person to bring the six agencies together.

- The Diversity in Leadership Network appears to be underutilized. All six agencies should promote the database and encourage members of the PC(USA) to submit their names and/or resumes.



## III. Agency Highlights and Areas of Growth

This review process cycle started out slow and included new elements that were not included in previous review cycles. All of the agencies provided statistical reports, but many provided them later than in previous years. Consequently, the follow-up, in-person interviews took place in the fall of 2011 instead of the late spring/early summer of 2011. The new elements this year included (1) the request for statistical employment data for the disabled and for Middle Easterners, (2) revising the cultural proficiency tool, (3) the development of a six-year plan on assessing cultural proficiency by all six agencies, (4) the drafting of a cultural proficiency standard to be included in the Office of General Assembly's Agency Review Manual, and (5) ACREC's participation in the initial meetings of the Office of General Assembly (OGA) review committees for the PPC and PILP.

*New Data Categories:* Regarding the request for employment data for the disabled and Middle Easterners, ACREC was advised by some agencies that the PC(USA) attorney had advised that it was against federal law to collect this data. As a result, some agencies did not provide information in these areas. During the follow-up interviews, some agencies did discuss whether they had hired Middle Easterners or the disabled and whether they purchased goods and services from Middle Easterners. In light of the legal impediment, further discussion is needed as to how to address the true concern at issue, i.e., whether the PC(USA) is being inclusive by hiring the disabled and Middle Easterners.

*Cultural Proficiency Tool and the Six-Year Plans:* Revising the cultural proficiency tool and development of the six-year plans for implementing and assessing cultural proficiency required consultation by ACREC with the six agencies and with the associate for ODER. The ACREC members consulted with the agencies in the fall 2011 about revisions to the cultural proficiency tool. The ACREC was unable, however, to consult fully with the associate for ODER, who is considered the church's resource on cultural proficiency. It is anticipated that the cultural proficiency tool will be revised before the 220th General Assembly (2012). The tool serves an interim function. Its purpose is to gather information for assessment until the six-year plans are in place. The associate for ODER has begun consultations with the agencies regarding the development of the six-year plans and advises that at least two agencies are in the process of drafting their plans. It is anticipated that the six-year plans will be completed also before the 220th General Assembly (2012).

*OGA Review Committee Standards and ACREC Participation in Review Committee Meetings:* After numerous attempts by ACREC and/or ACREC's staff to contact the OGA director of operations, ACREC was unable to participate in the first meetings of the OGA Review Committees for PPC and PILP, the agencies that were being reviewed in the church's six-year review cycle. The ACREC eventually was told about later meeting dates, but the review committees were well into their evaluation process. The ability for ACREC to effectively consult with these review committees, which had been initially suggested by OGA staff, was severely hampered. It is hoped that there will be greater cooperation and higher priority given to ACREC's participation in the other review committees in the next assessment cycle. The ACREC also had hoped to have the benefit of consulting with OGA's director of operations and with the review committees to better understand the review process before drafting the cultural proficiency standard and developing the assessment and review process of the six-year plan for the OGA's Agency Review Manual. In response to the directive in the 2010 report, however, ACREC is providing the proposed cultural proficiency standard and the assessment and review process in Appendixes A and B.

In assessing the employment data for the assessment cycle 2008 to 2010, most agencies experienced little change from the earlier two-year assessment cycle. In general, the agencies are meeting the church-wide employment goals of 20 percent racial ethnic and 40 percent female employees. These goals, however, are not being reached in the upper management category. Several agencies are intentionally considering qualified persons of color when a vacancy occurs or are using internal promotion and education tracks. The Diversity Leadership Network appears to be underutilized, however, and a suggestion was made that more persons needed to be included in the database. Regarding the implementation of the 10 percent minority vendor policy, the failure to accurately track purchases still persists: only two agencies track this data (GAMC and the Foundation), several agencies (OGA, PILP, and PPC) rely upon another agency (GAMC) to make their purchases, but that agency does not delineate the purchases by agency, and one only keeps track of administrative or miscellaneous purchases, which is a very small percentage of their overall expenditures regarding vendors (BOP). All agencies appear to understand the general concept of cultural proficiency, but not all are clear on how cultural proficiency is to be measured or achieved. Cultural proficiency training is being provided by all of the agencies, but the training is not mandatory. Cultural proficiency needs to be elevated as a priority in the work place by providing greater education opportunities and mandatory training for all employees, and by incorporating accountability measures such as in performance work plans and evaluations. Finally, all agencies can benefit by collaborating with each other and by discussing best practices that exist among the agencies.

A. *General Assembly Mission Council*1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The General Assembly Mission Council continues to work on cultural proficiency (CP) and its related areas. It has focused particularly on The Diversity Leadership Network, which has among its goals to develop a recruiting network and an active database of racial ethnic candidates for leadership positions within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Efforts to support the network include creating relevant resource materials, providing staffing, and conducting seminars. A workshop for six-

teen African American women specifically served to encourage, nurture, and develop the skills needed to apply for positions in the church. The GAMC also has helped advertise the network at the church-wide Big Tent event and provided educational resources to help grow specific leaders.

On a broader scale the GAMC maintains a cultural proficiency statement in its employee handbook and staff is encouraged to incorporate CP standards into their work. The agency's performance assessment tool also has a category to measure cultural proficiency, although the measures are all subjective. Officials in GAMC indicate future work is planned to set specific goals and directions that can be more objectively measured. Among other things, impact and accountability as they relate to creating a climate of CP within the agency have yet to be defined.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

As of Dec. 31, 2010, GAMC had 464 employees, 145 of whom (31 percent) were racial ethnic persons and 315 (68 percent) were women. In the senior management category there were six employees, 50 percent of whom were female and 20 percent of whom were racial ethnic individuals. Staffing patterns are essentially the same as the review in 2008 both in terms of actual numbers and categories.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

The GAMC has exceeded its goal related to minority vending as a result of its vendor who handles agency travel. On a whole, however, the agency has generally maintained the same percentage of business/purchase of services from minority vendors. Because of combined minority vendor management handled by the GAMC, it continues to be difficult to break out the specific amount of minority vendor business done by the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

## B. *Office of the General Assembly*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

Change has occurred since the 2008 report, and there remains an overall sense of openness to accepting and advancing cultural proficiency within the agency, and intentionality as it relates to classes, workshops, and resources. The OGA primarily support the aims of CP through continuing education. Training and continuing education are encouraged in the agency personnel manual, and OGA's budget continues to include tuition reimbursement and continuing education. Cultural proficiency training is done as a part of Education Day, which includes instruction on various issues and is required for new employees. Agency officials admit training is not enough and seek guidance from ACREC on other steps to take. Outside of training and continuing education, another area to highlight for OGA is its work to communicate in different languages. Work to translate materials into Korean and Spanish have specifically led to teamwork with people from those cultural backgrounds.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

The OGA's employment statistics have not veered much since the 2008 report. As of December 31, 2010, OGA had 72 employees, 53 of whom were women (74 percent), and 21 of whom were racial ethnic persons (29 percent). The three executive/senior level managers are all white males. The Staff Coordinating Committee, however, which consists of nine persons including the senior level managers, consists of four women (44 percent) and two persons of color (11 percent). Turnover remains low, which agency officials attribute to the respectful working environment and the open door policy.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

The OGA continues to rely on the GAMC as the main source for many of its vendors. As such, it is difficult to gain accurate vendor figures specifically related to OGA. There have been no discussions with the GAMC about how to resolve this situation or about where the GAMC stands in terms of its responsibility toward minority vendors. Furthermore, it was pointed out that OGA's hands are tied at many of its meeting sites with regard to conference center vendors due to union rules. There is more flexibility when meetings are held in Louisville and more care can be given to locations that are more culturally friendly.

## C. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

There is a strong indication of good progress in the area of cultural proficiency by the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Among its most notable efforts has been to hold workshops and presentations on race and gender issues that were initiated by top leadership.

Following the hiring of an African American person and a woman, PILP took the opportunity to enhance learning about diversity and strengthen its ministry. The agency continues to facilitate conversations in order to generate positive outcomes.

## 2. *Employment Profile*

The PILP had 14 employees as of December 31, 2010. Three (2 percent) of those were racial ethnic persons and 10 (71 percent) of those were women. Turnover continues to be very small for the agency. Since the 2008 report there has been one retirement, but that position was filled by an African American person. The staff size remains the same, and PILP continues to be committed to seeking racial ethnic people whenever an opening exists. The PILP officials have indicated that at least three employees will be nearing retirement in the next few years and that diversity will be the focus of finding replacements.

## 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

Just as in 2008, there is little to report in terms of minority vendors for PILP. Purchases continue to be done through the GAMC. Agency officials did indicate, however, that PILP's lawyer is a racial ethnic person, and there was acknowledgement that the agency could be more mindful to seek minority vendor opportunities when staff travels.

## D. *Presbyterian Publishing Corporation*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

It is unclear what, if any, changes have been made in the area of cultural proficiency for the PPC since 2008. Agency officials indicate that there is an awareness of the importance of CP, yet the PPC has no self-evaluation form or other mechanism in place for ensuring it takes place. The one primary event lifted up as an example of what the PPC does was a mandatory Staff Development Day, which included a course on antiracism. An agency official also pointed out that two members of the PPC board of directors are racial ethnic persons.

From a broader standpoint, the PPC has written a resource book entitled *2010 Self Study of the Presbyterian Publishing Company*, a six-year study of the organization called for by the Review Committee of General Assembly. The PPC will complete another one in 2016.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

At one time the Presbyterian Publishing Company had 38 staff members, but that has now slimmed down to 26.5. Of those 26.5, which were reported on staff as of December 31, 2010, six (23 percent) were racial ethnic persons and 13.5 (51 percent) were women. The PPC has five top positions, one of which is open. The agency is working to fill that slot with a racial ethnic person. The PPC also has hired two customer service employees who are bilingual, and it continues to utilize the Robert Bohl internship to seek out racial ethnic people. The latest intern, an African American female, has been offered a job once she completes doctoral work she is currently engaged in. The PPC leadership cited the U.S. economic situation as one of the obstacles to recruiting racial ethnic persons.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

The PPC contracts with companies to print, publish, and distribute its books and periodicals according to the lowest bid that is provided by potential vendors. If the bids are equal and one of the potential vendors is a racial ethnic company, then PPC will select the racial ethnic company.

## E. *Presbyterian Board of Pensions*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The Board of Pensions continues to be a leader among the six agencies in the area of cultural proficiency. Officials with the agency indicate that its training "goes way beyond" what is required by the agencies in Louisville. At the same time, however, funds for CP efforts by the BOP are perhaps greater than they are with the other agencies. The BOP has focused not just on numbers and statistics, but also on the culture of the agency.

Among other things, the BOP recently hired The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership to conduct training and assessment on how they are "helping the constituencies they serve." They are working with a six-year plan to grow into servant leadership. The plan is to build a foundation for the concept of serving others.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

In 2010 the BOP reported 186 total staff members. Of those 60 (32 percent) were racial ethnic employees and 123 (66 percent) were women. Of its executive senior officers, two are white males and two are white females. The agency also reported that in 2010 there were 11 new hires, two of which were racial ethnic persons; and six promotions, two of which were of racial ethnic persons.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

The Board of Pensions maintains little statistical data on its vendors. It does report, however, that out of its “administrative and other expenditures” category, which totals \$45.5 million a year, \$500,000 goes toward discretionary spending (printing, office supplies, catering, etc.). And, in 2009, 41 percent of the vendors used in this budget area were minority or women-owned.

## F. *Presbyterian Foundation*

### 1. *Cultural Proficiency*

The Presbyterian Foundation addresses cultural proficiency through an employee evaluation tool called Core Values, of which there are ten. The core value of Respect/Equality particularly addresses CP, and is defined as “recognizing and appreciating different perspectives; listening and seeking to understand others before acting; treating everyone with respect; and creating a discrimination-free environment.”

The agency’s employee handbook also outlines an EEO policy that all employees are expected to comply with. Overall performance of managers and supervisors is evaluated according to this policy. Other efforts that fall in line with cultural proficiency include annual staff training sessions on topics such as sexual harassment and nondiscrimination. All employees, including the president, take this interactive training.

### 2. *Employment Profile*

The Foundation had 68 employees on December 31, 2010, which is down from a high at one point of 73. Of that 68, 16 (24 percent) were racial ethnic persons and 42 (62 percent) were women. All 10 of its senior management staff were white. Recruiting includes both internal and external searches, although sometimes employees are groomed to take over a job. Efforts are made to include racial ethnic candidates in the process. High retention rates make it difficult to change the racial ethnic makeup of the organization, although there is a desire. The Foundation also indicated that it is difficult to employ racial ethnic persons because the nature of the work.

Foundation senior management previously included one African American person, but that employee retired. A female filled that position. Officials indicated an open interim vice president position is being filled via an internal promotion. The Diversity Leadership Network was consulted for that vice president’s position but no candidates matched the skills required. Officials indicated a racial ethnic person is being considered as a potential senior staffer, although the actual position was not identified.

Of the 19 members of the Foundation’s board of trustees, four are racial ethnic persons, eight are females, and five are clergy.

### 3. *Minority Vendor Policy*

In 2008 approximately 6 percent of the Foundation’s vendors were African American and Asian/Pacific Islander. In 2009 the number increased to 39 percent, and in 2010 the agency reported that figure at 31 percent, which only represented African American vendors. The agency’s percentage of women vendors went from 14.9 percent in 2008 to 11 percent in 2009 and 14 percent in 2010.

## IV. Conclusion

There is noticeable movement by the six agencies in their journey—our journey—toward cultural proficiency. The idea of cultural proficiency is no longer an unfamiliar word. Employees now are being trained and educated on how to function in a diverse workplace, which benefits all. Management also is beginning to recognize the importance of its role and its responsibility in creating an atmosphere that welcomes and embraces diversity. We now are embarking on a process that seeks to integrate cultural proficiency into the institutional fabric of our church, which presents an even greater challenge. There is still much work to be done that will require diligence on the part of us all. As our society is becoming more diverse, so is our church family. Paraphrasing Paul from his letter to the Galatians, as many of us were baptized into Christ, we are now one in Christ. Let us get to work toward becoming that beloved community.

## APPENDIX A

### Standards for Review of PC(USA) Agencies—Cultural Proficiency Standard

Review Committee Manual of Operations—Standard for Cultural Proficiency:

Short Definition:

Cultural Proficiency: The policies and practices of an organization, and the values and behaviors of individuals, that enables an organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency defines diversity as a strength rather than a problem in organizations. It is a process for strategic, intentional organizational transformation that addresses culture, commitments, practices and skills.

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Cultural Proficiency is an approach to building organizational capacity to thrive on the strengths of diversity, a process for intentional systemic change. It encompasses a set of tools for change and a vision of community that nurtures the diverse gifts of all its members. Implementing cultural proficiency incorporates both:

- *Policies and practices* within organizations, and
- *Values and behaviors* of individuals.

As a transformational tool, cultural proficiency is an inside-out process that builds on the core values, norms and traditions within the existing organizational structure to equip the organization to live out its vision with integrity. This approach creates a platform for creative, innovative leadership for change.

The Tools of Cultural Proficiency are not strategies or techniques. They provide a framework for assessing organizational practices and individual behaviors with an eye to giving direction to change and setting parameters for developing strategies for change within an organization.

- The Continuum: Language for describing both healthy and non-productive policies, practices and individual behaviors.
- The Essential Elements: Behavioral standards for measuring, and planning for, growth toward cultural proficiency.
- The Barriers: Caveats that assist in responding effectively to resistance to change.
- The Guiding Principles: Underlying values of the approach.

The *Continuum* recognizes that change processes are fluid and do not happen uniformly. There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum that indicate various ways of perceiving and responding to differences. They provide a vocabulary for assessing policies, practices and behaviors. Organizations and individuals may have practices at multiple points on the continuum at any time.

- Cultural destructiveness works to eliminate any vestige of culture or difference defined as “other,” practices exclusion or segregation.
- Cultural incapacity works to define culture or difference defined as “other” to be wrong, requires assimilation to the normative culture.
- Cultural indifference refuses to acknowledge the culture of others, treats difference as insignificant, and of no value to the organization.
- Cultural pre-competence accepts difference as normal, reflects an initial awareness of the need to adapt in order to incorporate diversity in a constructive manner in an organization and work effectively as an individual in a diverse environment.
- Cultural competence works to build individual skills and organizational capacity to incorporate cultural diversity in an interactive manner, creates a culture that welcomes cultural difference.
- Cultural proficiency values difference, works to learn from the “other,” nurtures full participation and contributions of diverse cultural and social groups.

*The Essential Elements* of cultural proficiency provide the standards for building individual competencies and organizational practices. Organizational change begins with individual actions.

- *Assessing Cultural Knowledge*: Aware of one’s own cultural identity and organizational norms, aware of what you know about other’s cultures, about how you react to difference and what you need to do to be effective in cross-cultural situations.
- *Valuing Diversity*: Makes intentional effort and adaptation to be inclusive of people whose cultural perspectives and experiences are different from yours or the normative culture of the organization, in order to enrich the conversation, decision-making and problem-solving processes.
- *Managing the Dynamics of Difference*: develops problem-solving and conflict resolutions strategies that are accessible to everyone and attend to cultural differences as normal processes within the organizational culture.
- *Adapting to Diversity*: Develops habits and ways of being within the organization that facilitate learning about differences of experience and cultural perspectives as normative practices.
- *Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge*: Learning about cultural differences, developing skills for cross-cultural communication and problem-solving become integral to the organizational culture and standards for professional excellence.

*The Barriers* to cultural proficiency area present in varying degree in any organization. Effective strategies for change will be cognizant of the need to educate and motivate employees to gain support for change. The barriers also point to the importance that each individual plays in effecting change within an organization.

- *Unawareness of the need to adapt (resistance to change)*: Persons who are served well by the existing organizational culture may see the pressure to change as unnecessary and respond with indifference or see it as threatening. Resistance can create adversarial relationships within an organization if not addressed.
- *Systems of oppression*: Racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, etc. are historically embedded in the internal cultures of organizations and the external culture of society. Systems of oppression create barriers for members of non-dominant groups and extend unearned

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privilege to the members of the dominant group. Being able to recognize these systemic patterns apart from individual behavior is critical to effecting change within an organization, just as recognizing ways that the organization is impacted by external systems is important.

- The presumption of privilege and entitlement: When one group is defined as marginal and denied access to rights and privileges within a system, those same rights and privileges accrue to those who are by definition members of the dominant group, through no effort of their own. Failure to recognize this impact of systemic oppression leads to the presumption of privilege and entitlement as normative. This skewed sense of reality can lead to negative perceptions of persons in marginalized groups and undermines the moral force for organizational transformation.

*The Guiding Principles* provide the core values and assumptions on which cultural proficiency is built. They reflect the significant role of culture in perpetuating systems of oppression, the complexity of attempting deep systemic change, and the potential for culture to be an instrument of change and transformation.

- Culture is a predominant force in people's lives and in organization's lives. Within an organization, you cannot NOT participate or be influenced by the organizational culture.
- People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture.
- Acknowledge group identities. People have group identities and personal identities. The group identities that an individual participates in are important to that person as an individual.
- Diversity within cultures is important. Cultural groups are neither homogenous nor monolithic. Persons within a cultural group are unique individuals.
- Respect unique cultural needs. Culture shapes every aspect of life. Members of different cultures bring different needs to organizational life. In a culturally proficient organization, the dominant culture is attentive to the needs of non-dominant groups.

Adapted from: *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*. Lindsey, et al; "The Tools of Cultural Diversity" at <http://www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org/files/> ; and "Cultural Proficiency: Changing the Conversation", Lindsey, et al, at [http://www.acsa.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/About\\_ACSA/Committees\\_Groups/EAD-for-Success/Cultural-proficiency.aspx](http://www.acsa.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/About_ACSA/Committees_Groups/EAD-for-Success/Cultural-proficiency.aspx)

#### APPENDIX B

##### Standards for Review of PC(USA) Agencies--Cultural Proficiency Assessment

##### Assessment and Review of Cultural Proficiency or a Comparable Approach of the Six Agencies

The six-year plan drafted by each agency for the implementation of cultural proficiency becomes the document by which an agency is assessed.

The six-year plan shall come into effect once approved by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), who will consult with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) and the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) before it is approved.

The affirmative action goals for employment and purchasing are established by the 1985 Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action and the 1984 Minority Vendor Policy. These are the church's policy goals until they are reviewed and/or revised by GACOR in 2014.

The six-year plan shall include:

1. Expression of the commitment of top management, evidenced through:
  - a. A mission and/or vision statement (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0103, F-1.0403),
  - b. Regular discussion in management meetings,
  - c. Training to develop management skills in support of cultural proficiency goals,
  - d. Evaluation of management performance in support of cultural proficiency goals.
2. Training and education strategies to promote employee support for cultural proficiency goals and provide opportunities to enhance skills.
3. A communication strategy to ensure employee awareness and promote the transformation of organizational culture to support the goals of cultural proficiency.
4. Recruitment, training, promotion, and retention strategies to achieve affirmative action employment goals at all levels of the organization, including senior management.
5. Employee education programs to promote employee compliance and support for minority vendor policy and/or supplier diversity goals.
6. Strategies to promote the employment and create a supportive working environment for persons with disabilities.

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The six-year plan shall have measurable targets and goals set out in three, two-year cycles.

Each agency is to submit to GACOR biennial reports giving employment data (e.g., salaries, occupations, separations, new hires, promotions, in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender). The GACOR will share this data with ACREC and ACWC for purposes of monitoring and assessing cultural proficiency.

Every two years (consistent with the meeting cycle of the General Assembly), ACREC will monitor each agency to determine if it is meeting the church-wide benchmarks and to discuss the status of the cultural proficiency goals, allowing for adjustments as appropriate.

The ACREC will conduct its detailed assessment of each agency simultaneously with the six-year agency review conducted by the OGA agency review committee.

The ACREC will consult with each OGA agency review committee in the early stages of the review process.

APPENDIX C

Statistical Data

[For text of Appendix C, see 03-13-acrec-climate-for-change-report-appendix-c-statistical-data (or pages 207–230.)

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 03-13**

**[Received June 29, 2012]**

*Comment on Item 03-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The GAMC is grateful for ACREC’s review of GAMC efforts in the areas of cultural proficiency and creating a climate for change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). These initiatives are important ones for the church as it seeks to be faithful to Christ’s work to create an inclusive church and for the church’s own commitment to justice.

The GAMC embraces ACREC’s recommendation that cultural proficiency and antiracism training be mandatory for its employees. The GAMC also continues to be willing to make its staff member (the associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruiting) available for the important work of helping the other General Assembly agencies prepare their six-year cultural proficiency plans.

At the same time, the GAMC feels that several clarifications should be made to the ACREC report, so that the General Assembly has a proper assessment of these issues.

1. “Summary of Findings” first item in the list and Section III, “New Data Categories”—The summary of findings says, “ACREC learned from the PC(USA) attorney and others that it is illegal to collect data pertaining to the employment of the disabled and data identifying employees or vendors as Middle Eastern.” Similar language appears in the “New Data Categories” paragraph. As currently written, the statement is incorrect. The permanent record should reflect that (1) employers are barred by the Americans with Disabilities Act from inquiring of employees about disabilities before and after hire, except in very limited circumstances; and (2) collection of data on persons having origins in the original peoples of the Middle East is inconsistent with the published data collection instructions of the EEOC.

2. Section III, last paragraph, and Section III.A.2. last sentence—these sections describe staffing patterns as reflecting “little change” or being “essentially the same” when comparing 2008 figures to 2010. While correct on a percentage basis, the analysis does not take into account the impact of reduced staff size. See the table of comparisons between 2008 and 2010:

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis

Change in Staffing Patterns, 2008 and 2010

	2008			2010			Change in staffing over period		
	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women
Board of Pensions	192	33.9%	65.1%	188	31.9%	66.5%	-4	-2%	+1.4%
General Assembly Mission Council	421	27.1%	68.4%	291	25.8%	66.3%	-130	-1.3	-2.1%
Office of the General Assembly	75	29.3%	77.3%	84	27.4%	71.4%	+9	-1.9	-5.9%
Presbyterian Foundation	92	22.8%	63%	69	23.2%	59.4%	-23	+4	-3.6%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	14	14.3%	71.4%	14	21.4%	71.4%	0	+7.1	0

	2008			2010			Change in staffing over period		
	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	35	17%	45.7%	27	22.2%	51.9%	-8	+5.2	+6.2%
Hubbard Press	17	0	70%	15	0	66.7%	-2	0	-3.3%
Jarvie Commonwealth Service	15	40%	66.7%	14	28.6%	71.4%	-1	-11.4	+4.7%
Conference Centers:									
All reporting (4/3)*	104	51.7%	70.2%	145	52.4%	69%	+41	+6.1	-8%

\*Numbers in parentheses show the number of organizations in the category that reported in 2008 and in 2010. Looking at change when the number of reporting entities has changed could lead to inaccurate conclusions and should be done cautiously.

The most obvious difference in these two presentations is the size of the staff. Maintaining a consistent ratio in staffing patterns, while experiencing a decrease in staff size, requires careful attention to the existing ratios. So, while our ratios have not substantially changed, it should be noted that GAMC has kept them in compliance with the General Assembly directives, even as headcount has decreased by 130 employees over a seven-year period, with a net decrease of 1.3 percent and 2.1 percent racial ethnic and women's representation respectively.

3. Section III, A.1. Cultural Proficiency—the “workshop” described in the ACREC report is actually a major effort of the GAMC to host leadership institutes. The GAMC has held the Racial Ethnic Clergywomen's Leadership Institute, the Clergywomen's/Young Women's Leadership Development Institute, and the African American Executive Leadership Seminar, in addition to leading workshops on cultural proficiency. The GAMC will hold a New Immigrant Young Adult Leadership Institute in the fall of 2012 and plans to hold three racial ethnic leadership institutes each year. Each of these institutes is designed to prepare participants for leadership positions in congregations, mid councils, and General Assembly agencies.

4. Section III, A.1. Cultural Proficiency—The ACREC report indicates that GAMC “helped advertise” the Diversity in Leadership Network at the Big Tent in 2011. In actuality, the GAMC created and launched the Diversity in Leadership Network, carrying the major role for intra-agency collaboration in the effort. The network and database were launched at the Big Tent in 2011, and the GAMC continues to provide the primary support for its promotion and utilization.

5. Section III, A.3. Minority Vendor Policy—The ACREC report correctly indicates that GAMC has “generally maintained the same percentage of business/purchase of services from minority vendors,” but does not indicate that it has done this within the context of a declining budget. In 2008, the GAMC budget totaled \$94M. By 2011, the budget was \$77M. As with staffing percentages, as indicated above, it is increasingly difficult to continue exceeding the goal as the overall numbers decrease. Meeting the goal isn't simply a matter of choosing minority vendors for new projects, rather as budgets decrease, majority vendors must be eliminated at a greater rate than minority vendors in order to keep pace with the decline.

The GAMC has also had difficulty finding vendors who provide sweat-free materials, while also meeting the terms of the minority vendor policy.

In the midst of these two factors, the GAMC's ability to exceed the minority vendor goals is noteworthy.

With respect to the report as a whole, insufficient attention was given to GAMC involvement in the cultural proficiency training that is provided to other agencies. While not having direct responsibility for the other agencies, GAMC continues to invite the other agencies to attend its training sessions, to travel to other agency sites to provide training, and, in fact, to provide cultural proficiency for ACREC. While the other agencies received recognition for training their employees, it was not recognized that this training was actually provided by the GAMC, as part of GAMC's commitment to cultural proficiency.

## Item 03-14

[The assembly approved Item 03-14. See pp. 10, 80.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Establishing a Code of Ethics for Elected Commissioners and Elected/Appointed Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, to develop and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) a Code of Ethics Policy for all commissioners and advisory delegates that reflects the intent and**



**content of the *Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* that was approved in 2009.**

***Rationale:***

There is a significant difference between the process of seeking to offer educational information, background material, and advocacy recommendations to commissioners and advisory delegates and the attempt to influence the actions and vote of commissioners and advisory delegates through the offer and acceptance of expensive gifts or experiences. In our post-Citizens United world there is a growing culture of expending money in order to influence voters on many different issues and levels. Super pacs are now a way of life, even in the church context.

Many corporations, governmental units (e.g. the U.S. Congress), boards, and nonprofit organizations provide specific guidelines for how any kind of gift may or may not be accepted, as well as the process by which reporting both the giver and the receiver of such gifts takes place. This commissioners' resolution seeks to bring into line with existing policies of the PC(USA) such standards of ethical behavior for General Assembly commissioners and advisory delegates as already apply to the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly.

For text of the *Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* see <http://gamic.pcusa.org/media/uploads/gamic/pdf/ethics-gamic.pdf>.

Aaron R. Doll, Presbytery of Genesee Valley  
M. Melinda Thompson, Presbytery of National Capital

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-14**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 03-14—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 03-14 be approved. The assembly should consider this item with the following addition to the rationale section:

*Additional Rationale*

The current ethics policy applies to elected and appointed members of the General Assembly Mission Council (“GAMC”) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (“COGA”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“Ethics Policy”) and addresses the business ethics of governance of the PC(USA) (excluding other ethical values and policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“PC(USA)”). As commissioners and advisory delegates likewise participate in the conduct of the business of the denomination it is just and reasonable to develop and extend an ethics policy to these persons.

Historically, the General Assembly has addressed the nature and influence of organizations of its members by requiring or requesting voluntary disclosure of information by those organizations or affinity groups. This request suggests that the church needs to address the role of non-PC(USA) groups seeking to influence commissioners specifically, and would make explicit a responsibility upon each commissioner to help safeguard the integrity of the General Assembly as a place where all commissioners are open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The General Assembly has addressed the role of money in politics in other social witness policy statements, most recently *Lift Every Voice* (2008). Thus the extension of ethics policy to commissioners seems aware of both the individual challenges and the problem of appearances of undue influence for the body as a whole.

The section on principles in the *Book of Order* continues the Presbyterian understanding of the Third Use of the Law as a “guide to the elect,” regulating primarily by informing and encouraging mutual accountability. The core, of course, is our historic respect for the Christian conscience of each member.

F-3.0101 God Is Lord of the Conscience

a. That “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.”

While this refers to the exercise of conscience before God and the “rights of private judgment in relation to all matters with respect to religion” it implicitly extends to the exercise of one’s commissioner vote as a matter of obedience to God’s guidance, uninfluenced by gifts or benefits intended to persuade one’s vote.

## Item 03-15

[The assembly approved Item 03-15 with comment. See pp. 10, 80.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. Designating as an Honored Name, the Reverend Elijah Parish Lovejoy.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) designates as an honored name, the Reverend Elijah Parish Lovejoy, whose death had been a witness of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that his name, along with that of the Reverend Dr. Donald McClure, whose ministry was recognized by the 199th General Assembly (1987), be sent to the Presbyterian Historical Society for recognition so their ministries and the sacrifices they endured may be remembered by the church at large.**

Comment: Grant the Presbyterian Historical Society discretion for the people to be included on the list in the future.

### *Rationale*

The church as an entire body does not choose to emphasize the way one dies over against the way one lives.

There have been many Presbyterians whose death has been a witness of their faith in their Lord Jesus Christ.

The 199th General Assembly (1987), meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi, affirmed those Presbyterians whose death has been a witness to their faith.

One of the earliest to give their life for the abolitionist cause was Elijah Parish Lovejoy, who came to St. Louis as a newspaper writer and in 1832, at the age of thirty, he entered the ministry completing the Princeton Seminary three year course in fourteen months.

Upon his return to St. Louis, Lovejoy served as pastor of Des Peres Presbyterian Church and editor of the religious paper; *The St. Louis Observer*; later as the pastor of the Upper Alton Presbyterian Church, now College Avenue Presbyterian Church and stated clerk of the Presbytery of Alton.

Upon Lovejoy's return from the General Assembly meeting in Pittsburgh in 1836, Elijah found his press damaged because of his controversial editorial about slavery, which aroused passions on both sides, resulting in vandals successfully wrecking his printing press several times.

Lovejoy moved his paper to Alton, Illinois, a free state, but opposition followed and he was killed (175 years ago) on November 7, 1837, by a mob while trying to protect his fourteenth press.

Lovejoy became a national symbol for the abolitionist movement and is remembered today not only in the history books but with a large monument in Alton that overlooks the city and in the name of the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy from the merger of the Elijah Parish Lovejoy Presbytery and the Presbytery of Southeast Missouri on January 3, 1985.

[I have talked with Frederick Heuser of the Presbyterian Historical Society. He agrees that there will be no cost involved in the implementing of this resolution.]

Judy Pickett, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy  
Stephanie Knopf, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy

## 03-Info

### A. *General Assembly Nominating Committee Agency Summary*

The first ministers were the twelve disciples. There is no evidence that Jesus chose them because they were brighter or nicer than other people. ... Their sole qualification seems to have been their initial willingness to rise to their feet when Jesus said, "Follow me." (Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*)

The Form of Government stipulates that "All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the council. The process shall ensure that nominations are made by an entity broadly representative of the constituency of the council, and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0111).

As a council of the church, the General Assembly fulfills this mandate through the sixteen-member General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC). The GANC is composed of teaching and ruling elders drawn from the sixteen synods and in accord with the church's commitment to the rich diversity of the church's membership (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403). Through the General Assembly Nominating Committee's comprehensive nominations process, the General Assembly is af-

forded the opportunity to select, from the varied gifts and services of Presbyterians, the most qualified persons to serve on General Assembly entities with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee makes nominations to more than thirty entities. In the course of its work, the GANC:

1. presents to the General Assembly for election, nominees for at-large vacancies on General Assembly entities;
2. submits to the General Assembly for election, nominees from persons proposed by synods and presbyteries in consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee for rotation vacancies or for middle governing body representation on General Assembly entities; and
3. transmits to the General Assembly the names of persons from General Assembly entities for their representatives (linkages) to other General Assembly entities.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee works continuously to broaden and deepen the pool of persons interested in and capable of serving General Assembly entities. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is blessed with a wealth of faithful disciples of Christ. However, changing cultural patterns in American society have affected the ability and disposition of Presbyterians to commit themselves to multiple years of continuous service on ongoing governance entities.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks “a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0404). In its ongoing efforts to broaden and deepen the pool of persons for nomination, the GANC encounters barriers to service: young adults whose pattern of service centers on short-term, results-oriented engagement; working parents of young children who cannot be away from home for extended periods; persons whose employment does not allow the opportunity for extended absences; and persons whose service to church and community is already broad. These factors do not limit the GANC’s commitment to “a new openness,” but lead instead both to more intensive efforts to attract persons to service on General Assembly entities, and to conversations with the entities about ways they can adjust to emerging cultural realities.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee works in concert with the General Assembly Committee on Representation to ensure that membership on all General Assembly entities is broadly representative of the membership of the whole church.

In its continuous effort to enhance cultural competence and proficiency, the GANC enlisted the services of two consultants in the areas of servant leadership and theological diversity. In response to both *Book of Order* mandates and input from the church, the GANC also sought to refine its ability to discern “theological diversity” in its consideration of possible nominees. The committee invited Dr. John Burgess, professor of systematic theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, to provide a framework for understanding more fully the need for theological diversity. He deepened our understanding that it is only through hearing the full range of voices within the church that we have any hope of discerning the voice of God. Growing from this productive consultation, the GANC added the following question to its nomination form: “To assist the General Assembly Nominating Committee in addressing the Presbyterian Church’s commitment to theological diversity, please briefly describe your theological perspective.”

While not quantifiable as are other representational categories, such as gender, race, and ethnicity, the answers to the new question enabled the GANC to be more informed and intentional in ensuring that the theological diversity of nominees is “broadly representative of the constituency” of the PC(USA).

#### 1. *Accomplishments in 2010–2012*

The GANC continues to connect with Presbyterians—through meetings of presbytery and synod nominating committee, participation and attendance at national and regional conferences, engagement and correspondence with leaders at all governing body levels of the church—in order to inform Presbyterians of the many and diverse opportunities for service. In addition to face-to-face engagements, individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and synods can find a listing of positions open for election on the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s website [www.pcusa.org/nominations](http://www.pcusa.org/nominations). The website provides information on the General Assembly nominations process and descriptions of each entity to which the committee makes nominations. These descriptions are written by each entity and contain information on the purpose of the entity, skill sets and expertise needed, and time requirements for service. They are a useful tool for helping potential candidates determine whether or not their particular gifts and abilities are a match with the identified needs of a specific entity at this particular time.

In 2010–2012, in addition to providing information about the nominations process on its website, and in response to calls to do so, the General Assembly Nominating Committee returned to its practice of publishing a nominations booklet containing information of the nomination process, entity descriptions, skills and expertise needed, time requirements, and the names and contact information for members of the GANC. The booklet is offered at no cost upon request to the General Assembly nominations office in Louisville and disseminated to all mid councils.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee solicits applications for nomination to at-large positions from all councils, other official Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) groups, and individual Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members. Presbyteries and synods provide the names of persons to be considered for nomination to designated mid council positions on the various committees, boards, and commissions where such membership is mandated.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee encourages those wishing to be considered for service on a General Assembly level committee to apply online via its website. The online application is easy to use, safe and secure, and relatively fast way to file. While this is the preferred way to apply, women and men who find that they are not able to use this method are able to obtain either an electronic or paper version of the application form for their use.

Through participation at conferences, conversations and engagement with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, racial ethnic caucuses, affinity groups, individual contact at all mid council levels as well as with pastors and ruling elders across the denomination, the General Assembly Nominating Committee strives to increase the number of racial ethnic persons and persons with differing theological perspectives in its pool of applicants.

Most persons serving on General Assembly agencies, committees, or entities are members of a congregation or a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Several committees include within their membership persons who are not Presbyterian: the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, the National Committee on the Self-Development of People, and the Review Committees on General Assembly Agencies.

About a year before it meets to make nominations, the GANC publishes on its website and mails to each presbytery and synod a list of vacancies to be filled. Additionally, the GANC website provides instructions, committee descriptions, and information about the nominations process.

Persons interested in being considered for service on a General Assembly level committee and persons who wish to suggest persons for consideration may do so by submitting an application for nomination form either online at the GANC's website, electronically via an email version of the application form, or by completing and returning a printed version of the form. As of February 1, 2012, approximately 200 applications were received for about 75 at-large vacancies. Applications remain active for two General Assembly cycles.

The application process requires that applicants ask three appraisers to complete a reference form regarding the applicant's abilities, gifts, and experience. A reference is also solicited from the council for each applicant. The references are treated in confidence and are critical in the discernment process the members of the GANC use. All application forms are shared with each General Assembly Nominating Committee member. Each member of the General Assembly Nominating Committee has access to the confidential appraisal materials for all applicants.

The nominating committee maintains a rotation system by which synods and/or presbyteries nominate persons to serve on the Mission Development Resources Committee, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the National Committee on the Self-Development of People, as well as a rotation system for presbytery representation on the General Assembly Mission Council, as outlined in the *Organization for Mission*. It is important to remember that nominations for these mid council positions are made from proposals received from presbyteries or synods—through their regular nominating process.

Members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee relate actively to mid councils and General Assembly entities throughout the year. Each General Assembly Nominating Committee member serves as a liaison to the nominating committee of the synod in which the member resides. Each member attends at least one synod or synod nominating committee meeting every other year to explain the nominations process.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee invites all General Assembly entities to send a written report biennially concerning the specific needs of the entity regarding nominees presented to the General Assembly. In addition, the General Assembly Nominating Committee's liaison member is available to meet with the entity or be in contact by telephone or mail at the entity's invitation, so that the nominating process may be explained and that the skills and expertise needed by the entity are identified. This information, along with advice and counsel received from the General Assembly Committee on Representation, assists the General Assembly Nominating Committee in its work.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee continues to be concerned about the needs of persons with disabilities, persons with children and/or other dependents, and youth and young adults on entities of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation are committed to working together to discover persons with disabilities, youth, and young adults who are willing to be considered for service on General Assembly committees and agencies. The General Assembly Nominating Committee notes that many applicants do not identify themselves as persons with disabilities even when a disability does exist. Thus, we believe that the number of persons with disabilities serving the church on committees at the General Assembly level is actually higher than reported. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will continue to seek ways to encourage persons living with disabilities to make this information available.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee shared with the past General Assemblies its concern that there was an increase in the number of persons who have resigned from elected service because of a variety of obstacles. Resignations continue to increase as many demands, including pressures of family and work life, affect the ability of members to continue to serve at the General Assembly level.

The *Organization for Mission* provides that terms for most agencies, committees, or entities are four years, with eligibility to serve an additional four-year term. Re-nomination to a second term is not automatic. In fact, the 219th General Assembly (2010) urged “General Assembly entities to consider re-nominations as the exception, rather than the rule and applied only to those members whose continued service is clearly beneficial to on-going or projected work in order to assist the GANC in making its careful nominations” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 12). The GANC uses several factors in determining whether or not to re-nominate a person. Key in this discernment process is an evaluation instrument completed by the agency, committee, or entity on which the member serves, diversity issues, special skills and expertise needed by the agency, committee, or entity to respond to assigned mandates.

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), there have been four meetings of the nominating committee: January 2011 in New Orleans, Louisiana; November 2011 via video conference call; March 2012 in Dallas, Texas; and April 2012 video conference call. New members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee participated in an intensive orientation meeting in San Antonio in September, 2010.

## 2. *Membership*

There are sixteen members on the General Assembly Nominating Committee—one member residing in each of the sixteen synods. The General Assembly, upon the nomination of the General Assembly moderator, elects the members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee; members serve a six-year term. The following officers were elected and served from July 2010 to July 2012: Catherine Purves, teaching elder, Synod of the Trinity, moderator; Warner Durnell, teaching elder, Synod of Living Waters, vice-moderator; Cindy Edwards, church member, Synod of Alaska-Northwest, secretary. The other members of the committee are: Joan Carpenter, ruling elder, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii; Frank Deming, teaching elder, Synod of Mid-Atlantic; Tully Fletcher, teaching elder, Synod of the Southwest; Carnell Hampton, teaching elder, Synod of the South Atlantic; Roger Howell, ruling elder, Synod of the Covenant; Jack Jenkins, ruling elder, Synod of the Northeast; Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks, church member, Synod of the Rocky Mountains; Emily McGinley, teaching elder; Synod of Lincoln Trails; Judy North, ruling elder, Synod of Lakes and Prairies; Mike Reyes, ruling elder, Synod of the Pacific; Bob Riggs, ruling elder, Synod of Mid-America; Lita Simpson, ruling elder, Synod of the Sun; and Jose Torres Hernandez, ruling elder, Sinodo Presbiteriano Boriquen en Puerto Rico.

The office of the General Assembly Nominating Committee is located in the Office of the General Assembly, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396. Assistant Stated Clerk Valerie Kiriishi Small, ruling elder, serves as the manager for General Assembly Nominations.

We, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them. (Rom. 12:5–6 [RSV])

## **B. *General Assembly Per Capita Payments by Presbytery***

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is grateful to the presbyteries for their continued level of faithfulness in the payment of per capita apportionments, although there have been many challenges in recent years due to the economy and issues in the church. During the year 2008, the percentage of total per capita paid to the General Assembly was about 95 percent; during 2009, about 93.4 percent; and during 2010, about 92.8 percent. Improvement of the level of giving is encouraged in the current and future years.

“Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission[; and of] performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 301).

Full participation in per capita giving preserves the connectional nature of our Presbyterian system and provides a strong witness to the faithfulness of our covenantal community as believers of the Reformed Theology, based on the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It also helps us to function as a whole while coordinating between congregations and mid councils, and preserve the identity of our mission and ministry globally through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

See [5-year-per-capita-2006-2010.pdf](#) (or pages 231–36) for pages that contain a statement of all per capita payments to the General Assembly for the last five years (2006–2010) by presbytery, indicating the total annual per capita apportionment, the amount paid, and the outstanding balance. The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) will continue to receive per capita contributions for 2011 from presbyteries during the year 2012.

We are grateful that the vast majority of our congregations continue to be faithful and support our denomination by participating in per-capita giving even when they may have disagreements with some decisions made by elected commissioners to the General Assembly by the discernment of the Holy Spirit. Each member's share of the General Assembly per capita costs for the year (2012) is \$6.63.

**C. *General Assembly Agency Minister Salaries Report.***

The report of the 2010/2011 General Assembly Agency Minister Salary Report (see the report at 03-info-ga-minister-salary-information-2010&2011.pdf; or pages 237–40) is in response to the following referral: *2006 Referral: Item 08-01. Recommendation 2.e. the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly Shall Receive from Each Entity, Report to the Assembly, and Include in Its Minutes, a List of the Positions in Each Entity That Are Called Positions, Whether Occupied by a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Chief Administrative Officer, Along with Their Full Terms of Call for the Two Years Prior to the Year of the Assembly, Including Bonuses and All Other Financial Provisions—From the 217th General Assembly (2006) (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 623).*

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Per Capita**  
**COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**December 31, 2011 and 2010**

**Attachment A**

<b>Assets</b>	Per Capita	Dept. of History	Total 12/31/2011	Total 12/31/2010
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 772,111	\$ 19,245	\$ 791,355	\$ 293,861
Short term investments	2,504,600	1,168,383	3,672,983	2,097,651
OGA Foundation	103,886	-	103,886	-
Per Capita Investments	3,389,577	-	3,389,577	6,314,626
Long term investments	-	2,715,229	2,715,229	1,000,764
Endowment investments	654,664	(10,893)	643,772	353,043
Investments PILP	361,470	-	361,470	2,342,324
Apportionment receivable--current year	2,768,171	-	2,768,171	-
Apportionment receivable--prior year	832,970	-	832,970	-
Allowance for Uncollectible Apportionments	(1,663,421)	-	(1,663,421)	(592,192)
Other receivables	(120,453)	360,646	240,193	148,169
Receivable-GAC	-	-	-	602,915
Prepaid-Other	28,351	3,500	31,851	13,385
Land, Building and Fixed Assets	18,668	3,216,382	3,235,050	3,143,223
Accumulated depreciation	(5,600)	(1,761,733)	(1,767,333)	(1,595,943)
Total Assets	<b>\$ 9,644,993</b>	<b>\$ 5,710,759</b>	<b>\$ 15,355,751</b>	<b>\$ 14,121,826</b>
 <b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>				
<u>Liabilities:</u>				
Accounts Payable-GAC	\$ 324,950	\$ 349	\$ 325,299	\$ 496,997
Accounts Payable	47,890	-	47,890	59,925
Receipts in Process/ Other	-	-	-	77
Total liabilities	<b>\$ 372,840</b>	<b>\$ 349</b>	<b>\$ 373,189</b>	<b>\$ 556,999</b>
			0	0
Net assets:				0
Unrestricted:				0
Undesignated	\$ 6,714,232	\$ -	\$ 6,714,232	\$ 6,889,078
Designated	2,193,914	2,482,893	4,676,807	2,997,515
Plant Fund	13,067	1,607,695	1,620,762	1,683,525
Temporarily Restricted	261,370	926,757	1,188,127	1,212,075
Permanently Restricted	89,569	693,065	782,634	782,634
Total net assets	<b>\$ 9,272,152</b>	<b>\$ 5,710,410</b>	<b>\$ 14,982,562</b>	<b>\$ 13,564,827</b>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<b>\$ 9,644,993</b>	<b>\$ 5,710,759</b>	<b>\$ 15,355,751</b>	<b>\$ 14,121,826</b>

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW - PER CAPITA BUDGET**  
*Actual and Projected Sources of Funding and Expenditures 2010-2014*

**USING THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS:**

- Projected Rev and Exp for 2012, and beyond
- number of members for 2012-2014 is as follows: (please note that apportionment revenue is based on the membership reported two years prior to the current year; that is 2012 apportionment revenue is based on membership reported at end of 2010):  
 (2012) actual:2,016,091-38,953; (2013): 1,927,138 (2014): 1,877,138;  
 2013 & 2014 assumes a membership reduction of 50,000 each year.

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Expenditures less than budgeted
- Decline in membership is less than expected

**RISKS**

- Actual membership declines more than projected
- Actual expenditures exceed budgeted expenses
- Church and economic related issues impacting Revenue & Investment values
- General Assembly financial implications
- The level of available funds from reserves (after the 30% provision)

	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Rev Bgt	2013 Prop Bgt	2014 Prop Bgt
Unrestricted net assets, January 1	\$6,481,999	6,889,077	6,727,299	6,409,343	5,749,632
Less: Reserve (30% annual budget)	4,424,524	3,614,521	4,597,623	3,909,036	4,803,639
<b>Income from prior years available</b>	<b>2,057,475</b>	<b>3,274,556</b>	<b>2,129,676</b>	<b>2,500,307</b>	<b>945,993</b>

Sources of funding	<u>Apportionments</u>				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
	\$6.15 for 2010				
	\$6.50 for 2011				
	\$6.63 for 2012		\$13,108,425		
	\$6.87 for 2013			\$13,239,438	
	\$7.02 for 2014				\$13,177,509
<b>Income formula and other income</b>	<b>510,281</b>	<b>164,441</b>	<b>215,000</b>	<b>215,000</b>	<b>215,000</b>
Realized and unrealized gain on investments	224,218	(399,107)			
From Prior years accumulation	(407,078)	161,778	317,956	659,711	935,591
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,475,292</b>	<b>13,420,683</b>	<b>13,641,381</b>	<b>14,114,149</b>	<b>14,328,100</b>

<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>14,748,412</b>	<b>12,048,403</b>	<b>15,325,411</b>	<b>13,030,119</b>	<b>16,012,130</b>
Designated for Subsequent General Assembly	(1,273,120)	1,372,280	(1,384,030)	1,384,030	(1,384,030)
Estimated Under Expenditure			(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)
<b>Total Expenditures &amp; Commitments</b>	<b>13,475,292</b>	<b>13,420,683</b>	<b>13,641,381</b>	<b>14,114,149</b>	<b>14,328,100</b>
Unrestricted net assets, December 31	6,889,077	6,727,299	6,409,343	5,749,632	4,814,041



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY PER CAPITA BUDGET - STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2010-2014 (Attachment B)**

	2010 Revised Bgt.	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised Bgt.	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>									
APPORTIONMENTS	13,149,204	13,147,871	13,572,533	13,493,571	13,512,484	(404,059)	13,108,425	13,104,538	13,102,423
INCOME FORMULA AND OTHER INCOME	215,000	510,281	215,000	164,441	215,000		215,000	215,000	215,000
UNREALIZED GAIN/(LOSS)		224,218		(399,107)					
FROM PRIOR YEAR ACCUMULATION	260,897	(407,078)	313,635	161,778	417,083		317,956	794,611	1,010,677
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>13,625,101</b>	<b>13,475,292</b>	<b>14,101,168</b>	<b>13,420,683</b>	<b>14,144,567</b>	<b>(404,059)</b>	<b>13,641,381</b>	<b>14,114,149</b>	<b>14,328,100</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>									
<b>I. GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION</b>									
COMMISSIONER EXPENSES	1,756,208	1,680,509			2,056,179	26,511	2,082,690	2,400	2,082,690
FACILITY EXPENSES	670,032	797,454	70,192	39,880	723,803	(460,433)	263,370	19,000	263,370
TRAINING						93,000	93,000	2,000	93,000
WORSHIP	108,500	157,442	-		66,500	18,000	84,500		84,500
GA COMMITTEES	11,500	16,601	-		10,000	75,000	85,000		85,000
GA TECHNOLOGY	-	-	-			159,500	159,500	0	159,500
TOTAL	2,546,240	2,652,006	70,192	39,880	2,856,482	(88,422)	2,768,060	23,400	2,768,060
<b>II. PERMANENT AND SP. COMMITTEES</b>									
PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION	91,405	41,539	91,405	89,777	91,405	(1,830)	89,575	102,457	102,457
GA NOMINATING COMMITTEE	64,025	59,840	57,745	27,707	64,025	(3,201)	60,824	60,765	65,715
COMM ECUMENICAL RELATIONS	38,470	34,896	38,470	31,455	40,630	(2,030)	38,600	46,110	47,795
COMM PRESBYTN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	25,775	17,247	25,775	18,958	25,775	0	25,775	25,000	25,000
COMM ON REPRESENTATION	75,605	65,290	92,565	91,164	75,605	(3,780)	71,825	102,227	83,225
ADV COMM CONSTITUTION	30,494	30,097	11,205	7,082	30,494	(1,524)	28,970	10,644	28,970
ADV COMM ON LITIGATION	12,085	2,079	10,560	186	12,085	(605)	11,480	10,605	12,150
COMMITTEE ON OGA (COGA)	79,480	75,350	79,480	34,768	79,480	(3,480)	76,000	69,000	76,000
TF ON BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES F110 03-18	17,720	750	26,705	12,960	8,735	0	8,735	27,230	11,495
STATED CLERK REV/NOMINATION			14,575	4,177	46,425	0	46,425		
COMMITTEE ON REVIEW	35,970	17,049	35,970	48,400	35,970	0	35,970	36,000	36,000
PRESBYTERIES COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE	47,000	40,219	42,000	42,000	42,000	0	42,000		
GA TASK FORCES (GA 216-217)	-	754					0		
COM ON MARRIAGE & CIVIL UNION	17,675	18,204							
FORM OF GOVERNANCE TASKFORCE	60,350	40,065							
COM ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUE	5,380	29,667		699					
COM- HEIDELBERG CATECHISM F110 16-11	15,125	6,740	23,900	8,547	3,110	0	3,110		
COM ON BELHAR CONFESSION	3,050	10,414						36,250	21,535
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PREVENT - RESOURCES	5,000								
TASKFORCE-GUN VIOLENCE, ITEM 09-05	5,240	6,353							
ACREC-ACS WP TF-PUBLIC EDUC TN 09-06	11,655	2,668							
ACSWP-T&W-VOC TF-PAY EQUITY 09-08	3,220	7,576							
ACSWP TF-HIV/AIDS 10-02	5,240	3,672							
ACWC TF-STATUS OF WOMEN 09-12	16,000	497							
ACWC-ACREC JT WORK GROUP 09-13	3,060	2,671							
ACREC TF-CLIMATE FOR CHANGE 09-16	12,960	15,184							
TF-SPECIAL OFFERING 08-03	6,715	12,252							
REVIEW COM ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES	13,544	1,298							
COM-MGB & ADMIN REVIEW ON PR F110 04-06	47,667	24,706	89,555	153,644	36,570	0	36,570		
FOG COM ON INTERPRETATION F110 07-11		479	9,660	4,363		0			
COM STUDY NAT OF CHURCH-21CENT F110 11-10	21,730	3,048	34,895	25,803	13,665	0	13,665	16,805	9,195
COM-RACL ETHNIC/NEW IMMIG GRTH F110 15-08	17,970		27,205	21,691	9,735	0	9,735		
COM-HISP/LATINO PARTCPN IN CHRCH F110 15-09			13,310	8,618	13,310	0	13,310		
COM- SYN BNDRIES, MID CNCLS F112.05-12							14,810	29,500	18,500
TF-REV RACL ETHNC MIN F112.05-12 Rec 8								15,050	9,855
STUDY TEAM-ORDIN EXAMS F112.07-07								17,660	10,260
COM-FUND THEOLGL INSTITNS F112.10-18								9,860	8,000
TOTAL	789,610	570,604	724,980	631,999	629,019	(16,450)	627,379	615,163	566,152
<b>III. GRANTS TO ECUMENICAL GROUPS</b>									
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES	204,000	204,000	204,000	204,000	204,000	0	204,000	204,000	204,000
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402	0	458,402	458,402	458,402
CHURCHES UNITING IN CHRIST	30,000	30,000	30,000		30,000	(10,000)	20,000	20,000	20,000
WORLD ALLIANCE REFORMED CHURCHES	232,731	202,731	232,732	222,732	232,732	0	232,732	232,732	232,732
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TOGETHER	2,500	2,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000
ECUMENICAL ASSEMBLY ALLOCATION	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	0	75,000	75,000	75,000
TOTAL	1,002,633	972,633	1,005,134	965,134	1,005,134	(10,000)	995,134	995,134	995,134
<b>IV. DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES</b>									
STATED CLERK	819,713	798,010	857,781	798,147	886,037	(23,767)	862,270	890,550	918,810
ECUMENICAL & AGENCY RELATIONS	734,891	689,299	753,057	654,117	778,757	(27,447)	751,310	760,820	804,685
CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES	704,719	669,374	727,312	650,572	750,164	(46,417)	703,747	732,805	755,015
ASSEMBLY SERVICES	490,454	441,311	505,582	480,825	522,718	(38,396)	484,322	529,360	544,915
COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY	598,535	581,229	626,193	592,441	627,294	(5,230)	622,064	662,669	666,359
COMMON EXPENSES	228,500	167,669	204,000	154,953	206,500	1,500	208,000	207,500	207,500
VOCATION	1,112,684	1,012,238	1,071,005	943,367	1,103,152	(19,564)	1,083,588	1,117,667	1,150,856
PRESBYTN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	1,839,629	1,735,223	1,893,468	1,837,680	1,943,093	(74,648)	1,868,445	1,926,612	1,984,356
TOTAL	6,529,125	6,094,353	6,638,398	6,112,102	6,817,715	(233,969)	6,583,746	6,827,983	7,032,496
<b>I-IV TOTAL OGA</b>	<b>10,865,108</b>	<b>10,289,596</b>	<b>8,438,704</b>	<b>7,749,115</b>	<b>11,308,350</b>	<b>(348,841)</b>	<b>10,974,319</b>	<b>8,461,680</b>	<b>11,361,842</b>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY PER CAPITA BUDGET - STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2010-2014 (Attachment B)									
	2010 Revised Bgt.	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised Bgt.	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>V.GOVERNING BODY RELATIONS (OGA/GAC S)</b>	239,682	232,623	226,538	203,640	247,283	(42,043)	205,240	186,428	203,848
<b>VI. GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL</b>									
GAMC MEETINGS	193,890	267,821	163,610	165,890	191,890	(3,390)	188,500	178,000	188,000
OTHER MEETINGS	81,629	25,207	153,859	49,603	164,859	(80,859)	84,000	84,000	84,000
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RACIAL ETHNIC CON	62,000	58,052	50,000	44,665	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	52,210	52,155
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WITNESS PO	62,000	48,782	50,000	45,201	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	50,000	52,155
ACSWP-GLOBALIZATION		2,639							
ACSWP-DIST RESOURCE ON CREED FI10 10-02			1,700						
ACSWP-TF-STUDY ECONOMIC TRENDS FI10 10-05	9,045		27,885		3,110	0	3,110		
ACSWP-PEACE MKG-REVIEW PEACE FI10 13-11	2,088		68,598	14,368	4,643	0	4,643		
ACSWP-DEV STUDY MATS - HIV/AIDS FI10 19-05			10,000	6,800		0			
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S CONCERNS	62,000	49,691	50,000	31,033	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	52,210	52,155
ACWC-STATUS OF WOMEN TF FI10 09-17			19,345	7,233		0			
ACWC-TF VIOLENCE WOM/CHILDREN FI10 10-06	10,980		24,470	14,251		0			
ACSWP-WAR,DRUGS, INCACRN FI12 11-08		*						1,500	500
ACSWP-STUDY TAX POLICY FI12 11-09		*						20,635	12,015
ACSWP-STDY DISPTD W.SAHARA FI12 14NB		*						1,753	3,438
CONSLTNS-RACL ETH, N IMGNTS FI12 16-06		*					240	36,315	240
ACSWP-STDY COMPNSN & JSTCE FI12,16-07 Rec 06-b		*						4,000	3,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>483,632</b>	<b>452,192</b>	<b>619,467</b>	<b>379,044</b>	<b>529,202</b>	<b>(92,484)</b>	<b>436,958</b>	<b>480,623</b>	<b>448,158</b>
<b>VII. GAMC ADMINISTRATION</b>									
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	1,225,045	1,213,578	1,248,994	1,177,191	1,292,101	(27,096)	1,265,005	1,305,348	1,347,411
OTHER GAMC COORDINATION	773,114	763,896	804,039	785,738	836,200	(4,674)	831,526	861,766	892,926
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,998,159</b>	<b>1,977,474</b>	<b>2,053,033</b>	<b>1,962,929</b>	<b>2,128,301</b>	<b>(31,770)</b>	<b>2,096,531</b>	<b>2,167,114</b>	<b>2,240,337</b>
<b>VI-VII TOTAL GAC</b>	<b>2,481,791</b>	<b>2,429,666</b>	<b>2,672,500</b>	<b>2,341,973</b>	<b>2,657,503</b>	<b>(124,254)</b>	<b>2,533,489</b>	<b>2,647,737</b>	<b>2,688,495</b>
<b>VIII. SHARED SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>711,640</b>	<b>666,490</b>	<b>735,185</b>	<b>697,260</b>	<b>759,672</b>	<b>52,691</b>	<b>812,363</b>	<b>834,274</b>	<b>857,945</b>
<b>IX. UNCOLLECTIBLE PER CAPITA</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>1,130,037</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>1,056,415</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>900,000</b>	<b>900,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>14,898,221</b>	<b>14,748,412</b>	<b>12,672,927</b>	<b>12,048,403</b>	<b>15,572,808</b>	<b>(262,447)</b>	<b>15,325,411</b>	<b>13,030,119</b>	<b>16,012,130</b>
X. COMMITTED FOR SUBSEQUENT ASSEMBLIES	(1,273,120)	(1,273,120)	1,428,241	1,372,280	(1,428,241)		(1,384,030)	1,384,030	(1,384,030)
XI ESTIMATED UNDER-EXPENDITURE							(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND COMMITMENTS</b>	<b>13,625,101</b>	<b>13,475,292</b>	<b>14,101,168</b>	<b>13,420,683</b>	<b>14,144,567</b>		<b>13,641,381</b>	<b>14,114,149</b>	<b>14,328,100</b>

**PER CAPITA**  
**Statement of Activities**  
**Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>									
1 Apportionments	\$13,149,204	\$13,147,871	\$13,572,533	\$13,493,571	\$13,512,484	(404,059)	\$13,108,425	\$13,239,438	\$13,177,509
2 Income Formula	\$200,000	\$163,890	\$200,000	\$157,520	\$200,000		\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
3 Manley Fund	\$13,000		\$13,000		\$13,000		\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
4 Miscellaneous	\$2,000	\$346,391	\$2,000	\$6,921	\$2,000		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
5 Unrealized/Realized Gain (Loss)		\$224,218		(399,107)					
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$13,364,204	\$13,882,370	\$13,787,533	\$13,258,905	\$13,727,484	(\$404,059)	\$13,323,425	\$13,454,438	\$13,392,509
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$13,364,204	\$13,882,370	\$13,787,533	\$13,258,905	\$13,727,484		\$13,323,425	\$13,454,438	\$13,392,509
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>									
1 General Assembly Session	\$2,546,240	\$2,652,006	\$70,192	\$39,880	\$2,856,482	(88,422)	\$2,768,060	\$23,400	\$2,768,060
2 Committee/Commission Expenses	\$789,610	\$570,604	\$724,980	\$631,999	\$629,019	(1,640)	\$627,379	\$615,163	\$566,152
3 Ecumenical Expenses	\$1,000,133	\$972,633	\$1,005,134	\$965,134	\$1,005,134	(10,000)	\$995,134	\$995,134	\$995,134
4 Office of the General Assembly	6,529,125	6,094,353	6,638,398	6,112,102	6,817,715	(233,969)	6,583,746	6,827,983	7,032,496
5 OGA/GAC Shared Expenses	\$239,682	\$232,624	226,538	203,640	247,283	(42,043)	205,240	186,428	203,848
6 General Assembly Council	1,708,677	1,665,769	1,868,461	1,556,235	1,821,303	(119,340)	1,701,963	1,785,971	1,795,569
7 Other GAC Supervised Work	\$773,114	\$763,896	804,039	785,738	836,200	(4,674)	831,526	861,766	892,926
8 Support Services	\$588,640	\$588,640	612,185	619,260	636,672	(3,309)	633,363	655,274	677,945
9 Other Expenses	\$123,000	\$77,850	123,000	78,000	123,000	56,000	179,000	179,000	180,000
10 Uncollectable Apportionments	\$600,000	\$1,130,037	600,000	1,056,415	600,000	200,000	800,000	900,000	900,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$14,898,221	\$14,748,412	\$12,672,927	\$12,048,403	\$15,572,808	(\$247,397)	\$15,325,410	\$13,030,120	\$16,012,130
Committed for Subsequent Assemblies	(\$1,273,120)	(\$1,273,120)	\$1,428,241	\$1,372,280	(\$1,428,241)		(\$1,384,030)	\$1,384,030	(\$1,384,030)
Estimated Under-Expenditure							(\$300,000)	(\$300,000)	(\$300,000)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES &amp; COMMITMENTS</b>	13,625,101	13,475,292	\$14,101,168	\$13,420,683	\$14,144,567		\$13,641,380	\$14,114,150	\$14,328,100
Net to or (from) Reserve	(260,896)	407,078	(313,635)	(161,778)	(417,083)		(317,956)	(659,712)	(935,592)

**Schedule 1 - GENERAL ASSEMBLY SES**

1 Mileage & Per Diem/Commissr & Advisory Delega	\$1,339,792				1,577,542	(177,362)	1,400,180		1,400,180
2 Place of Meeting/GA Support	\$483,000				539,500	(385,500)	154,000		154,000
3a Official Personnel/GA Personnel	\$415,416				477,612	(177,102)	300,510	2,400	300,510
3b Plenary						382,000	382,000		382,000
4 Printing	\$70,000		1,000		66,100	(66,100)			
5 Local Committee	\$117,032		69,192	39,880	118,203	(8,833)	109,370	19,000	109,370
6 Accident Ins - Commissioners	\$1,000				1,025	(1,025)			
7 Training						93,000	93,000	2,000	93,000
8 GA Programs	\$11,500				10,000	(10,000)			
9 Committees at GA						85,000	85,000		85,000
10 Worship	\$108,500				66,500	18,000	84,500		84,500
11 GA Technology						159,500	159,500		159,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$2,546,240		70,192	39,880	2,856,482	(88,422)	2,768,060	23,400	2,768,060



**PER CAPITA**  
**Statement of Activities**  
**Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

		2010	2010	2011	2011	2012	2012	2012	2013	2014
		Revised	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Adjustment	Revised	Proposed	Proposed
<b>Schedule 2 - COMMITTEE &amp; COMMISSI</b>										
1	Permanent Judicial Commission	\$91,405	41,539	91,405	89,777	91,405	(1,830)	89,575	102,457	102,457
2	Permanent Nominating Comm	\$64,025	59,840	57,745	27,707	64,025	(3,201)	60,824	60,765	65,715
3	Comm on Ecumenical Relations	\$38,470	34,896	38,470	31,455	40,630	(2,030)	38,600	46,110	47,795
4	Comm of PHS	\$25,775	17,247	25,775	18,958	25,775		25,775	25,000	25,000
5	GA Comm on Representation	\$75,605	65,290	92,565	91,164	75,605	(3,780)	71,825	102,227	83,225
6	Adv Comm on Constitution	\$30,494	30,097	11,205	7,082	30,494	(1,524)	28,970	10,644	28,970
7	Adv Comm on Litigation	\$12,085	2,079	10,560	186	12,085	(605)	11,480	10,605	12,150
8	Committee on Ofc of GA	\$79,480	75,350	79,480	34,768	79,480	(3,480)	76,000	69,000	76,000
9	COGA TF-Bienl Assm/PR FI10 03-18	\$17,720	750	26,705	12,960	8,735		8,735	27,230	11,495
10	Comm for Review of GA	\$35,970	17,049	35,970	48,400	35,970		35,970	36,000	36,000
11	Presbyterian Cooperative Communion	\$47,000	40,219	42,000	42,000	42,000		42,000		
12	Stated Clerk Rev/Nomination			14,575	4,177	46,425		46,425		
13	GA Task Forces (GA216-217)		\$754							
14	Comm Marriage & Civil Union	\$17,675	\$18,204							
15	Form of Gov Taskforce	\$60,350	\$40,065							
16	Comm on Middle East Issue	\$5,380	\$29,667		699					
17	Comm Transln Heidelberg Catech	15,125	6,740	23,900	8,547	3,110		3,110		
18	Comm Belhar Confession	\$3,050	\$10,414						36,250	21,535
19	Struck Down - Print									
20	Sexual Misconduct Prevent Rscs	\$5,000								
21	Theological Diversity Com									
22	TF-Gun Violence 09-05	5,240	6,353							
23	TF-Public Education 09-06	11,655	2,668							
24	TF-Pay Equity 09-08	3,220	7,576							
25	TF-HIV/AIDS 10-02	5,240	3,672							
26	TF-Status of Women 09-12	16,000	497							
27	Joint Work Group 09-13	3,060	2,671							
28	TF-Climate for Change 09-16	12,960	15,184							
29	TF-Special Offering 08-03	6,715	12,252							
30	Rev Com on Adv Committees	13,544	1,298							
31	Com-MGB & Adm Rev PR FI10, 04-06	47,667	24,706	89,555	153,644	36,570		36,570		
32	FOG Com on Interpretn FI10, 07-11		479	9,660	4,363					
33	Com on Nature-Church 21st FI10, 11-10	21,730	3,048	34,895	25,803	13,665		13,665	16,805	9,195
34	Com-Racl Ethnc/New Immig FI10, 15-08	17,970		27,205	21,691	9,735		9,735		
35	Com-Hisp/Latino Partcpn FI10, 15-09			13,310	8,618	13,310		13,310		
36	Com-Syn Bndries/Mid Cncils FI12, 05-12							14,810	29,500	18,500
37	TF-Rev Racial Ethnc Min FI 12, 05-12 R8								15,050	9,855
38	Study Team-Ordin Exams FI12, 07-07								17,660	10,260
39	Com-Fund Theol Institns FI12, 10-18								9,860	8,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$789,610</b>	<b>\$570,604</b>	<b>\$724,980</b>	<b>\$631,999</b>	<b>\$629,019</b>	<b>(\$16,450)</b>	<b>\$627,379</b>	<b>\$615,163</b>	<b>\$566,152</b>



**PER CAPITA**  
**Statement of Activities**  
**Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>Schedule 3 - ECUMENICAL EXPENSES</b>									
1 Natl Council of Churches	\$204,000	\$204,000	204,000	204,000	204,000		204,000	204,000	204,000
2 World Council of Churches	\$458,402	\$458,402	458,402	458,402	458,402		458,402	458,402	458,402
3 Churches Uniting in Christ	\$30,000	\$30,000	30,000		30,000	(10,000)	20,000	20,000	20,000
4 World Alliance Ref Churches	\$232,731	\$202,731	232,732	222,732	232,732		232,732	232,732	232,732
5 Christian Churches Together	\$2,500	\$2,500	5,000	5,000	5,000		5,000	5,000	5,000
6 Ecumenical Assembly Allocation	\$75,000	\$75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000		75,000	75,000	75,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,002,633</b>	<b>\$972,633</b>	<b>1,005,134</b>	<b>965,134</b>	<b>1,005,134</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>995,134</b>	<b>995,134</b>	<b>995,134</b>
<b>Schedule 4 - OFFICE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY</b>									
<b>4A OFFICE EXPENSES</b>									
1 Salaries-Temporaries	\$9,000		9,000		9,000	(3,000)	6,000	6,000	6,000
2 Supplies	\$22,000	\$14,099	20,000	10,448	20,000		20,000	20,000	20,000
3 Office Equip & Accessories	\$8,500	\$1,061	5,000		5,000		5,000	4,000	4,000
4 Telephone	\$56,500	\$64,990	60,000	70,882	60,000	5,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
5 Professional Fees	\$10,000	\$1,200	8,000	2,200	8,000	(1,000)	7,000	7,000	7,000
6 Insurance	\$60,000	\$42,407	50,000	42,176	52,500	(2,500)	50,000	51,000	51,000
7 Equip Maintenance & Repair	\$3,500	\$949	2,000	540	2,000		2,000	1,500	1,500
8 Emerging Developments	\$40,000	\$28,978	31,000	16,212	31,000	4,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
9 Miscellaneous	\$9,000	\$3,985	9,000	2,495	9,000	(1,000)	8,000	8,000	8,000
10 Replacement Reserve	\$10,000	\$10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000		10,000	10,000	10,000
Sub-Total, 4A	\$228,500	\$167,669	204,000	154,953	206,500	1,500	208,000	207,500	207,500
<b>4B-DEPARTMENT OF THE STATED CLERK</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$701,073	\$698,970	739,141	705,855	767,397	(19,727)	747,670	774,950	803,210
2 Administrative	\$48,000	\$34,602	48,000	20,890	48,000	(2,400)	45,600	45,600	45,600
3 Travel & Meetings	\$66,640	\$60,438	66,640	67,402	66,640	(1,640)	65,000	66,000	66,000
4 Presbyterian Service Commission	\$4,000	\$4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000		4,000	4,000	4,000
Sub-Total, 4B	\$819,713	\$798,010	857,781	798,147	886,037	(23,767)	862,270	890,550	918,810
<b>4C-DEPARTMENT OF ECUMENICAL AGENCY R</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$487,061	\$468,327	505,227	483,889	524,397	(19,967)	504,430	516,220	535,460
2 Administrative	\$9,700	\$7,911	9,700	2,724	9,700	(700)	9,000	9,000	9,000
3 Travel & Meetings	\$43,000	\$33,775	43,000	24,464	43,000	(1,000)	42,000	42,000	42,000
4 Ecumenical Expenses	\$108,930	\$98,498	108,930	70,604	115,460	(5,780)	109,680	107,400	132,025
5 Moderator: Jan - June	\$40,100	\$39,039	40,100	26,336	40,100		40,100	40,100	40,100
6 Moderator: July - Dec	\$40,100	\$35,749	40,100	40,100	40,100		40,100	40,100	40,100
7 Moderator's Gathering	\$6,000	\$6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000		6,000	6,000	6,000
Sub-Total, 4C	\$734,891	\$689,299	753,057	654,117	778,757	(27,447)	751,310	760,820	804,685
<b>4D-CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$569,704	\$561,472	590,797	540,111	613,649	(39,817)	573,832	602,890	625,100
2 Administrative	\$14,000	\$7,207	13,500	9,008	13,500	(675)	12,825	12,825	12,825
3 Travel & Meetings	\$58,500	\$48,379	58,500	46,519	58,500	(2,925)	55,575	55,575	55,575
4 PJC Trainer Training	\$500		500		500	(500)			
5 Immigration Network	\$12,015	\$2,408	14,015	4,934	14,015		14,015	14,015	14,015
6 Church Property and Legal	\$50,000	\$49,908	50,000	50,000	50,000	(2,500)	47,500	47,500	47,500
Sub-Total, 4D	704,719	669,374	727,312	650,572	750,164	(46,417)	703,747	732,805	755,015



**PER CAPITA**  
**Statement of Activities**  
**Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>4E-ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$384,464	\$393,568	399,592	391,722	414,728	(33,006)	381,722	426,760	442,315
2 Administrative	\$8,330	\$3,566	8,330	4,225	8,330	(430)	7,900	7,900	7,900
3 Travel & Meetings	\$32,000	\$25,967	32,000	19,218	34,000	(1,700)	32,300	32,300	32,300
4 Stated Clerks Training	\$65,660	\$18,210	65,660	65,660	65,660	(3,260)	62,400	62,400	62,400
Sub-Total, 4E	\$490,454	\$441,311	505,582	480,825	522,718	(38,396)	484,322	529,360	544,915
<b>4F-COMMUNICATION &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$491,535	\$490,712	510,193	501,109	529,294	11,820	541,114	561,898	579,870
2 Administrative	\$17,500	\$10,234	15,000	6,959	14,000	(1,000)	13,000	14,000	14,000
3 Travel & Meetings	\$18,000	\$18,237	20,000	18,222	20,000	(2,000)	18,000	17,000	17,000
4 Technology-Equipment & Maintenance	\$71,500	\$62,046	81,000	66,151	64,000	(14,050)	49,950	50,600	35,650
5 Translate docs-Korean, Spanish FI12,16-07								19,171	19,839
Sub-Total,4F	\$598,535	\$581,229	626,193	592,441	627,294	(5,230)	622,064	662,669	666,359
<b>4G- VOCATION</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$912,684	\$872,751	867,005	848,714	899,152	(19,564)	879,588	911,667	944,856
2 Administrative	\$24,005	\$5,886	23,000	4,296	23,000	(6,000)	17,000	17,000	17,000
3 Travel & Meetings	\$67,000	\$47,361	66,000	32,990	66,000	(3,000)	63,000	61,000	63,000
4 Program	\$63,995	\$41,244	65,000	32,349	65,000	3,500	68,500	71,000	69,000
5 Pastorial Residency Support	\$25,000	\$24,996	25,000	25,000	25,000		25,000	25,000	25,000
6 Healthy Ministries			25,000	18				32,000	
7 COM/CPM Event	\$20,000	\$20,000			25,000	5,500	30,500		32,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$1,112,684	\$1,012,238	1,071,005	943,367	1,103,152	(19,564)	1,083,588	1,117,667	1,150,856
<b>4H-HISTORICAL SERVICES</b>									
1 Salaries and Benefits	\$1,299,529	\$1,260,862	1,344,518	1,321,288	1,391,143	(57,248)	1,333,895	1,378,362	1,426,106
2 Temporaries	\$4,000		4,000		4,000		4,000	4,000	4,000
3 Postage	\$11,000	\$11,447	11,500	10,120	12,000	(1,000)	11,000	11,000	11,000
4 Insurance	\$82,500	\$70,716	83,750	67,476	83,750	(8,750)	75,000	75,000	75,000
5 Telephone	\$17,500	\$20,977	17,500	22,924	17,500		17,500	18,500	19,500
6 Contract Services	\$53,700	\$31,068	54,850	38,862	54,850	(2,000)	52,850	53,350	53,350
7 Travel & Meetings	\$42,500	\$30,221	37,500	30,057	37,500	(3,000)	34,500	35,000	35,000
8 Supplies	\$18,600	\$17,055	19,550	23,179	19,550	(250)	19,300	20,350	20,350
9 Utilities	\$180,200	\$168,911	190,200	186,870	192,700	(400)	192,300	202,300	211,300
10 Repairs and Services	\$9,600	\$9,316	9,600	15,421	9,600	(1,000)	8,600	8,600	8,600
11 Miscellaneous	\$500	\$442	500	856	500		500	500	500
12 Replacement Reserve	\$75,000	\$75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000		75,000	75,000	75,000
13 Staff Development	\$8,000	\$5,496	8,000	8,372	8,000	(1,000)	7,000	7,150	7,150
14 Library Computer Service	\$5,000	\$2,250	5,000	5,255	5,000		5,000	5,500	5,500
15 Technology	\$32,000	\$31,462	32,000	32,000	32,000		32,000	32,000	32,000
Sub-Total, 4H	\$1,839,629	\$1,735,223	1,893,468	1,837,680	1,943,093	(74,648)	1,868,445	1,926,612	1,984,356
<b>TOTAL SCH4'S</b>	6,529,125	6,094,353	6,638,398	6,112,102	6,817,715	(233,969)	6,583,746	6,827,983	7,032,496



**PER CAPITA**  
**Statement of Activities**  
**Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>5-GOVERNING BODY RELATIONS (OGA/GAC SH)</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$180,652	\$182,342	187,108	177,804	194,533	(39,693)	154,840	148,678	153,448
2 Administrative	\$3,430	\$3,016	3,430	2,427	3,430	(180)	3,250	3,250	3,250
3 Travel & Meetings	\$30,000	\$27,864	30,000	17,401	30,000	(1,500)	28,500	28,500	28,500
4 MGB Receptio/Office at GA	\$19,600	\$13,401		8	13,320	(670)	12,650		12,650
5 Presbyterian Leadership Formn	\$6,000	\$6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000		6,000	6,000	6,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$239,682</b>	<b>\$232,623</b>	<b>226,538</b>	<b>203,640</b>	<b>247,283</b>	<b>(42,043)</b>	<b>205,240</b>	<b>186,428</b>	<b>203,848</b>
<b>e 6 - GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION CC</b>									
<b>6A - MEETING COSTS</b>									
1 Council Meetings	\$155,505	\$234,084	130,225	150,877	155,505	4,995	160,500	150,500	160,500
2 GA Presentation	\$2,000				2,000	(1,000)	1,000		
3 Special Communications									
4 Member Related Expenses	\$9,500		7,500		7,500	(2,500)	5,000	5,000	5,000
5 Staff Teams/Cabinet									
6 GA Orientation	\$1,000				1,000	(1,000)			
7 GAMC Elected Mbr Travel	10,000	6,740	10,000	4,166	10,000	(1,000)	9,000	9,500	9,500
8 MGB Advisory Board	11,960	6,009	11,960	4,581	11,960	(2,960)	9,000	9,000	9,000
9 MGB Planning Team	3,925	20,988	3,925	6,266	3,925	75	4,000	4,000	4,000
Sub-Total, Lines 1-6	\$193,890	\$267,821	163,610	165,890	191,890	(3,390)	188,500	178,000	188,000
<b>- COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>									
10 Executive Committee	\$42,000	\$25,162	31,000	20,181	42,000	(2,500)	39,500	39,500	39,500
11 Nominating Committee	\$6,000		6,000		6,000	(1,000)	5,000	5,000	5,000
Sub-Total, Lines 7-12	\$48,000	\$25,162	37,000	20,181	48,000	(3,500)	44,500	44,500	44,500
<b>-OTHER MEETINGS</b>									
12 GAC Task Forces	\$31,129	\$45	66,859	29,422	66,859	(36,859)	30,000	30,000	30,000
13 Mission Part Fund Consult			40,000		40,000	(40,000)			
14 Executive Training	\$2,500		10,000		10,000	(500)	9,500	9,500	9,500
Sub-Total, Lines 13-16	\$33,629	\$45	116,859	29,422	116,859	(77,359)	39,500	39,500	39,500
<b>- ADVISORY COMMITTEES</b>									
15 Adv Com-Racial Ethnic Concerns	\$62,000	\$58,052	50,000	44,665	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	52,210	52,155
16 Adv Com-Social Witness Policy	\$62,000	\$48,782	50,000	45,201	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	50,000	52,155
17 ACSWP - Globalization TF		\$2,639							
18 ACSWP-Dist Res Creed FI10 10-02			1,700						
19 TF-Study Econ Trends FI10 10-09	\$9,045		27,885		3,110		3,110		
20 ACSWP-Pce Mkg Rev FI10 13-11	\$2,088		68,598	14,368	4,643		4,643		
21 Dev mats Hiv/Aids FI10 19-05			10,000	6,800					
22 Adv Com-Women's Concerns	\$62,000	\$49,691	50,000	31,033	54,900	(2,745)	52,155	52,210	52,155
23 TF-Status of Women FI10 09-17			19,345	7,233					
24 TF-Violence -Wom/ChildnFI10 10-06	\$10,980		24,470	14,251					
25 ACSWP War, Drugs Incacrn FI12 11-08								1,500	500
26 ACSWP Study Tax Policy FI12, 11-09								20,635	12,015
27 ACSWP Study Disputed Sahara FI12, 14 NB								1,753	3,438
28 Consultn Racl Ethn/New Immigts FI12 16-06							240	36,315	240
29 ACSWP Stdy Compenstn/Justice FI12 16-07								4,000	3,500
Sub-Total, 15 -23	208,113	\$159,164	301,998	163,551	172,453	(8,235)	164,458	218,623	176,158

**PER CAPITA  
Statement of Activities  
Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
<b>6B - OFFICE EXPENSES</b>									
1 Supplies	\$5,500	\$2,563	\$5,500	\$2,728	\$5,500	(500)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
2 Printing & Duplicating	\$9,453	\$5,496	\$9,453	\$4,265	\$9,453	(453)	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
3 Postage	\$3,000	\$1,429	\$3,000	\$1,332	\$3,000		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
4 Telephone	\$12,500	\$23,560	\$12,500	\$20,948	\$12,500		\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
5 Equip & Software	\$10,000	\$4,804	\$10,000	\$8,534	\$10,000	(500)	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500
6 Insurance	\$15,000	\$10,634	\$15,000		\$15,000	(750)	\$14,250	\$14,250	\$14,250
7 Resource Materials	\$1,500	\$37	\$1,500	\$2,301	\$1,500		\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
8 Outside legal costs	\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000	(500)	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500
9 Executive Director Expenses	\$4,000	\$7,462	\$4,000	\$1,507	\$4,000	(200)	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$3,800
10 Leadership Team Expense	\$3,500	\$2,815	\$3,500	\$1,500	\$3,500	(175)	\$3,325	\$3,325	\$3,325
11 Miscellaneous	\$868	\$5,242	\$868	\$5,433	\$868	(43)	\$825	\$825	\$825
Sub-Total, 6B	\$75,321	\$64,042	75,321	48,548	75,321	(3,121)	72,200	72,200	72,200
<b>6C - PERSONNEL COSTS</b>									
1 Salaries & Benefits	\$1,036,224	\$1,040,807	1,077,673	1,025,523	1,120,780	(23,175)	1,097,605	1,137,948	1,180,011
4 Travel - Exempt Staff	\$80,000	\$100,266	70,000	83,046	70,000	500	70,500	70,500	70,500
5 Travel - Non-Exempt Staff	\$7,000		7,000		7,000	(350)	6,650	6,650	6,650
6 Staff Relations	\$7,500	\$187		10,176					
6 Consultant Fees	\$10,000	\$3,950	10,000	3,254	10,000	(500)	9,500	9,500	9,500
7 Staff Development	\$4,000	\$3,474	4,000	6,644	4,000	(200)	3,800	3,800	3,800
8 Cultural Proficiency Programs	\$5,000	\$850	5,000		5,000	(250)	4,750	4,750	4,750
Sub-Total, 6C	\$1,149,724	\$1,149,534	1,173,673	1,128,643	1,216,780	(23,975)	1,192,805	1,233,148	1,275,211
<b>TOTAL Schedule 6</b>	<b>1,708,677</b>	<b>1,665,768</b>	<b>1,868,461</b>	<b>1,556,235</b>	<b>1,821,303</b>	<b>(119,580)</b>	<b>1,701,963</b>	<b>1,785,971</b>	<b>1,795,569</b>





**PER CAPITA  
Statement of Activities  
Budget Proposals 2012-2014**

	2010 Revised	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	2011 Actual	2012 Budget	2012 Adjustment	2012 Revised	2013 Proposed	2014 Proposed
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**Schedule 7 - OTHER GAMC SUPERVISED WC**

1 Office of Legal Services	\$551,700	\$551,775	573,768	576,588	596,719	50	596,769	617,655	639,273
2 Internal Auditor	\$221,414	\$212,121	230,271	209,150	239,481	(4,724)	234,757	244,111	253,653
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$773,114</b>	<b>\$763,896</b>	<b>804,039</b>	<b>785,738</b>	<b>836,200</b>	<b>(4,674)</b>	<b>831,526</b>	<b>861,766</b>	<b>892,926</b>

**Schedule 8 - SUPPORT SERVICES**

1 Building Operation	\$290,160	\$290,160	301,767	301,767	313,837	(1,508)	312,329	323,260	334,574
2 Finance & Accounting Services	\$250,640	\$250,640	260,665	267,740	271,092	(1,304)	269,788	279,231	289,004
3 Office of Information Services	\$47,840	\$47,840	49,753	49,753	51,743	(497)	51,246	52,783	54,366
4 Human Resources									
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$588,640</b>	<b>\$588,640</b>	<b>612,185</b>	<b>619,260</b>	<b>636,672</b>	<b>(3,309)</b>	<b>633,363</b>	<b>655,274</b>	<b>677,945</b>

**Schedule 9 - OTHER EXPENSES**

1 Contingency	\$45,000		45,000		45,000	55,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
2 Audit Expenses	\$78,000	\$77,850	78,000	78,000	78,000	1,000	79,000	79,000	80,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$123,000</b>	<b>\$77,850</b>	<b>123,000</b>	<b>78,000</b>	<b>123,000</b>	<b>56,000</b>	<b>179,000</b>	<b>179,000</b>	<b>180,000</b>

**Schedule 10 - UNCOLLECTIBLE APPORTIONMENT**

1 Reserve for Uncollectable Appor	\$600,000	\$1,130,037	600,000	1,056,415	600,000	200,000	800,000	900,000	900,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>	<b>\$1,130,037</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>1,056,415</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>900,000</b>	<b>900,000</b>

**OGA/GAMC DESIGNATED BUDGET 2012-2014**

**Attachment C**

	Beg Bal 1/1/2012	Revenue Bgt 2012	Expense Bgt 2012	End Bal 12/31/2012	Revenue Bgt 2013	Expense Bgt 2013	Proj End Bal 2013	Revenue Bgt 2014	Expense Bgt 2014	Proj End Bal 12/31/2014
OGA Sales of Publications	2,495	450,000	400,000	52,495	350,000	300,000	102,495	400,000	400,000	102,495
Replacement Reserve-OGA	54,301	10,000	15,000	49,301	10,000	20,000	39,301	10,000	10,000	39,301
Ecumenical Reserve	328,664	75,000	49	403,615	75,000	125,000	353,615	75,000	125,000	303,615
Replacement Reserve-DOH	90,155	74,890	60,000	105,045	75,000	60,000	120,045	75,000	60,000	135,045
Presbyterian Historical Society	3,409,650	547,370	520,486	3,436,534	532,370	511,723	3,457,181	543,370	518,497	3,482,054
General Assembly Mtg - Registration	4,021	140,000	135,000	9,021			9,021	150,000	140,000	19,021
Stated Clerk Training/Fall Polity	(12,726)	120,000	105,000	2,274	115,000	110,000	7,274	115,000	110,000	12,274
Cooperative Reading Grp-Ord Exams	67,174	220,000	220,000	67,174	150,000	150,000	67,174	90,000	90,000	67,174
Moderator's Travel	14,646	5,000	5,000	14,646	5,000	5,000	14,646	5,000	5,000	14,646
Moderator's Annual Gathering	25,680	30,000	35,000	20,680	30,000	35,000	15,680	35,000	35,000	15,680
GACOR Diversity Project	12,000		12,000	-			-			-
Fred Jenkins Memorial Library Fund	1,464		500	964		500	464		464	-
Presbyterian Leader Formation	32,151	15,000	40,000	7,151	25,000	30,000	2,151	25,000	25,000	2,151
Ecumenical Consultation	5,000		5,000	-			-			-
Church Property and Legal	48,567		30,000	18,567	50,000	30,000	38,567	50,000	40,000	48,567
Contributions	2,150	5,000		7,150	5,000		12,150	5,000	15,000	2,150
Mid Council Financial Network Conf	22,251	20,000	20,000	22,251	20,000	20,000	22,251	20,000	20,000	22,251
Unity & Heritage Seminar	4,551	15,000	16,000	3,551	16,000	16,000	3,551	16,000	16,000	3,551
OGA/GAMC Task Forces	41,102		35,000	6,102		5,000	1,102			1,102
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,153,296</b>	<b>1,727,260</b>	<b>1,654,035</b>	<b>4,226,521</b>	<b>1,458,370</b>	<b>1,418,223</b>	<b>4,266,668</b>	<b>1,614,370</b>	<b>1,609,961</b>	<b>4,271,077</b>

GAMC

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY SALARY RANGE  
As of 12/31/10**

	Black/ African American		Asian		Hispanic/ Latino		American Indian/Alaska Ntv		Two or More		Hawaiian/ Pacif. Islander		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #		3	1		11	13	1	1					5	8	18	25
%																
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #				2	3	10	3	10	1f1m				8	51	15	74
%																
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #		14		2		7		1	1m				12	49	13	73
%																
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #		2		3	2	6							15	34	17	45
%																
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	3	6	4	1	2				1f				17	18	26	26
%																
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #		3	1	2		2			1m				19	17	21	24
%																
\$75,001 -	2	1			1								9	4	12	5

\$85,000 42#14														
%														
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #		1	2								4	4	5	6
%														
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #											4	5	4	5
%														
\$115,000 + #	1										3	6	4	6
%														
Under 15000	1	5			3	3		1			9	18	13	27
Total Employees #	10	45	8	10	22	41	3	2	3m,2f		105	214		464
%														

[ GAMC ]

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
As of 12/31/10**

	Black/ African American		Asian		Hispanic/ Latino		Two or More		Hawaiian/Pacif. Islander		American Indian/		White		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Exec/Sr Level Officials and Mgrs.	1												4	8	5	8
%																
First/Mid Level Officials/Managers #	2	4	4		2	3	1						34	32	43	39
%																
Professionals #	3	11	3	6	2	14	1	1				1	47	77	56	110
%																
Technicians #														2		2
%																
Sales Workers #														1		1
%																
Administrative Support Workers	3	26	1	4	2	9	1					1	10	82	17	122
%																
Craft Workers (skilled) #					2								2		4	
%																
Operatives #					3								2	1	5	1
%																

%																
Laborers #					4	1							2		6	1
%																
Service Workers #	1	4			7	14		1			1	1	4	11	13	13
%																
Total Employees #	10	45	8	10	22	41	3	2			1	3	105	214	149	315
%																

**\* NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. *Creating a Climate for Change* notes a particular concern about the representation of women and persons of color in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".

# PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

## Minority Vendor Report

As of 12/31/10

	2008	2009	2010
African American	\$ 113,637	\$ 70,122	\$ 57,407
	0.49%	0.38%	0.27%
Asian/Pacific Islander	\$ 313,673	\$ 126,488	\$ 1,653,427
	1.36%	0.69%	7.82%
Hispanic/Latino	\$ 210,359	\$ 139,580	99,389\$
	0.91%	0.76%	0.47%
Native Am./Alaska Native	\$ 5,600	1,344\$	5,497\$
	0.02%	0.01%	0.03%
Middle Eastern	\$ 14,841	7,253\$	2,972\$
	0.06%	0.04%	0.01%
Women	\$ 2,585,823	2,091,424\$	1,017,942\$
	11.21%	11.43%	4.81%
Second Tier	\$ 200,464	152,267\$	178,503\$
	0.87%	0.83%	0.84%
Total Minority	\$ 3,444,398	2,588,478\$	3,015,138\$
	14.94%	14.15%	14.25%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 23,058,488	18,290,886\$	21,153,633\$

OGA

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY SALARY RANGE  
As of 12/31/10**

	Black/ African American		Asian		Hispanic/ Latino		American Indian/Alaska Ntv		Two or More		Hawaiian/ Pacif. Islander		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #	1												2	1	2	
%																
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		3		1					1m				1	2	2	6
%																
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	1	3							1F				14	1	18	
%																
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #		1	1										1	4	2	5
%																
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #		2		1	1								1	6	2	9
%																
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #			1										2	5	3	5
%																
\$75,001 -						1							3		3	



\$85,000 42#14														
%														
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #											2	1	2	1
%														
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #		1									2		2	1
%														
\$115,000 + #											1		1	
%														
Under 15000														
Total Employees #	2	11	2	2	1	1			1m 1F		13	38	19	53
%														

OGA

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
As of 12/31/10**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES																
	African American		Asian		Hispanic/Latino		Two or More		Hawaiian/Pacif. Islander		American Indian/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Executive /Senior -Level Officials and Managers														3		3	
%																	
First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers	1	1	1			1								4	9	6	11
%																	
Professionals #		2	1	1	1									4	13	6	16
%																	
Technicians #																	
%																	
Sales Workers #																	
%																	
Administrative Support Workers #		8		1			1	1						2	16	3	26
%																	
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #																	
%																	

%																
Operatives #																
%																
Laborers #	1														1	
%																
Service Workers #																
%																
Total Employees #	2	11	2	2			1	1					13	38	19	53
%																

**\* NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. *Creating a Climate for Change* notes a particular concern about the representation of women and persons of color in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".

PILP

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY SALARY RANGE  
As of 12/31/10**

	Black/ African American		Asian		Hispanic/ Latino		American Indian/Alaska Ntv		Two or More		Hawaiian/ Pacif. Islander		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #																
%																
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		1											1		2	
%																
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #													5		5	
%																
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #																
%																
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	1														1	
%																
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #				1									2		3	
%																

%													
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #.													
%													
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #										2		2	
%													
\$115,000 + #										1		1	
%													
Under 15000													
Total Employees #	1	1		1						3	8	4	10
%													

**Presbyterian Church (USA) Investment and Loan Program  
Minority Vendor Report  
As of 12/31/10**

		2008	2009	2010
African American	\$			
	%			
Asian/Pac Islander	\$			
	%			
Hispanic/Latino/a	\$			
	%			
Natv. Am./Alaska Natv.	\$			
	%			
Middle Eastern	\$			
	%			
Women	\$			
	%			
Disabled	\$			
	%			
TOTAL	\$			

The majority of our purchasing is through the GAMC purchasing or information technology departments. The primary vendors with whom we do business directly are:

Securities Legal Services	Stollar Partnership, St Louis, MO
Banking Software	BSC – Lexington, KY
Printing Service	Merrick Publishing, C-R Graphics and Hubbard Press
Office Supplies	Office Max

PILP  
**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES**  
**As of 12/31/10**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES																
	African American		Asian		Hispanic/Latino		Two or More		Hawaiian/Pacif. Islander		American Indian/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers														1		1	
%																	
First Mid-Level Officials and /Managers #														2		2	
%																	
Professionals #	1			1										2	1	3	
%																	
Technicians #																	
%																	
Sales Workers #																	
%																	
Administrative Support Workers		1												6		7	
%																	
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #																	
%																	
Operatives																	

#																
%																
Laborers #																
%																
Service Workers #																
%																
Total Employees #	1	1		1									3	8	4	10
%																

**\* NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. *Creating a Climate for Change* notes a particular concern about the representation of women and persons of color in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".



Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
As of 12/31/10**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #									4	1	4	1
%									.151	.038	.151	.038
Officials/Managers #										3		3
%										.114		.114
Professionals #	1								4	1.5	5	1.5
%	.038								.151	.057	.189	.057
Technicians #												
%												
Sales Workers #				1		1			3		3	2
%				.038		.038			.114		.114	.076
Office & Clerical #		1	1							4	1	5
%		.038	.038							.151	.038	.189
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #		1										1
%		.038										.038
Operatives #												
%												
Laborers #												
%												
Service Workers #												
%												
Total Employees #	1	2	1	1		1			11	9.5	13	13.5
%	.038	.076	.038	.038		.038			.415	.358	.49	.51

**NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. The *Climate for Change* paper notes a particular concern about the representation of women and racial ethnic people in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".

Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

**Employment data by salary range  
As of 12/31/10**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #				1		1						2
%				.038		.038						.076
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	1	2	1						4	3	6	4
%	.038	.076	.038						.151	.114	.226	.151
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #										2		2
%										.076		.076
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #									1	4	1	4
%									.038	.151	.038	.151
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #									3		3	
%									.114		.114	
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #												
%												
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #										.5		.5
%										.019		.019
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #									2		2	
%									.076		.076	
\$115,000 + #									1		1	
%									.038		.038	
Total Employees #	1	2	1	1		1			11	9.5	13	13.5
%	.038	.057	.028	.038		.038			.415	.358	.49	.51

Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

**Minority Vendor Report  
As of 12/31/10**

This report is provided in a more narrative format which seemed useful to report our performance.

As a self-sustaining entity, PPC conducts all purchasing for outside services based on a cost related bid/quote system. We do not currently have any vendors who are in the not-for-profit category. While we are always looking for and open to new vendors, because of the specialties of work in publishing there is a smaller universe of possibilities than some other fields. We do ask our vendors to respond about whether their ownership includes minority or women. We do attempt to find and encourage bids from women and minority vendors; however, the vendor that is most likely chosen is either the low cost bidder or an equal cost bidder. We purchase services in the following categories:

- Printing – We have found only one minority-owned book printer in Lowell Massachusetts however their printing bids consistently range 25 to 40% higher than other bids. We do use one employee owned printer with many of their employees being women and minorities. Overall annual purchases amount to approximately \$1.8 million
- Proofreading, Copyediting and indexing - We use 18 persons, twelve of which are female and 2 of which are minority (African American and African American-Hispanic) Overall annual purchases amount to approximately \$90,000
- Typesetting – We use three small companies, one is a Caucasian woman, one is a Caucasian male and the other includes two Caucasian women. Overall annual purchases are approximately \$105,000.
- eBook technical conversion – We use one company whose employees are Middle-Eastern. Overall annual purchases are approximately \$10,000.

PPC does not specifically track financial payments to vendors by ethnicity, gender or disability.

PPC does purchase office supplies, printing, editorial services, production services, marketing products, and marketing services from a variety of minority vendors. A sampling of our providers is as follows:

- Niche Marketing for marketing products (lanyards, mouse pads, coasters, and other promotional pieces).
- Ermins Catering.
- Tiffany Taylor for Packaging/Copyediting.
- Esther M. Kolb, Joyce Duecker, Joanna L. Mullins, Liz Welch, Frances E. Purifoy, Joy Matkowski, Linda S. Recktenwald, Christine E. Finnegan, Ann Farkas, Lois Geehr Editorial Services, Linda Webster, Alison Wingfield, Last Word Editorial Services, Linda Watkins, and Myra Alexander for Copyediting/Proofreading/Indexing services.
- Pamela Poll Graphic Design, Lisa Buckley, Night & Day Design, Rohani, Design, The Printed Image, Cyñthia Dunne, Arisman Design, and SuperStock, Inc. for Graphic Design/Art.

**BOARD OF PENSIONS**  
**Agency Employment Statistics**  
**Jan. 1, 2010 – Dec. 31, 2010**

SENIOR MANAGEMENT STAFF	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pres. & Chief Exec.									1		1	
Sr. VP, Treas. & Chief Invest. Officer										1		1
Ex. VP & COO									1		1	
Sr. VP, Benefits										1		1
Chief Info. Officer									1		1	
VP, Human Res.									1		1	
VP, Church Relations									1		1	
VP, Retirement Ben.										1		1
VP, Finance									1		1	
VP, Member Services		1										1
VP, Assistance, CREDO & Funds Dev.									1		1	
Dr., Comm. PR, Mktg. & Education										1		1
Total Employees #		1							7	4	7	5
%		8.33							58.33	33.33	58.33	41.67

**[ IBOARD OF PENSIONS ]**

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY SALARY RANGE  
As of 12/31/10**

	SALARY RANGES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Nativ		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #												
%												
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #		3							2	1	2	4
%		50							33.3	16.67	33.33	66.67
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	2	10			1	2			3	14	6	26
%	6.25	31.25			3.13	6.25			9.38	43.75	18.75	81.25
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #	1	15	2	1		1			5	19	8	36
%	2.22	33.33	4.44	2.22		2.22			11.11	42.22	17.78	80
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	1	3		1					4	7	5	11
%	6.67	20		6.67					26.67	46.67	33.33	66.67
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #	2	3		1		1			2	11	4	16
%	10	15		5		5			10	55	20	80
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #								2	5	8	5	10
%								13.33	33.33	53.33	33.33	66.67
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #				1					7	4	7	5
%				8.33					58.33	33.33	58.33	41.67
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #		1			1			1	12	2	13	4
%		5.88			5.88			5.88	70.59	11.76	76.47	23.53
\$115,000 + #		2							13	9	13	11
%		8.33							54.17	37.50	54.17	45.83
Total Employees #	6	37	2	4	2	4		3	54	75	63	123
%	3.23	19.89	1.08	2.15	1.08	2.15		1.61	28.49	40.32	33.87	66.13

**[ BOARD OF PENSIONS ]**

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
As of 12/31/10**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES											
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #		1							7	4	7	5
%		8.33							58.33	33.33	58.33	41.67
Officials/Managers #	2	7		2		1		1	10	19	12	30
%	4.76	17.67		4.76		2.38		2.38	23.81	45.24	28.57	71.43
Professionals #	1	5	2	3	1	1		1	20	18	24	28
%	1.92	9.62	3.85	5.77	1.92	1.92		1.92	38.46	34.62	46.15	53.85
Technicians #		1							8		8	1
%		11.11							88.89		88.89	11.11
Sales Workers #												
%												
Office & Clerical #	3	23	1	1	1	2			7	33	12	59
%	4.23	32.39	1.41	1.41	1.41	2.82			9.86	46.48	16.90	83.10
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #												
%												
Operatives #												
%												
Laborers #												
%												
Service Workers #												
%												
Total Employees #	6	37	3	6	2	4		2	52	74	63	123
%	3.23	19.89	1.61	3.23	1.08	2.15		1.08	27.96	39.79	33.87	66.13

**\* NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report.** There is one exception. *Creating a Climate for Change* notes a particular concern about the representation of women and persons of color in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".

**PCUSA FOUNDATION**

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY SALARY RANGE  
As of 12/31/10**

	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/Latino		Nativ Am/Alaska Ntv		Middle-Eastern		Disabled		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
\$15,000 - \$25,000 #																
%																
\$25,001 - \$35,000 #	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	3	6	
%	0	44.5%	0	11.1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33.3%	11.1%	33.3%	66.7%	
\$35,001 - \$45,000 #	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	14	
%	0	42.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	57.1%	0	100%	
\$45,001 - \$55,000 #	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	7	
%	11.1%	22.2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	77.8%	
\$55,001 - \$65,000 #	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	
%	50%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50%	50%	50%	
\$65,001 - \$75,000 #	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	3	
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40%	60%	40%	60%	
\$75,001 - \$85,000 #	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	5	4	
%	11.1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44.4%	44.4%	55.6%	44.4%	
\$85,001 - \$95,000 #	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	4	3	
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	57.12%	42.8%	57.12%	42.8%	
\$95,001 - \$115,000 #	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	3	

%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40%	60%	40%	60%
\$115,000 + #	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	7	1
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	87.5%	12.5%	87.5%	12.5%
Total Employees #	3	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	29	26	42
%	4.4%	17.65%	0	1.5%	0	0	0	0	0	0	33.8%	42.6%	38.2%	61.8%



**PCUSA FOUNDATION**

**EMPLOYMENT DATA BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES  
As of 12/31/10**

	OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES															
	African American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Middle Eastern		Disabled		Natv Am/Alaska Ntv		White		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senior Mgmt. Staff* #	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	5
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50%	50%	50%	50%
Officials/Mgrs #	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	4	6
%	10%	20%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30%	40%	40%	60%
Professionals #	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	12	8	14
%	4.5%	9%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31.8%	54.5%	36.4%	63.6%
Technicians #																
%																
Sales Workers #	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	6	3
%	11.1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55.6%	33.3%	66.7%	33.3%
Office & Clerical #	0	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	3	14
%	0	47.1%	0	5.9%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17.6%	29.4%	17.6%	82.4%
Craft Wkrs (skilled) #																
%																
Operatives #																
%																

Laborers #																
%																
Service Workers #																
%																
Total Employees #	3	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	29	26	42
%	4.4%	17.7%	0	1.5%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33.8%	42.6%	38.2%	61.8%

**\* NOTE: Please use the job categories as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Employer Information Report. There is one exception. *Creating a Climate for Change* notes a particular concern about the representation of women and persons of color in the top levels of management. Therefore, we are asking that you report on this category separately and attach a list identifying the positions included in the category "Senior Management Staff".**

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
SYNOD OF ALASKA/NORTHWEST															
PRESBYTERY															
ALASKA	7,430.38	7,430.38	-	7,469.10	7,469.10	-	6,177.93	6,177.93	-	6,555.90	6,555.90	-	6,475.95	6,475.95	-
CENTRAL WASHI	42,198.32	42,198.32	-	42,515.97	24,463.17	18,052.80	42,394.38	24,984.43	17,409.95	44,925.75	25,563.93	19,361.82	43,480.50	24,643.08	18,837.42
INLAND NORTHW	50,202.41	49,240.83	961.58	51,502.05	51,351.51	150.54	50,604.60	50,604.60	-	53,136.00	53,136.00	0.00	51,143.40	51,142.80	0.60
NORTH PUGET SC	43,540.69	43,540.69	-	43,425.00	43,425.00	-	44,403.51	44,403.51	-	46,414.05	46,414.05	-	44,802.75	44,802.75	-
OLYMPIA	61,827.00	61,503.00	324.00	62,532.00	62,423.44	108.56	61,229.25	61,229.28	(0.03)	63,529.50	63,529.50	(0.00)	62,736.15	62,736.15	(0.00)
SEATTLE	114,853.40	114,853.40	-	117,838.08	114,303.38	3,534.70	123,124.35	123,124.35	-	128,836.35	128,836.35	-	128,744.10	128,744.10	-
YUKON	16,982.93	16,293.99	688.94	17,497.38	16,393.48	1,103.90	16,374.12	15,930.02	444.10	16,088.40	10,509.09	5,579.31	16,315.95	12,795.39	3,520.56
SYNOD OF COVENANT															
PRESBYTERY															
CINCINNATI	102,220.64	102,220.64	-	101,689.77	101,689.77	-	98,424.21	98,424.21	-	99,599.25	99,599.25	-	96,954.75	96,954.75	0.00
DETROIT	201,154.98	198,285.20	2,869.78	205,400.25	205,400.25	-	199,471.29	199,471.29	-	202,894.65	202,894.65	(0.00)	195,840.60	195,840.60	0.00
EASTMINSTER	69,435.62	60,094.84	9,340.78	67,036.62	57,901.65	9,134.97	65,953.89	55,702.00	10,251.89	67,723.80	56,027.82	11,695.98	63,277.35	53,899.12	9,378.23
LAKE HURON	67,586.38	67,586.38	-	68,223.57	68,223.57	-	67,152.42	67,152.42	-	67,939.05	67,939.10	(0.05)	66,924.30	66,924.30	(0.00)
LAKE MICHIGAN	110,113.33	110,113.33	-	110,762.70	110,762.70	-	104,665.83	104,665.83	-	108,295.35	104,115.14	4,180.21	103,689.00	97,987.58	5,701.42
MACKINAC	40,059.44	40,059.44	-	40,883.19	40,883.19	-	39,927.84	39,927.84	-	41,943.00	41,943.00	-	40,879.05	40,879.05	-
MAUMEE VALLEY	71,173.46	71,173.46	-	70,996.98	70,996.98	-	68,055.66	68,055.66	-	70,626.60	70,626.60	-	64,722.60	64,722.60	-
MIAMI	83,711.53	83,711.53	-	82,524.87	82,524.87	-	81,893.76	81,893.76	-	83,135.70	83,135.70	-	80,927.85	80,927.85	0.00
MUSKINGUM VAL	72,354.30	69,886.13	2,468.17	72,722.40	58,992.32	13,730.08	68,843.10	51,168.31	17,674.79	69,507.30	56,774.98	12,732.32	65,792.70	44,736.27	21,056.43
SCIOTO VALLEY	136,648.81	126,267.80	10,381.01	138,612.60	125,720.38	12,892.22	133,812.69	122,293.28	11,519.41	137,895.30	113,667.22	24,228.08	133,338.15	102,165.86	31,172.29
WESTERN RESE	81,338.71	81,338.71	-	82,229.58	82,229.56	0.02	80,903.67	80,903.67	-	82,336.20	82,336.20	-	68,431.05	68,431.05	-
SYNOD OF LAKES AND PRAIRIES															
PRESBYTERY															
CENTRAL NEBRA	36,266.27	36,266.27	-	37,108.11	37,108.08	0.03	35,683.77	35,683.77	-	36,254.25	36,254.28	(0.03)	35,018.10	35,018.04	0.06
DAKOTA	5,090.98	2,737.13	2,353.85	5,292.06	0.00	5,292.06	5,292.06	0.00	5,292.06	5,621.10	0.00	5,621.10	5,621.10	2,810.55	2,810.55
DES MOINES	59,599.00	59,599.00	-	60,754.47	60,754.47	-	56,875.17	56,875.17	-	58,357.35	58,357.35	-	56,598.45	56,598.45	-
EAST IOWA	91,214.32	86,560.30	4,654.02	93,427.44	86,815.43	6,612.01	91,001.43	88,430.47	2,570.96	94,679.25	90,830.13	3,849.12	92,496.00	88,008.87	4,487.13
HOMESTEAD	60,055.74	60,056.00	(0.26)	61,379.79	61,380.00	(0.21)	58,878.51	58,878.51	-	59,851.80	59,852.00	(0.20)	58,849.35	58,849.35	(0.00)
JOHN KNOX (THE	60,779.84	60,779.84	-	62,086.17	62,086.17	-	60,632.88	60,632.88	-	62,840.70	62,840.70	-	60,872.70	60,872.70	-
MILWAUKEE	63,603.83	63,603.87	(0.04)	65,311.20	65,311.20	-	63,967.92	63,967.92	-	65,817.30	65,817.36	(0.06)	62,016.60	62,016.60	(0.00)
MINNESOTA VALL	60,072.45	60,072.45	-	59,694.90	59,676.90	18.00	57,373.11	57,373.11	-	59,261.40	59,261.40	-	57,176.55	57,176.55	-
MISSOURI RIVER	68,566.70	68,566.70	-	69,757.92	69,757.92	-	62,508.84	62,508.84	-	64,931.70	64,931.70	-	63,947.70	63,947.70	-
N.CENTRAL IOWA	52,307.87	52,307.87	-	53,545.92	53,546.52	(0.60)	52,011.57	52,011.57	-	54,156.90	54,156.96	(0.06)	53,068.35	53,068.32	0.03
NORTHERN PLAIN	41,179.01	41,179.00	0.01	41,120.58	30,840.45	10,280.13	39,632.55	39,673.08	(40.53)	39,808.95	39,808.95	-	38,818.80	38,818.80	-
NORTHERN WATE	42,939.13	42,939.13	-	43,795.56	43,796.00	(0.44)	41,433.24	41,433.24	-	42,914.70	43,071.33	(156.63)	39,772.05	39,772.00	0.05
PROSPECT HILL	50,285.96	50,285.96	-	50,760.93	50,760.96	(0.03)	49,492.92	49,492.92	-	51,229.50	51,229.56	(0.06)	47,385.75	37,489.68	9,896.07
SOUTH DAKOTA	48,821.05	48,821.05	-	50,564.07	50,564.07	-	49,249.74	49,249.80	(0.06)	51,315.60	51,315.60	(0.00)	49,753.50	49,753.44	0.06
TWIN CITIES	143,962.22	143,962.22	-	148,727.73	149,862.35	(1,134.62)	147,118.11	147,118.08	0.03	155,951.70	155,951.76	(0.06)	154,106.70	154,106.76	(0.06)
WINNEBAGO	45,651.72	45,651.72	-	46,696.35	46,696.35	-	45,989.97	45,989.97	-	47,939.25	47,939.99	(0.74)	46,512.45	46,512.45	(0.00)

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS															
PRESBYTERY															
BLACKHAWK	96,606.08	59,169.19	37,436.89	97,949.43	80,916.82	17,032.61	95,755.02	54,817.67	40,937.35	98,818.20	64,940.47	33,877.73	96,598.05	68,737.23	27,860.82
CHICAGO	219,781.06	219,781.06	-	223,899.30	223,899.25	0.05	221,096.94	221,097.00	(0.06)	225,889.50	225,890.00	(0.50)	224,948.55	224,948.55	0.00
MIDWEST HANMI	25,833.66	25,833.66	-	26,518.20	26,519.00	(0.80)	24,485.91	9,485.91	15,000.00	23,800.50	19,440.45	4,360.05	23,093.25	11,340.50	11,752.75
GREAT RIVERS	113,132.27	110,930.13	2,202.14	114,746.22	105,765.24	8,980.98	112,621.29	112,624.78	(3.49)	115,318.65	115,318.65	(0.00)	112,981.65	112,391.25	590.40
OHIO VALLEY	48,965.87	48,965.88	(0.01)	49,145.52	49,146.00	(0.48)	45,995.76	45,996.00	(0.24)	46,912.20	46,912.20	-	45,239.40	45,239.40	-
SOUTHEASTERN	67,636.51	67,636.51	-	66,926.61	66,926.61	-	64,737.99	64,737.99	-	67,010.40	67,010.40	-	65,921.85	65,921.85	-
WABASH VALLEY	99,775.41	79,668.56	20,106.85	98,354.73	85,846.02	12,508.71	95,812.92	94,601.48	1,211.44	97,237.65	97,237.65	-	93,984.30	93,984.30	-
WHITEWATER VA	131,680.37	131,680.37	-	135,422.31	135,422.31	-	133,916.91	133,916.91	-	138,399.60	138,399.60	-	135,650.55	135,650.55	-
SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS															
PRESBYTERY															
EAST TENNESSE	88,601.99	75,551.48	13,050.51	89,102.31	87,081.60	2,020.71	87,730.08	87,730.00	0.08	78,959.85	78,959.85	-	79,654.80	79,654.80	-
HOLSTON	48,130.37	48,130.37	-	48,444.93	48,444.90	0.03	47,119.02	47,123.82	(4.80)	50,608.35	50,608.35	-	50,374.65	50,374.65	-
MID-KENTUCKY	61,041.63	60,491.06	550.57	61,669.29	60,600.25	1,069.04	58,131.60	58,131.60	-	61,026.45	58,195.93	2,830.52	58,092.90	58,092.90	(0.00)
MID-SOUTH	63,614.97	63,614.97	-	63,823.17	56,921.49	6,901.68	61,941.42	58,386.36	3,555.06	62,428.65	54,292.00	8,136.65	59,267.55	51,801.45	7,466.10
MIDDLE TENNESS	104,136.72	104,487.63	(350.91)	110,073.69	110,074.00	(0.31)	112,001.76	112,002.00	(0.24)	119,137.80	119,138.00	(0.20)	120,275.55	120,276.00	(0.45)
MISSISSIPPI	34,929.47	18,176.55	16,752.92	35,926.95	21,041.33	14,885.62	34,676.31	21,738.45	12,937.86	31,051.35	21,066.30	9,985.05	29,643.00	17,183.82	12,459.18
NORTH ALABAMA	31,771.28	31,771.28	-	32,487.69	32,487.69	-	29,818.50	26,744.00	3,074.50	30,873.00	26,700.00	4,173.00	28,566.75	24,083.00	4,483.75
SOUTH ALABAMA	30,796.53	28,221.92	2,574.61	30,449.61	27,921.51	2,528.10	30,241.17	27,497.72	2,743.45	31,604.85	31,604.85	-	30,122.70	29,871.60	251.10
SHEPPARDS AND	77,757.20	71,491.85	6,265.35	79,543.02	72,756.39	6,786.63	78,292.38	76,588.29	1,704.09	81,081.60	81,081.60	-	78,541.65	78,541.65	-
ST. ANDREW	36,494.64	36,495.00	(0.36)	37,403.40	37,403.00	0.40	37,704.48	37,704.00	0.48	39,458.40	39,458.40	-	35,817.60	35,817.60	-
TRANSYLVANIA	65,258.12	65,258.16	(0.04)	64,958.01	64,958.04	(0.03)	63,527.88	63,527.88	-	65,116.20	65,116.20	(0.00)	61,998.15	61,998.15	(0.00)
WESTERN KENTL	22,820.29	22,820.29	-	23,362.65	23,362.65	-	22,499.94	22,499.94	-	22,398.30	22,398.30	-	22,521.30	22,521.30	-
SYNOD OF MID-AMERICA															
PRESBYTERY															
GIDDINGS-LOVE	124,010.48	124,010.48	-	126,685.20	126,685.20	-	123,958.11	123,958.11	-	129,033.15	129,033.15	-	122,335.80	122,335.80	0.00
JOHN CALVIN	49,032.71	49,032.72	(0.01)	49,880.85	49,881.00	(0.15)	49,683.99	49,683.99	-	50,651.40	50,651.40	0.00	48,068.40	48,068.40	0.00
HEARTLAND	141,277.48	142,277.48	(1,000.00)	142,758.24	142,758.24	-	140,060.10	139,591.11	468.99	143,811.60	143,811.60	0.00	137,962.95	137,962.95	-
MISSOURI UNION	45,233.97	45,233.97	-	46,690.56	44,916.18	1,774.38	46,893.21	46,893.21	-	48,874.05	48,874.05	-	47,557.95	47,557.95	-
NORTHERN KANS	57,638.36	57,638.36	-	57,100.98	57,100.98	-	55,057.11	55,057.11	-	55,897.35	55,897.35	-	50,700.60	50,700.60	-
SOUTHERN KANS	63,158.23	63,158.23	-	64,737.99	64,737.99	-	63,533.67	51,542.58	11,991.09	65,989.50	49,834.61	16,154.89	63,504.90	46,015.94	17,488.96
SYNOD OF MID-ATLANTIC															
PRESBYTERY															
ABINGDON	25,666.56	25,666.56	-	26,900.34	26,900.34	-	26,564.52	26,564.52	-	27,896.40	25,227.30	2,669.10	27,650.40	24,329.41	3,320.99
ATLANTIC KOREA	8,160.05	3,000.00	5,160.05	8,540.25	3,000.00	5,540.25	9,559.29	3,000.00	6,559.29	9,766.20	0.00	9,766.20	9,673.95	2,000.00	7,673.95
BALTIMORE	103,251.09	103,251.09	-	104,752.68	104,752.68	-	102,720.39	102,720.39	-	107,114.55	107,114.55	0.00	105,121.95	105,121.95	(0.00)
CHARLOTTE	235,482.89	235,486.71	(3.82)	239,590.20	239,008.00	582.20	237,141.03	237,144.00	(2.97)	246,596.55	246,596.55	-	245,526.45	245,530.00	(3.55)
COASTAL CAROL	172,074.01	172,074.00	0.01	177,278.22	177,277.92	0.30	176,166.54	176,166.60	(0.06)	182,999.40	182,999.44	(0.04)	180,754.65	180,754.65	(0.00)
EASTERN VIRGIN	103,106.27	103,106.00	0.27	106,397.04	107,496.37	(1,099.33)	105,887.52	105,887.52	-	110,060.40	110,060.40	-	109,617.60	109,617.60	(0.00)
JAMES	157,714.55	157,715.00	(0.45)	163,619.61	163,619.61	-	160,238.25	160,238.25	-	168,866.70	168,866.70	-	166,259.10	166,259.10	-
NATIONAL CAPIT	200,787.36	200,787.36	-	204,855.99	205,006.53	(150.54)	202,707.90	202,707.90	-	209,056.95	209,056.95	-	203,663.40	203,663.40	0.00
NEW CASTLE	67,714.49	67,714.50	(0.01)	70,035.84	70,962.46	(926.62)	68,599.92	68,570.98	28.94	70,048.50	70,048.50	-	67,317.90	66,764.40	553.50
NEW HOPE	182,322.81	182,322.81	-	188,921.91	188,921.91	-	189,026.10	189,026.10	-	199,985.70	199,279.35	706.35	196,111.20	196,111.20	-

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
PEAKS(THE)	109,004.90	106,598.00	2,406.90	110,212.65	107,502.93	2,709.72	108,666.72	105,227.46	3,439.26	115,214.10	111,774.84	3,439.26	112,077.60	109,462.19	2,615.41
SALEM	195,200.65	195,051.50	149.15	202,192.59	202,193.00	(0.41)	201,167.76	201,167.76	-	213,552.60	213,552.60	-	213,429.60	161,944.56	51,485.04
SHENANDOAH	98,382.91	98,382.91	-	105,389.58	105,390.00	(0.42)	104,208.42	104,208.00	0.42	108,492.15	108,492.15	-	105,915.30	105,915.00	0.30
WESTERN NO. CA	113,700.41	114,126.41	(426.00)	115,435.23	115,435.00	0.23	113,675.07	113,675.00	0.07	116,376.45	116,376.45	(0.00)	113,904.15	113,904.15	(0.00)
SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST															
PRESBYTERY															
ALBANY	54,045.71	54,045.71	-	53,962.80	53,962.80	-	52,248.96	52,248.96	-	52,256.55	52,256.55	0.00	50,307.00	50,307.00	-
BOSTON	17,294.85	17,294.85	-	17,873.73	17,873.73	-	17,949.00	17,949.00	-	19,218.75	19,218.75	-	18,874.35	18,874.35	-
CAYUGA-SYRACL	36,956.95	36,956.95	-	37,380.24	37,380.29	(0.05)	35,336.37	35,336.37	-	35,024.25	35,039.96	(15.71)	32,736.45	32,735.45	1.00
EASTERN KOREA	21,060.17	19,308.41	1,751.76	24,422.22	23,388.75	1,033.47	28,336.26	31,500.49	(3,164.23)	34,606.05	32,218.88	2,387.17	38,714.25	36,082.05	2,632.20
ELIZABETH	86,106.63	86,106.32	0.31	87,353.73	87,353.73	-	84,754.02	84,753.83	0.19	87,920.40	87,920.40	-	85,171.35	85,171.35	-
GENESEE VALLEY	88,401.47	88,401.47	-	89,241.27	89,241.00	0.27	86,068.35	86,068.40	(0.05)	87,699.00	87,256.24	442.76	82,797.45	81,985.64	811.81
GENEVA	44,615.70	44,615.70	-	45,011.46	45,011.46	-	43,094.97	43,094.97	-	44,753.55	44,753.56	(0.01)	43,462.05	43,462.05	-
HUDSON RIVER	92,133.37	92,133.37	-	91,829.40	91,829.40	-	89,096.52	89,096.52	-	90,534.15	90,534.15	-	88,689.15	88,689.15	-
LONG ISLAND	73,975.17	74,389.43	(414.26)	73,961.46	73,838.23	123.23	69,682.65	69,831.26	(148.61)	73,646.25	73,646.57	(0.32)	71,432.25	71,432.25	-
MONMOUTH	82,369.16	82,368.96	0.20	84,904.56	84,904.56	-	83,532.33	83,995.56	(463.23)	87,926.55	87,926.55	(0.00)	86,069.25	86,069.28	(0.03)
NEWARK	44,515.44	44,515.44	-	45,167.79	45,167.80	(0.01)	44,519.31	44,519.32	(0.01)	46,936.80	46,936.80	-	45,368.55	45,368.56	(0.01)
NEW BRUNSWICK	65,531.05	65,531.32	(0.27)	65,357.52	65,357.52	-	65,004.33	65,004.33	-	68,880.00	68,880.00	-	64,796.40	64,796.40	0.00
NEWTON	83,466.45	83,466.45	-	84,348.72	84,348.72	-	81,835.86	81,835.86	-	84,476.40	84,476.40	-	82,090.20	82,090.20	-
NEW YORK CITY	98,600.14	98,600.00	0.14	100,688.10	100,688.08	0.02	99,553.26	99,552.00	1.26	104,537.70	104,538.00	(0.30)	101,481.15	101,481.15	-
NORTHERN NEW	23,065.37	22,280.00	785.37	23,901.12	17,765.16	6,135.96	19,767.06	19,767.06	-	20,854.65	20,854.68	(0.03)	20,448.75	20,448.75	0.00
NORTHERN NEW	18,447.84	18,447.84	-	19,089.63	19,089.63	-	18,279.03	18,279.03	-	18,603.75	18,603.75	-	18,419.25	18,419.28	(0.03)
PALISADES	49,751.24	49,751.24	-	51,357.30	51,357.32	(0.02)	50,923.05	50,923.04	0.01	52,797.75	52,797.76	(0.01)	50,645.25	50,645.25	0.00
SO. NEW ENGLAN	49,522.87	49,522.87	-	51,559.95	52,132.05	(572.10)	50,355.63	50,355.63	-	53,099.10	53,099.10	(0.00)	51,715.35	51,715.35	(0.00)
SUSQUEHANNA V	37,185.32	37,047.71	137.61	37,391.82	37,391.78	0.04	36,089.07	36,089.44	(0.37)	37,213.65	37,213.64	0.01	35,995.95	35,995.96	(0.01)
UTICA	25,432.62	25,432.56	0.06	25,105.44	25,105.04	0.40	24,682.77	24,682.74	0.03	26,039.10	26,039.10	(0.00)	25,018.20	25,018.20	0.00
WESTERN NEW Y	84,040.16	84,040.16	-	84,788.76	84,788.76	-	81,175.80	81,175.80	-	83,037.30	83,037.30	-	81,001.65	81,001.65	-
WEST JERSEY	78,575.99	77,537.83	1,038.16	80,214.66	77,771.23	2,443.43	78,784.53	76,803.47	1,981.06	79,888.50	78,916.80	971.70	77,582.25	77,582.25	-
SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC															
PRESBYTERY															
CASCADES	146,457.58	146,457.58	-	149,978.37	149,978.37	-	149,104.08	149,104.08	-	154,438.80	154,438.80	-	142,065.00	142,065.00	-
BOISE	15,545.87	15,545.87	-	16,773.63	16,773.63	-	17,057.34	17,057.34	-	17,927.25	17,927.25	-	16,211.40	16,211.40	-
EASTERN OREGO	6,500.19	6,500.19	-	6,438.48	6,438.48	-	6,403.74	6,403.74	-	6,685.05	6,685.05	-	6,746.55	6,746.55	-
KENDALL	12,721.88	12,721.88	-	12,425.34	12,425.34	-	12,101.10	12,101.10	-	12,761.25	12,761.25	-	12,336.90	12,336.90	-
NEVADA	28,824.75	28,824.75	-	30,947.55	30,947.55	-	29,216.34	29,216.34	-	30,012.00	30,012.00	-	28,905.00	28,905.00	-
REDWOODS (THE	46,158.59	45,974.78	183.81	45,839.43	44,197.95	1,641.48	44,820.39	44,820.88	(0.49)	44,827.35	44,827.35	(0.00)	43,984.80	43,984.80	(0.00)
SACRAMENTO	89,170.13	89,170.13	-	92,298.39	65,690.71	26,607.68	90,955.11	56,881.00	34,074.11	88,861.35	53,016.56	35,844.79	85,823.25	46,008.40	39,814.85
SAN FRANCISCO	159,652.91	159,652.91	-	162,884.28	162,884.28	-	160,880.94	160,880.94	-	165,318.15	165,318.15	-	155,687.25	155,687.25	-
SAN JOAQUIN	44,075.41	31,086.17	12,989.24	46,204.20	25,178.28	21,025.92	44,791.44	23,365.28	21,426.16	44,593.65	28,966.50	15,627.15	42,102.90	42,102.90	-
SAN JOSE	63,915.75	63,916.00	(0.25)	66,411.30	66,411.00	0.30	65,895.99	65,896.00	(0.01)	69,033.75	69,033.75	-	68,148.15	68,148.15	-
STOCKTON	23,182.34	23,182.34	-	24,057.45	15,945.65	8,111.80	22,812.60	12,546.93	10,265.67	23,591.40	11,199.15	12,392.25	22,084.65	11,625.70	10,458.95

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
SYNOD OF PUERTO RICO															
PRESBYTERY															
NORTHWEST	22,759.02	22,579.02	180.00	23,849.01	23,849.01	-	23,849.01	0.00	23,849.01	25,454.85	25,454.85	-	24,981.30	24,981.30	-
SAN JUAN	10,388.05	9,405.14	982.91	10,757.82	10,757.82	-	9,871.95	9,871.95	-	10,196.70	10,196.70	-	10,295.10	10,295.10	-
SOUTHWEST (TH)	14,197.93	14,197.93	-	14,897.67	14,897.67	-	14,625.54	14,625.54	-	14,729.25	14,729.25	-	14,458.65	14,458.65	-
SYNOD OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS															
PRESBYTERY															
PLAINS AND PEAK	62,378.43	62,378.43	-	62,682.54	62,682.54	-	60,991.86	56,638.65	4,353.21	61,967.40	55,034.44	6,932.96	57,883.80	56,483.51	1,400.29
DENVER	78,241.79	78,241.79	-	81,146.85	81,146.85	-	78,992.97	78,992.97	-	81,924.15	81,924.15	-	80,079.15	80,079.15	-
GLACIER	19,545.13	19,545.13	-	18,898.56	18,898.56	-	18,782.76	18,782.76	-	19,507.80	19,507.80	-	18,665.25	18,665.25	-
PUEBLO	50,441.92	50,441.92	-	51,577.32	51,577.32	-	51,525.21	23,081.03	28,444.18	52,299.60	21,186.04	31,113.56	50,473.05	19,795.56	30,677.49
UTAH	22,268.86	22,268.86	-	23,212.11	23,212.11	-	23,131.05	23,131.05	-	24,003.45	24,003.45	-	22,982.55	22,982.55	(0.00)
WESTERN COLORADO	14,192.36	14,192.36	-	14,052.33	14,052.25	0.08	13,907.58	10,960.89	2,946.69	14,163.45	13,007.38	1,156.07	13,862.10	8,394.75	5,467.35
WYOMING	29,075.40	29,075.40	-	28,185.72	28,185.72	-	27,543.03	27,543.03	-	28,548.30	28,548.30	-	28,154.70	28,154.70	-
YELLOWSTONE	17,305.99	17,305.99	-	16,767.84	16,767.84	-	16,125.15	16,125.15	-	16,469.70	16,469.70	-	15,657.90	15,657.90	-
SYNOD OF SOUTH ATLANTIC															
PRESBYTERY															
CENTRAL FLORIDA	169,834.87	160,274.18	9,560.69	173,149.95	170,525.01	2,624.94	168,489.00	130,631.36	37,857.64	179,641.50	153,757.50	25,884.00	179,167.95	178,676.83	491.12
CHARLESTON-ATLANTA	100,644.33	95,609.72	5,034.61	104,712.15	97,070.88	7,641.27	104,538.45	87,115.80	17,422.65	111,745.50	37,050.00	74,695.50	109,826.70	67,050.00	42,776.70
CHEROKEE	61,938.40	61,938.40	-	63,898.44	61,691.28	2,207.16	61,848.78	56,694.77	5,154.01	63,006.75	59,525.53	3,481.22	61,684.50	52,544.83	9,139.67
FLINT RIVER	37,786.88	35,936.02	1,850.86	38,578.77	34,841.22	3,737.55	36,760.71	36,760.71	-	38,351.40	38,351.00	0.40	37,908.60	37,908.60	-
FLORIDA	48,715.22	48,715.22	-	49,892.43	49,892.43	-	49,064.46	49,064.46	-	50,036.40	50,036.40	0.00	47,336.55	47,336.55	0.00
FOOTHILLS	125,001.94	97,993.01	27,008.93	128,630.64	101,539.23	27,091.41	127,999.53	102,876.76	25,122.77	129,894.15	103,031.00	26,863.15	127,741.65	101,261.65	26,480.00
GREATER ATLANTA	261,706.45	209,836.62	51,869.83	270,914.10	191,203.17	79,710.93	265,512.03	181,285.81	84,226.22	278,478.15	200,597.39	77,880.76	277,537.20	187,697.00	89,840.20
NEW HARMONY	75,072.46	75,072.00	0.46	77,533.89	77,534.00	(0.11)	75,327.90	73,945.05	1,382.85	79,624.05	79,624.05	-	78,553.95	78,554.00	(0.05)
NORTHEAST GEORGIA	50,759.41	50,759.41	-	52,196.85	52,196.85	-	52,613.73	52,613.73	-	55,313.10	55,313.10	-	54,981.00	54,981.00	-
PEACE RIVER	122,840.78	91,959.06	30,881.72	124,085.49	117,903.49	6,182.00	121,532.10	100,717.16	20,814.94	123,713.40	105,533.04	18,180.36	116,437.95	106,573.68	9,864.27
PROVIDENCE	50,013.03	50,013.04	(0.01)	51,832.08	51,832.08	-	51,739.44	51,739.44	-	54,298.35	54,298.35	(0.00)	53,289.75	53,289.75	-
ST. AUGUSTINE	107,450.87	106,529.26	921.61	111,781.74	104,059.15	7,722.59	110,010.00	107,045.52	2,964.48	115,958.25	115,396.50	561.75	117,938.55	117,938.55	0.00
SAVANNAH	34,495.01	36,199.27	(1,704.26)	36,725.97	33,665.50	3,060.47	36,494.37	36,494.37	-	37,982.40	37,982.40	-	37,914.75	37,914.75	-
TAMPA BAY	140,993.41	138,770.98	2,222.43	143,713.59	143,713.59	-	140,922.81	136,379.02	4,543.79	145,945.65	126,626.50	19,319.15	143,030.55	108,105.84	34,924.71
TRINITY	113,265.95	113,266.00	(0.05)	106,304.40	105,575.53	728.87	106,541.79	95,610.73	10,931.06	111,677.85	90,811.18	20,866.67	110,884.50	93,453.71	17,430.79
TROPICAL FLORIDA	91,125.20	90,103.09	1,022.11	93,954.33	91,670.40	2,283.93	91,290.93	89,043.29	2,247.64	93,424.65	86,774.45	6,650.20	88,467.75	83,435.41	5,032.34
SYNOD OF S. CALIF. & HAWAII															
PRESBYTERY															
HANMI	29,626.83	0.00	29,626.83	16,883.64	16,883.64	-	14,729.76	14,729.76	-	31,155.90	1,000.00	30,155.90	15,879.30	1,000.00	14,879.30
LOS RANCHOS	125,141.19	125,141.19	-	127,142.61	127,142.61	-	120,310.41	120,310.41	-	125,712.15	125,712.15	-	123,412.05	123,412.05	-
PACIFIC	88,446.03	88,446.03	-	88,679.64	88,685.43	(5.79)	86,340.48	86,340.48	-	90,927.75	90,927.75	-	87,293.10	87,293.10	-
RIVERSIDE	39,329.77	38,548.00	781.77	40,958.46	36,367.18	4,591.28	40,246.29	40,313.09	(66.80)	41,106.60	36,363.85	4,742.75	40,294.80	40,294.80	-
SAN DIEGO	92,272.62	75,981.40	16,291.22	96,669.84	64,655.50	32,014.34	94,782.30	57,623.26	37,159.04	100,368.00	57,384.26	42,983.74	95,730.90	58,494.21	37,236.69
SAN FERNANDO	47,645.78	47,645.78	-	49,203.42	49,203.42	-	48,514.41	48,514.41	-	49,624.35	49,624.35	-	47,963.85	47,963.85	-
SAN GABRIEL	56,663.61	56,663.61	-	58,374.78	58,374.78	-	57,581.55	57,581.55	-	61,598.40	49,377.87	12,220.53	61,340.10	50,699.20	10,640.90
SANTA BARBARA	54,652.84	54,652.84	-	54,298.62	48,213.33	6,085.29	52,607.94	46,399.22	6,208.72	56,832.15	1,808.10	55,024.05	53,400.45	26,354.44	27,046.01

PC 2006 through 2010

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST															
PRESBYTERY															
DE CRISTO	49,901.63	49,901.63	-	51,270.45	51,270.45	-	48,114.90	48,114.90	-	48,843.30	47,409.01	1,434.29	46,924.50	46,924.50	-
GRAND CANYON	92,205.78	92,205.78	-	94,243.83	94,243.83	-	92,570.52	92,570.52	-	96,210.60	96,210.60	(0.00)	93,067.95	93,067.95	(0.00)
SANTA FE	39,702.96	39,702.96	-	41,213.22	41,213.22	-	40,778.97	40,778.97	-	44,329.20	44,329.20	-	41,930.70	41,930.70	-
SIERRA BLANCA	12,521.36	12,521.36	-	12,512.19	12,512.19	-	12,193.74	12,193.74	-	13,117.95	13,117.95	0.00	12,496.80	12,496.80	-
SYNOD OF THE SUN															
PRESBYTERY															
ARKANSAS	88,652.12	88,652.12	-	91,534.11	91,534.11	-	89,472.87	89,472.87	-	94,384.05	94,384.05	(0.00)	93,461.55	93,461.55	-
CIMARRON	14,704.80	14,704.80	-	14,891.88	14,891.88	-	14,677.65	14,677.65	-	14,630.85	14,630.85	-	14,218.80	14,218.00	0.80
EASTERN OKLAH	73,524.00	73,524.00	-	75,883.74	63,231.30	12,652.44	59,544.36	56,765.70	2,778.66	62,594.70	62,594.70	0.00	57,631.65	57,631.65	0.00
GRACE	253,941.87	253,941.87	-	260,781.60	260,781.60	-	257,157.06	257,157.06	-	270,175.65	269,702.16	473.49	262,272.90	136,980.31	125,292.59
INDIAN NATIONS	60,724.14	60,730.08	(5.94)	62,120.91	60,724.20	1,396.71	60,273.90	60,273.24	0.66	59,821.05	59,821.05	0.00	57,662.40	57,662.40	0.00
MISSION	179,604.65	179,604.65	-	185,198.94	185,198.94	-	184,695.21	184,695.21	-	193,054.65	193,054.65	-	192,390.45	192,341.48	48.97
NEW COVENANT	223,496.25	223,496.25	-	228,218.64	228,457.32	(238.68)	227,014.32	227,014.32	-	235,446.60	168,353.42	67,093.18	227,058.00	172,436.34	54,621.66
PALO DURO	54,218.38	54,218.38	-	54,952.89	55,633.47	(680.58)	53,870.16	53,870.16	-	56,961.30	56,961.30	-	55,909.65	55,909.65	-
PINES(THE)	35,274.81	35,274.81	-	35,585.34	35,643.00	(57.66)	34,983.18	34,983.18	-	35,694.60	35,694.60	-	34,280.10	34,280.00	0.10
SOUTH LOUISIAN	59,197.96	49,125.93	10,072.03	59,822.28	43,039.21	16,783.07	56,180.37	41,990.10	14,190.27	56,463.15	38,870.36	17,592.79	42,201.30	38,660.00	3,541.30
TRES RIOS	43,562.97	43,562.97	-	42,788.10	43,952.00	(1,163.90)	41,780.64	41,646.00	134.64	42,422.70	42,422.70	-	41,401.80	41,401.80	-
SYNOD OF THE TRINITY															
PRESBYTERY															
BEAVER-BUTLER	87,816.62	70,727.96	17,088.66	88,754.91	40,390.45	48,364.46	85,946.76	85,773.00	173.76	89,673.15	83,909.92	5,763.23	86,751.90	84,507.15	2,244.75
CARLISLE	87,259.62	80,258.69	7,000.93	88,146.96	86,717.75	1,429.21	86,757.36	86,757.36	-	90,042.15	90,042.15	-	89,445.60	89,445.60	(0.00)
DONEGAL	130,126.34	128,806.94	1,319.40	132,139.38	121,849.29	10,290.09	131,705.13	121,070.01	10,635.12	132,883.05	126,179.40	6,703.65	126,622.35	117,329.76	9,292.59
HUNINGDON	41,724.87	41,724.87	-	41,323.23	41,323.23	-	39,557.28	39,557.28	-	40,885.20	40,885.20	-	39,003.30	39,003.30	0.00
KISKIMINETAS	69,613.86	69,613.86	-	69,920.04	69,920.04	-	67,910.91	67,910.91	-	68,812.35	68,812.35	0.00	65,964.90	65,964.90	-
LACKAWANNA	46,832.56	35,805.86	11,026.70	48,323.34	37,338.87	10,984.47	47,472.21	36,338.26	11,133.95	48,935.55	48,935.55	-	47,496.45	47,496.45	-
LAKE ERIE	64,528.45	64,528.45	-	65,340.15	65,340.00	0.15	63,684.21	63,684.00	0.21	66,819.75	66,819.75	-	65,208.45	65,208.45	0.00
LEHIGH	63,486.86	63,486.86	-	65,427.00	65,427.00	-	64,784.31	64,784.31	-	66,936.60	66,936.60	-	62,317.95	62,317.95	(0.00)
NORTHUMBERLA	31,308.97	31,308.97	-	31,607.61	31,115.46	492.15	31,115.46	31,115.46	-	32,841.00	32,283.00	558.00	31,936.95	27,452.00	4,484.95
PHILADELPHIA	229,077.39	209,680.11	19,397.28	233,557.02	212,984.11	20,572.91	227,205.39	205,773.75	21,431.64	236,393.70	211,386.60	25,007.10	225,299.10	198,635.75	26,663.35
PITTSBURGH	253,234.48	253,234.48	-	253,920.45	253,920.45	-	241,460.37	241,460.37	-	250,526.40	239,954.55	10,571.85	237,543.75	237,543.74	0.01
REDSTONE	91,955.13	91,955.13	-	94,307.52	94,307.52	-	92,159.43	92,159.43	-	97,459.05	97,514.40	(55.35)	93,953.55	93,954.00	(0.45)
SHENANGO	88,412.61	52,469.03	35,943.58	86,601.03	55,526.32	31,074.71	84,470.31	53,100.71	31,369.60	87,360.75	51,718.60	35,642.15	85,515.75	54,735.16	30,780.59
UPPER OHIO VAL	56,429.67	56,480.30	(50.63)	55,225.02	35,225.02	20,000.00	52,619.52	47,718.92	4,900.60	54,273.75	54,273.75	-	53,043.75	53,043.75	-
WASHINGTON	65,246.98	51,183.09	14,063.89	66,289.71	50,239.83	16,049.88	64,714.83	48,803.91	15,910.92	67,059.60	52,133.55	14,926.05	65,054.70	48,289.80	16,764.90
WEST VIRGINIA	76,593.07	76,340.07	253.00	76,775.40	75,678.63	1,096.77	75,322.11	75,322.11	-	78,517.05	77,386.01	1,131.04	76,253.85	75,603.15	650.70
TOTALS	13,147,311.03	12,699,282.14	448,028.89	13,380,058.89	12,777,867.99	602,190.90	13,084,624.14	12,423,667.44	660,956.70	13,566,979.95	12,670,588.20	896,391.75	13,143,681.60	12,197,389.19	946,292.41

SYNOD/PRES.	APPORTN-06	AMT. PAID 06	BALANCE 06	APPORTN-07	AMT. PAID 07	BALANCE 07	APPORTN-08	AMT. PAID 08	BALANCE 08	APPORTN-09	AMT. PAID 09	BALANCE 09	APPORTN-10	AMT. PAID 10	BALANCE 10
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2008															
PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR													
Pueblo	12,830.96	2006													
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2009															
PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR													
Detroit	4319.58	2007													
Sacramento	5,386.08	2007													
Sacramento	3,109.23	2007													
	12,814.89														
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2010															
PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR													
Great Rivers	519.68	2008													
Plains and Peaks	3,395.88	2008													
Riverside	35.74	2008													
Riverside	312.06	2008													
Wabash	2,079.60	2008													
	6,342.96														
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2010															
PRESBYTERY	AMOUNT	FOR YEAR													
West Jersey	219.52	2008													
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2011															
PRESBYTERY															
West Jersey	581.38	2005													
West Jersey	667.48	2006													
West Jersey	220.50	2008													
	1,469.36														
PAYMENTS RECEIVED IN 2012															
PRESBYTERY															
De Cristo	4,050.75	2010													
Savannah	7,914.75	2010													
	11,965.50														
NOTE: Since outstanding accounts for 2006 through 2010 have been closed, the above payments have been credited to the prior years adjustments account in 2010.															
This report is based on receipts as of April 11, 2012															



2010 2011 General Assembly Agency Minister Salary Report

Name	Position	Presbytery	2010 Salary & Housing	2010 Medical Pensions & Other Benefits	2010 Other	2011 Salary & Housing	2011 Medical Pensions & Other Benefits	2011 Other
<b>Board of Pensions</b>								
Badillo, Ernesto, Jr	Regional Representative	West Jersey	\$97,800	\$32,032	\$1,693	\$99,800	\$31,970	\$768
Cobb, Clayton	Regional Representative	The Pacific				\$90,000	\$8,584	\$0
Fleming, Steven R	Education Specialist	Carlisle	\$84,200	\$27,717	\$3,282	\$86,700	\$28,344	\$3,335
Frey, Mark	Regional Representative	The Cascades	\$94,800	\$30,537	\$2,917	\$97,200	\$31,537	\$2,500
Gehman, Philip R	Regional Representative & Assistant Corporate Secretary	Salem	\$113,700	\$23,355	\$750	\$0	\$805	\$0
Kelly, Douglas A	Regional Representative	Southern Kansas	\$91,500	\$29,356	\$0	\$93,300	\$29,390	\$1,914
Locklear, Helen	Regional Representative	Coastal Carolina	\$96,100	\$30,200	\$0	\$98,000	\$30,870	\$0
Maggs, Robert W Jr (Elder)	President & CEO		\$350,300	\$51,179	\$184,595	\$400,000	\$50,031	\$187,849
McFayden, John	Vice President, Church Relations	Chicago	\$150,000	\$22,376	\$7,500	\$155,300	\$39,792	\$1,314
Mills, Arthur W	Regional Representative	San Jose	\$92,700	\$29,672	\$500	\$95,500	\$25,226	\$1,000
Seed, Allison	Regional Representative & Assistant Corporate Secretary	Heartland				\$87,000	\$27,177	\$0
Serovy, Mary	Director, CREDO	Milwaukee	\$104,300	\$34,221	\$11,900	\$106,900	\$33,639	\$0
Sewell, Rodney	Education Specialist	Denver	\$75,800	\$24,768	\$2,391	\$78,100	\$25,355	\$1,415
Sime, Peter CS	Vice President, Assistance & Funds Development	Philadelphia	\$164,500	\$45,609	\$42,863	\$171,100	\$46,559	\$45,090
Young, Richard E	Regional Representative	Grace	\$95,200	\$30,596	\$4,211	\$98,100	\$24,503	\$10,533
<b>General Assembly Mission Council</b>								
Ashley, Sandawna G	Assoc Gender & Racial Just	Chicago				\$33,990	\$11,201	
Braaksma, Debra Ann	Area Coordinator Africa		\$57,903	\$18,900		\$67,973	\$21,444	
Brown, Jonathan M.	Special Offering Consultant	Palisades	\$65,456	\$17,268		\$3,937	\$0	
Cannon, Jerry L	Term-Professional		\$22,292	\$0				
Chai, David H.	Assoc For Asian American Lead	Mid-Kentucky	\$68,756	\$20,477		\$12,501	\$3,242	
Chapman, Jon T.	Area Coord/Europe Ecu Council	Cayuga-Syracus	\$81,896	\$24,390		\$31,461	\$12,825	
Clark, Brian H.	Term-Professional	National Capital	\$14,400	\$0		\$8,862	\$0	
Coyle, Jean M	Term-Professional		\$22,708	\$7,471				
Crittenden, David D.	Director Of Stewardship	Ohio Valley				\$105,346	\$33,549	
Curry, Belinda	Assoc Policy Development		\$133,504	\$9,357				
Damico, Noelle	Associate Fair Food Concerns		\$25,854	\$11,925		\$27,854	\$12,861	
Delair Jr, Edward R	Director Of Education	Santa Fe				\$41,923	\$17,802	
Dermody Jr, Roger A.	Deputy Exec Direct For Mission	Pacific	\$87,539	\$21,676		\$144,089	\$37,941	
Ellis, Robert L.	Coordinator	New Hope	\$67,379	\$21,225		\$69,971	\$22,074	
Enders Odom, Emily J.	Mijhh/Exec Dir Comm Associate	Salem	\$61,222	\$19,262		\$62,914	\$19,841	
Ensign-George, Barry A.	Associate For Theology	Boston	\$60,716	\$19,126		\$63,103	\$19,907	
Farrell, Bennett H.	Director, World Mission	Grace	\$77,769	\$24,497		\$77,849	\$24,522	
Fox, Edward Q.	Associate For Theology	National Capital	\$60,133	\$18,942		\$36,469	\$10,928	
Galvan-Valle, Marissa I.	Assoc Resources Hispanic	San Juan	\$51,803	\$16,309		\$53,268	\$16,798	
Gambrell, David P.	Associate For Worship	Mission	\$59,554	\$18,760		\$61,845	\$19,510	
Girgis, Raafat S.	Assoc Multicult Cong Suppt	New Hope	\$55,494	\$17,481		\$57,762	\$18,215	
Gnatuk, Wayne A.	Associate Churchwide Relations	Transylvania	\$56,165	\$17,692		\$57,785	\$18,223	

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Hammond, Carl L.	Term-Professional		\$12,035	\$0	\$11,999	\$0
Heery, Patrick D.	Term-Professional	Scioto Valley			\$18,338	\$7,148
Herrinton-Hodge, Elizabeth	Assoc For Curriculum For Youth	Mid-Kentucky	\$51,258	\$15,827	\$9,662	\$2,506
Hinson-Hasty, Gerald L.	Coordinator Theological Edu	Coastal Carolina	\$65,374	\$20,577	\$67,207	\$21,194
Hoey, Eric	Prog Dir Evang & Church Growth	San Gabriel	\$86,355	\$27,186	\$88,794	\$28,002
Horton, Carl E	Strat Plan/Pgrm Facil Peacemkg	Mid-Kentucky			\$43,077	\$14,210
Hudson, David L.	Area Coord Asia/Pacific	Ohio Valley	\$67,445	\$21,245	\$8,301	\$0
Hunter, Rhaskell D.	Prog Dir Women & Racial Ethnic	Lake Huron	\$86,339	\$27,186	\$88,794	\$28,002
Iosso, Christian T.	Coordinator For Acswp	Hudson River	\$67,379	\$21,225	\$69,971	\$22,074
Jackson, Stephany D.	Assoc For Congregational Lead		\$29,912	\$13,797	\$4,177	\$1,427
Jones III, Ray Glenn	Coord Evangelism	Cherokee	\$66,000	\$20,790	\$67,904	\$21,414
Kearns, Curtis A.	Executive Administrator		\$86,907	\$23,396		
Kim, Grace C.	Assoc Korean Adult	Midwest Hanmi			\$67,342	\$22,002
Kim, Jin S	Term Employee		\$5,400	\$0	\$18,451	\$0
Kim, Sun B.	Assoc Korean Congregation	Midwest Hanmi	\$60,674	\$19,112	\$62,197	\$19,592
Koenig, William M.	Director Un Ministries	New York City	\$69,423	\$21,944	\$80,721	\$25,456
Lai, Mei-Hui	Assoc Asian Congr Support				\$49,000	\$15,971
Lawrence, Jeffrey C.	Sr Coord Mission Resources		\$67,357	\$21,320	\$76,447	\$24,081
Lee, Randolph A.	Term Employee		\$2,308	\$0		
Lee, Unzu S.	Leadership Develop For Women	Newton	\$56,041	\$17,653	\$57,658	\$18,183
Loleng, David M	Evangelism Associate	Riverside	\$51,519	\$16,658	\$58,669	\$18,502
Lotspeich, Philip A	Coord Church Gr & Transform	Grace	\$64,850	\$20,412	\$66,668	\$21,024
Lugo, Ana L.	Term-Professional	National Capital	\$89,617	\$9,737	\$71,324	\$22,467
Makari, Victor E.	Area Coord Middle East	Scioto Valley	\$85,170	\$24,475	\$53,493	\$19,595
Martin, Louis E.	Campaign Consultant				\$1,571	\$0
Morse, Sterling	Coord Cross Cultural Min	National Capital	\$13,221	\$4,758	\$64,303	\$20,278
Nelson II, James Herbert	Director Of Public Witness	Mid-Kentucky	\$51,404	\$17,010	\$83,450	\$26,316
Niles-McCrary, Rose E.	Assoc Theological Ed & Sem Rel	Hudson River	\$58,953	\$18,570	\$60,727	\$19,150
Ockels, Katherine T.	Manager, Project And Operation	Mid-Kentucky			\$69,971	\$25,114
Oliver, Lonnie J	Assoc For A/A Congr Support	Greater Atlanta	\$12,577	\$4,483	\$56,418	\$17,793
Park, Kevin	Associate For Theology	Newark	\$62,645	\$19,733	\$64,453	\$20,326
Parker, Michael T.	Coord Intern'L Evangel.& Front	National Capital	\$66,141	\$20,818	\$68,632	\$21,651
Philbrick, Ann	Assoc Church Growth & Trans	National Capital	\$16,102	\$7,080	\$45,000	\$15,748
Reeves, Kathy	Pw Program Associate For Missn	Denver	\$51,500	\$16,223	\$52,986	\$16,709
Rift, Meg	Assoc For Curriculum Develop	Chicago	\$52,292	\$16,223	\$9,904	\$2,569
Robinson Jr, John A.	Assoc Disaster Response In Us	Shenendoah	\$69,491	\$21,822	\$71,274	\$22,476
Rock, Jay T.	Coord For Interfatih Relations	Peace River	\$66,512	\$20,402	\$30,890	\$12,629
Rodriguez, Hector L.	Assoc Hispanic Congregational	Central Florida	\$26,615	\$7,945	\$60,605	\$19,112
Rodrigue, Kimberly L.	Coord Of Faith/Comm, Campus		\$26,615	\$7,945		
Roseland, Chris H	Church Suppt Fnd Raising Asc	Ohio Valley			\$66,875	\$21,089
Russell, Karen S.	Program Associate	Mid-Kentucky	\$58,905	\$18,555	\$40,788	\$12,889
Sadongei, Martha D	Church Specialist	Grand Canyon	\$65,000	\$20,475	\$36,000	\$14,550
Sauceda, Teresa Chavez	Term-Officials & Managers	San Francisco	\$37,500	\$12,670	\$8,091	\$2,389
Seebeck, Paul R	Assoc Mission Communications	Inland Northwes	\$6,231	\$3,015	\$62,914	\$19,841

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Small, Joseph D.	Program Dir Theol Worship Edu	Mid-Kentucky	\$36,490	\$13,140	\$10,689	\$0
Smith, Alexa A.	Assoc Join Hand Against Hunger	Ohio Valley	\$61,177	\$19,262	\$58,550	\$18,464
Somplatsky-Jarman, Carol L.	Assoc Mission Connections		\$92,640	\$29,182	\$44,508	\$14,036
Somplatsky-Jarman, William	Coord Social Witness Ministry		\$56,908	\$17,926	\$75,562	\$23,829
Stricklen, Teresa D.	Associate For Worship	Pittsburgh	\$43,260	\$13,627	\$62,447	\$19,700
Suarez-Valera, Pastor A.	Assoc For Immigrant Groups	del Suroeste	\$73,443	\$23,135	\$59,657	\$18,813
Taylor, Thomas F.	Deputy Exec Direct For Mission		\$10,157	\$1,440		
Tom, Philip	Assoc Sm Church Community Min		\$19,067	\$4,606		
Troy, Nancy K.	Assoc Social Welfare Org	Mid-Kentucky	\$17,678	\$4,958	\$835	\$0
Uriarte, Mienda A.	Area Coord Asia/Pacific	Pacific	\$57,984	\$18,265	\$16,891	\$6,029
Valentine, Linda (Elder)	Executive Director		\$164,800	\$61,187	\$169,584	\$62,105
Van Marter, Jerry	Coordinator News Services	Mid-Kentucky	\$70,238	\$22,125	\$72,441	\$22,844
Wiens-Sorge, Tammy L.	Assoc For Spiritual Formation	Pittsburgh	\$31,409	\$14,003	\$3,045	\$934
Wiley, Charles A.	Assoc Director For Twe	New Hope	\$67,379	\$21,225	\$74,934	\$23,732
Williams, Craig S.	Term-Professional	Los Ranchos	\$47,197	\$14,175	\$60,154	\$18,949
Wilson, Sylvia J.	Associate For Collegiate Min		\$1,031	\$0		
Winter, Mary Jane	Term Employee		\$20,846	\$6,545		
Young, Nancy K	Cord Rew Ldrshp Dev/Re Schools	Ohio Valley	\$56,490	\$18,375	\$64,303	\$20,278

**Office of the General Assembly**

Black, Andrew D.	Dir Dept Of Constitutional Svc	Santa Fe			\$18,523	\$6,848
Cargal, Timothy B	Term-Officials & Managers	National Capital	\$60,051	\$18,900	\$61,200	\$19,278
Casteel, Molly N	Manager Committee On Rep	Eastern Oklahon	\$49,100	\$16,341	\$57,149	\$18,002
Clements, Kerry S.	Associate Dir Commun	Heartland	\$90,347	\$28,409	\$91,991	\$28,977
Davies, Lesley A.	Manager For Examination Servic	Utah	\$17,003	\$4,761	\$726	\$0
Hay, Thomas D.	Director Of Operations	Sheandoah	\$92,000	\$28,980	\$93,840	\$29,560
Hudson, Jill M.	Coord Govern Body Relations	Ohio Valley	\$84,872	\$26,735	\$86,788	\$27,338
Lieberman, Joyce E.	Manager For Polity Training	Santa Fe	\$61,800	\$19,467	\$63,090	\$19,926
Malave, Carlos L.	Assoc Ecumenical Relations	Mid-Kentucky	\$58,844	\$18,525	\$59,985	\$18,895
Moorhead, James H.	Editor	New Hope	\$8,742	\$0	\$8,952	\$0
Myers, Marcia C.	Director, Office Of Vocation	Mid-Kentucky	\$87,195	\$27,435	\$88,836	\$27,983
Parsons, Gradye M.	Stated Clerk	Holston	\$128,750	\$35,808	\$131,325	\$36,390
Rim, Heahwan	Acting Manager Polity	Savannah	\$29,766	\$13,256	\$34,252	\$0
Tammen, Mark A.	Dir Dept Of Constitutional Svc	Long Island	\$96,103	\$30,272	\$50,491	\$14,973
Winbush, Robina M.	Dir Ecumenical & Agency Relati	New York City	\$96,103	\$30,272	\$98,025	\$30,878
Youngs, Sharon K.	Coord Of Communications	West Virginia	\$67,643	\$21,308	\$69,142	\$21,780

**Presbyterian Foundation**

Beckhusen, Elizabeth	Development Officer	Genesee Valley	\$81,535	\$25,684		
Chavis, Eric	Development Officer	Maumee Valley	\$86,808	\$27,345		
Herbert, George	Development Officer	Sacramento	\$90,966	\$28,654		
Taylor, Thomas	President/Chief Executive Officer	San Gabriel	\$239,377	\$49,083		

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**Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program**

Hoe, Migill C.	Development Specialist	Riverside	\$65,398	\$20,059	\$67,533	\$21,298
Hudson, James L.	President & Ceo	Ohio Valley	\$143,365	\$37,576	\$146,865	\$38,271

**Presbyterian Publishing Corpotation**

Berquist, Jon	Executive Editor, Bibilical Studies	Temporary Member of New Bruswick	\$64,394	\$22,754		
Lewis, Lansing Marc (Elder)	President & Publisher		\$155,581	\$39,203		
Maxwell, David L	Executive Editor, Geneva Press, TheThoughtfulChristian.com, ThePresbyterianLeader.com	Mid-Kentucky	\$72,158	\$22,838		
McKim, Donald K	Executive Editor, Academic, Referece and These Days	Mid-South	\$65,312	\$19,719		

## Item 04-01

### *Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)*

The Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 1. See pp. 69, 72.]

#### 1. *Regarding the Plenary Sessions of the General Assembly*

**Direct the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to structure the docket of each biennial meeting of the General Assembly to contain plenary sessions focused on prayer, Bible study, and community building.**

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 1.*

Since the General Assembly convenes to lead the whole church in becoming “a community of faith, hope, love, and witness” (*Book of Order*, G- 3.0501), we recommend the assembly spend significant time during its plenary sessions in prayer, Bible study, and community building. As we gather as God’s people, we do so as those forgiven, redeemed, and called to discover and embrace God’s will for us. Therefore, we will intentionally construct our time together around practices unique to the church such as prayer, singing, and Scripture reading. As we draw closer to God through these practices of faith, we seek greater spiritual wisdom to discern God’s will and the courage to act on the call of Christ.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 2. See pp. 69, 72.]

#### 2. *Regarding the Framework for Plenary Sessions of the Next Three General Assemblies*

**Direct the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to construct the dockets for the next three successive General Assemblies (2014, 2016, 2018) around the Great Ends of the Church, the Marks of the Church, and the Notes of the Church. (cf. G 3.0501: “... As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, [the General Assembly] shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).”)**

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 2.*

In light of G 3.0501, we believe such a framework for the assembly will provide a form for the week and a context for its work while encouraging the assembly to center its work in worship, study, witness, and decision making.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 3, with amendment. See pp. 72–73.]

#### 3. *Regarding Concurrences for Overtures and Commissioners’ Resolutions*

**That in order to improve collaboration among presbyteries, assure that the business before it is both of common concern to the mission of the church (G-3.0302(d)) and about key issues facing the church and society, and to encourage well-considered, significant overtures and resolutions of church-wide significance:**

**a. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Shall [G-3.0502] [G-3.0302d] be amended [by adding a new section “f.”] to read as follows: [(Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.)]**

*[“f. present to meetings of the General Assembly such overtures from presbyteries and synods that have received concurrences from at least 10 percent of the presbyteries or, in the case of overtures from a synod, concurrence by 10 percent of the synods.”]*

**[“d. propose to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church, and proposing to General Assembly overtures that have received a concurrence from at least one other presbytery.”]**

**b. Amend Standing Rule A.3.(c)6 so that it reads as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]**

**“(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (excluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that existing overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided**

by the overturing body. The concurrence and any additional rationale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly. *Concurrences to any overture shall be received up to 45 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture with constitutional implications shall be received up to 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.*”

c. Amend Standing Rule A.8.a as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“a. Any two commissioners may propose an item of new business, known as a commissioners’ resolution, for assembly consideration by delivering it in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two resolutions. An item of new business, in the form of a commissioners’ resolution, must be signed by commissioners representing [10 percent of the presbyteries] [at least one other presbytery]. Such resolutions must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two such resolutions.”~~

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 3.*

A consistent theme of the reflection and feedback we received is the need to focus the business considered by an assembly. Overtures from presbyteries represent a significant source of assembly business. At the 219th General Assembly (2010) 124 overtures were received from presbyteries; only 25 percent of these overtures had concurrences from other presbyteries.

The intent of this recommendation is not to control the business of the General Assembly; it is to help focus the business coming to any meeting of the General Assembly. Requiring the concurrence of at least 10 percent of presbyteries with any overture—and that commissioners’ resolutions require signatures from at least 10 percent of the presbyteries—will indicate that the significance of and interest in a particular issue have been tested across the church. Such concurrences will encourage and increase collaboration, education, and conversation within and among presbyteries about key issues.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 4. See pp. 69, 73.]

#### *4. Regarding the Assembly’s Plenary Consent Agenda*

Amend Standing Rule F.5(b) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“b.(1) The General Assembly shall ordinarily decide questions by electronic voting. The Moderator may also call for unanimous consent by voice vote or show of hands. Assembly committees may recommend the use of a consent agenda for portions of their reports. In all cases, the right of any commissioner to call for one of the other forms of voting or to remove any item from the consent agenda shall be preserved. All decisions made by assembly standing committees by a three-quarters (supermajority) vote shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda to be considered as the first order of plenary business following committee meetings. Any actions requesting constitutional change must be considered in plenary.~~

*“(2) In addition to all consent items from assembly committees, the following items shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda:*

*“(a) All unchallenged nominations from the General Assembly Nominating Committee.*

*“(b) Unanimous recommendations from assembly agencies and entities for confirmations of those offices that, according to the Manual of the General Assembly, require General Assembly confirmation.*

*“(3) In all cases, the right of any commissioner to remove any item from the plenary consent agenda or to call for one of the other forms of voting shall be preserved.”*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 4.*

Much of the reflection and responses we received involved the overwhelming amount of business considered in plenary sessions of the assembly. We believe General Assembly committees should be empowered to place on the Plenary consent agenda all recommendations, except constitutional changes, made by supermajority (three-quarters) vote of the committee.

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-01, Recommendation 5, with comment. See pp. 72, 73.]

### 5. *Regarding Young Adult Commissioners*

Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-3.0501 be amended by adding a new paragraph after the formula for the number of commissioners to read as follows:

“...48,001 or more: 7 ruling elders and 7 teaching elders

*“The presbyteries within the geographical boundaries of each synod shall elect, according to a rotation system agreed upon by the presbyteries, one young adult teaching elder commissioner and one young adult ruling elder commissioner, age 36 or younger at the time of the convening of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.”*

#### ***Rationale for Recommendation 5.***

Feedback provided us indicates both strong encouragement for and a desire for younger commissioners to be involved in the proceedings of the General Assembly. In consultation across the PC(USA), we received strong affirmation about this recommendation.

Recognizing that a body maintains the right to determine its own election procedure, it is not our desire to impose strictures on presbyteries regarding the individuals they choose to elect as commissioners. We recommend the creation of young adult commissioners (YACs) in order to facilitate the participation of gifted, younger adults throughout the church. These commissioners will be elected by the presbyteries within a synod’s geographical bounds using processes and criteria determined by those presbyteries.

At the assembly meeting, YACs will not be differentiated from “regular” commissioners in any way (i.e., they will be seated as commissioners in the same manner as others, will have full rights and privileges, etc.) and will be identified as ruling elder commissioners or teaching elder commissioners as appropriate.

Under current mid-council structure, this recommendation would result in thirty-two additional commissioners to the General Assembly, as there are sixteen synods. In the event of synod realignment or restructuring, it is recommended that the current geographical boundaries be used for this purpose until specifically addressed in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly and the *Book of Order*.

**Comment:** [To direct the Stated Clerk to communicate with the presbyteries the need to prioritize sending young adult commissioners under the age of thirty-six to the General Assembly.] The young adult demographic has been and continues to be an underrepresented group as commissioners to General Assembly. The assembly suggests the committee discover other ways to increase young adult representation.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 6, with amendment. See pp. 69, 72.]

### 6. *Regarding Moderatorial Pre-election Activities*

a. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.3(c) follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“(c) Distribution of written [campaign] materials at General Assembly outside of the candidate’s room shall be limited to printed materials placed in mailboxes the public distribution area.”~~

b. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.3(d) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“(d) On the day of the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall provide a room for each candidate where commissioners and advisory delegates may meet and talk with the candidate. Candidates are encouraged to meet and make themselves available for conversation with commissioners and advisory delegates within the scope of these [campaign] procedures.”~~

#### ***Rationale for Recommendation 6.***

Commissioners and advisory delegates are frequently unable to visit the booths/rooms because of other pre-assembly activities. We believe that providing booths for moderatorial candidates is not the best use of resources. We request the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, within the scope of the outlined campaign procedures, to facilitate opportunities for conversation between moderatorial candidates and commissioners and advisory delegates.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 7. See pp. 69, 73.]

**7. Regarding Removal of Nominating Speeches for the Office of Moderator**

a. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.4(a) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, only one speech shall be made placing in nomination the name of each nominee. The speech shall be made by a commissioner to the General Assembly. Such speech shall not exceed five minutes in length. There shall be no speeches seconding the nomination of any nominee. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly. Each candidate shall be nominated by a commissioner to the assembly in the following manner: the commissioners making nominations shall be recognized at microphones on the assembly floor. Upon recognition by the assembly Moderator, the nominator shall say, “Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the \_\_\_ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder \_\_\_ from the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_.” The nominator shall then return to his/her seat on the plenary floor. No seconds to nominations are required.”~~

b. Amend Standing Rule H.1.b.4(b) as follows:

~~“(b) After nominations are closed, each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the concerns that nominee feels to be the most important for the church. The nominees shall speak in the same order as the presentation of nominating speeches. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly.”~~

*Rationale for Recommendation 7.*

This practice offers to the General Assembly the powerful symbol that all candidates for Moderator come from within the body of the assembly. It will also streamline the current election procedure by eliminating nominating speeches.

[The assembly approved Item 04-01, Recommendation 8, with amendment. See pp. 72, 73.]

**8. Regarding Extending the Timeframe for the Work of the Biennial Review Committee**

The 220th General Assembly (2012) instructs the Committee to Review Biennial General Assemblies to continue its work to the 221st General Assembly (2014) in order that all matters related to the form and function of the meeting of the General Assembly may be explored, developed, and discerned, and additional recommendations brought to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly for the 221st General Assembly (2014). [Three new committee members will be appointed by the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) from among the commissioners to the 220th General Assembly (2012).]

[Financial Implications: 04-01, Recommendation 8: 2013: \$27,230; 2014: \$11,495 (Per Capita—OGA)]

*Rationale for Recommendation 8.*

We have only been able to respond in part to our mandate “to include all matters related to the form and function of the meeting of the General Assembly.” We believe it is vital at this time in the life of the church for us to explore the possibilities of different ways of presenting issues, seeking God’s discernment, and making decisions. Our own work as a committee has convicted us of the importance of caring community, genuine collaboration, and generous conversation.

We believe the church is weary of a win/lose method of dealing with difficult and controversial issues and that the church in our 21st century context yearns for a way for those who make decisions on behalf of the church to do so in an environment that enables a greater awareness of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> As the council of the whole church, “*The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.*” (G-3.0501). For a community of faith, hope, love, and witness, the means by which the church searches for a common mind will be as important as the decisions that are reached.<sup>2</sup>

We seek to study other resources in greater depth including materials from the Uniting Church in Australia, and the significant contributions of the Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church. We believe both, as well as other resources, should be explored in greater depth.

Our goal in continuing our work would be to explore alternate processes for presentation and discussion of issues, to invite several mid-councils to work with us to assess the effectiveness of these processes, and to propose to the 221st General Assembly (2014) alternative ways of doing the work of the assembly.



## Endnotes for Rationale for Recommendation 8.

1. *Coming to Consensus: A Case Study for the Churches*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 2003.
2. *Ibid.*

**Overall Rationale**

## INTRODUCTION

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:

*2002 Referral: Item 02-01. Recommendation 6. COGA Prepare Full Evaluation of Biennial Assemblies After the 219th General Assembly (2010) and Bring a Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 159).*

*2010 Referral: Item 03-18. On Expanding the Scope of the Review of Biennial Assemblies—From the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 215–16).*

The Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies was established by action of two previous assemblies. The 214th General Assembly (2002), in recommending biennial General Assemblies to the PC(USA), requested a review of the biennial concept following the 219th General Assembly (2010). A committee was to be appointed by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council. *Overture 049* (Item 03-18) to the 219th General Assembly (2010) from the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy requested an expansion of the scope of the review committee to include all matters related to the form and function of the meeting of the General Assembly.

The following persons were named to the committee: Glen Bell, Indianapolis, Ind.; Theresa Cho, San Francisco, Calif.; Thomas Evans, Atlanta, Ga.; Glen Alberto Guenther, Denver, Colo.; Marcus Lambright, Princeton, N.J.; Kathy Lueckert, Seattle, Wash.; Carol McDonald, Indianapolis, Ind.; Matthew Schramm, Bay City, Mich.; David Van Dyke, St. Paul, Minn.. Carol McDonald serves as Moderator. The committee is staffed by Thomas Hay from the Office of the General Assembly.

The committee began its work in January 2011. From the beginning, the committee has kept before it these words: “The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0501).

Our research and evaluation involved two surveys—one of open-ended and one of specifically focused questions. Approximately 125 persons responded to the open-ended questions and almost 900 persons responded to the specific-question survey. In addition, we interviewed the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council, and members of the GAMC executive staff. We requested and received input from each of the other four entities of the General Assembly: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. We staffed a table at the Big Tent and engaged in conversation with many event attendees. The committee has held three face-to-face gatherings and has met multiple times by conference call.

The way we have worked together reflects our hope for future meetings of the General Assembly. We built community and have engaged in worshipful collaboration. Spirited and faithful conversation led, again and again, to decisions made by strong consensus. We offer this report with grateful hearts—thankful for one another and thankful for the One who called us together to do this work.

## CONTEXT

We are a church with a newly adopted Form of Government (FOG)—one being explored and embraced by councils at all levels. The new FOG invites us to move from governance as we have always known it into new and flexible ways of being church. We are a church living in and through a time of dramatic change; transition is the norm. We are a church yearning for new and different ways of discussing and discerning God’s call around difficult and controversial issues. We seek to be faithful to the One who has called us into being and who is calling us to be the church in a new way.

## VALUES

—That the common life of the whole church, as reflected in the meetings of the General Assembly, will reflect the mind of Christ as described by the Apostle Paul in *Philippians 2*.

—That our mode of engaging one another in the work of the whole church will reflect the image of the body of Christ described by the Apostle Paul in *Romans 12* and in *1 Corinthians 12*.

—That everything we say and do, as the council of the whole church, will allow us to engage with one another in love, humility, grace, and servanthood.

—That the council of the whole church will be an integrated community of worship, study, witness, discernment, and decision-making.

—That collaboration will be increased among all the councils of the church.

—That processes for discussion and deliberation will be fair and open and honest.

—That the work and business of each meeting of the General Assembly will be focused so as to encourage full and prayerful participation of those seeking the mind of Christ for the whole church.

#### AFFIRMATION

We affirm the pattern of biennial General Assembly meetings. Our research, conversations, and discernment indicate this pattern is helpful to the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) We heard no strong support either to return to annual assemblies or to lengthen time between assemblies. Biennial assemblies are wise stewardship of both human and financial resources. They permit the church to deliberate and discuss important issues facing church and society, and offer councils necessary time to consider and live into suggested actions. Biennial assemblies provide for the whole church opportunities for worship, Bible study, fellowship, collaboration, and spiritual reflection.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 04-01

*Advice on Item 04-01 —From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Recommendation 3.a. from the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Recommendation 5 from the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies raises constitutional issues that the assembly should consider.

#### *Rationale*

Two recommendations from the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies propose amendments to the Form of Government, and require the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC). The ACC responds to each recommendation under separate headings.

##### 1. *Recommendation 3.a.*

Recommendation 3.a. proposes that a new section “f” be added to G-3.0502, reading as follows:

*“f. present to meetings of the General Assembly such overtures from presbyteries and synods that have received concurrences from at least 10 percent of the presbyteries or, in the case of overtures from a synod, concurrence by 10 percent of the synods.”*

Recommendation 3.a. proposes that a new section “f” be added to G-3.0502. Section G-3.0502 currently consists of a series of lettered sentence fragments, each completing a sentence that begins, “The General Assembly has responsibility to maintain relationships with presbyteries and synods by....”

The meaning of existing sections a. through e. is clear in the context of the entire paragraph. The proposed addition of section f. would have a different structure and would read as follows:

“The General Assembly has responsibility to maintain relationships with presbyteries and synods by present [sic] to meetings of the General Assembly such overtures from presbyteries and synods that have received concurrences from at least 10 percent of the presbyteries or, in the case of overtures from a synod, concurrence by 10 percent of the synods.”

The meaning of this sentence is not obvious, and a reasonable reader might ask whether the new section f. was intended to complete a different sentence, perhaps in a different constitutional provision, or even in the Standing Rules. Even if the grammar is corrected, the sentence would still present the reader with a provision in which the subject (“The General Assembly”) is also the indirect object of “present” or “presenting.”

Lacking clarity as to the precise text and intention of the proposed constitutional amendment, the ACC advises the assembly that the rationale for the proposed amendment raises constitutional issues.

##### a. *Right of Appeal*

It appears that the amendment is aimed at limiting the business before the assembly. This could be seen as limiting the historic right of appeal, which is restated in F-3.02 (see footnote 6), and specifically implied in F-3.0206.

Other constitutional provisions address this issue. Each of the councils of the church has a responsibility to maintain relation with the other councils. “It is of particular importance that sessions ... propose to the presbytery, or through it to the synod and General Assembly, such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0202e). “The presbytery has a responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship to synod and General Assembly by ... proposing to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0302d). “The synod has responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship with the General Assembly ... by proposing to the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole church” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0402). These responsibilities in the session, presbytery, and synod presume a corresponding responsibility of the General Assembly to receive and consider the communications from them.

b. *Business That Possibly Should Not Require Many Concurrences*

There are many types of business that may not require substantial debate, but that are important to a small number of presbyteries. One example would be transferring a congregation from one presbytery to another. This is a matter typically brought to the assembly by overture from one presbytery with a concurrence from the other presbytery. For reasons we state in other advice before this assembly, the whole church does have a stake in such business, but it is difficult to explain why the two presbyteries at the heart of the matter would need to lobby sixteen other presbyteries for concurrence.

c. *Shifting of Power*

A restriction on the handling of overtures from presbyteries and synods would work against the ability of those councils to place business before the assembly, while leaving untouched the ability of entities of the General Assembly to present business. This shift could disturb the relationships expressed in G-3.0101:

... All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher council.

d. *Creation of Parties*

The emphasis on synods and presbyteries collaborating on overtures could have the effect of fragmenting the church by privileging conversations between the like-minded over the broad discernment and conversations that are intended to take place in the council of the whole church—the General Assembly.

The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of the whole church, it shall keep before it the Marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the Notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303), and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

e. *The Protection of Minority Voices*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) protects the voice of the one from being silenced by the many. Our church protects the rights of dissent and protest for those who disagree with decisions made in councils (*Book of Order*, G-3.0105).

Even as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms the principle that a majority shall govern (F-3.0205), it also “seeks a new openness to the sovereign activity of God, ... in its own membership, ... to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms, ... to God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0404). Frequently, the possibility of this new openness is carried by the same prophetic voices who are repeatedly outvoted in meetings of our councils.

f. *Other Options*

The assembly has a number of other options available to focus its discernment on which matters are important enough to warrant sustained consideration.

A restriction such as proposed in Recommendation 3 might more appropriately be stated within the *Manual of the General Assembly* than in a constitutional amendment, so long as the assembly approves its policy consistent with its constitutional role and obligations, described above.

The assembly, being required to operate in accord with *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (see G-3.0105), can control the best use of its time by its response to motions to approve the docket, by motions to limit debate, by motions to refer worthy but ill-prepared ideas for further study, or to disapprove business that does not convince the assembly of its merits. In addition, our parliamentary standard approves of the use of various additional tools of discernment and ways of crystallizing opinion.

The ACC advises the assembly that the above tools may be more helpful than merely counting concurrences, to the commissioners’ efforts to seek to find and represent the will of Christ (*Book of Order*, F-3.0204).

2. *Recommendation 5.*

Recommendation 5. proposes that G-3.0501 be amended by adding a new paragraph after the formula for the number of commissioners to read as follows:

*“The presbyteries within the geographical boundaries of each synod shall elect, according to a rotation system agreed upon by the presbyteries, one young adult teaching elder commissioner and one young adult ruling elder commissioner, age 36 or younger at the time of the convening of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.”*

*Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) considers young adults as an important constituency of the church. The church has provided an opportunity for the voice and influence of youth and young adults to be expressed at General Assemblies dating back to 1970. One mechanism that has been used over the last several assemblies is representation of youth as youth advisory delegates (YADs) which have had a voice but no vote on the floor of the assembly (see 1970 G-13.0100(1), UPC, 1969, 771, 65, Ref. 18; cf. PCUS, 1979, 123, 178; 1970, 94, 102; UPC, 1973, 466, 64; 1970, 100, 1005; 1969, 771, 65). The participation of advisory delegates (including youth advisory delegates—now “young adult advisory delegates”) is provided for in the Standing Rules of the assembly.

Several issues are raised by the proposed recommendation that would amend G-3.0501 to allow one young adult teaching elder commissioner and one young adult ruling elder commissioner, from each synod through the presbyteries of that synod. The proposed amendment would significantly alter the process by which commissioners are allocated and selected, and the process by which underrepresented voices are included at the assembly.

Section G-3.0501 of the Form of Government provides in part:

The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). *It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds* (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103)... [emphasis added].

It is important to note that this section of the Form of Government was changed to include the requirement that the delegates elected to General Assembly from the presbyteries be “reflective of the diversity within their bounds.” This new requirement would not only affect the young adult commissioners (YACs) but also other diverse constituencies within the bounds of the presbyteries.

The election of commissioners by presbyteries has been a right afforded to the presbyteries under the Constitution, with the manner of election left to the discretion of the presbyteries (former G-13.0102b). Historically there has not been a constraint regarding whom the presbyteries could elect other than the requirement that the delegation consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders. Under the current Form of Government there is an explicit requirement that the delegation “[reflect] ... the diversity [of the] bounds” (G-3.0501). This introduces the potential for a number of competing interests that must be taken into consideration with regard to diversity, of which age—in this case, youth—may be one. Other areas of diversity may include race, ethnicity, disability, and gender. To require the election of two youth representatives from each of the synods would elevate the importance of youth over other underrepresented groups such as racial minorities and women. The ability to elect young adults from presbyteries now exists and well may be required under the revised G-3.0501. The implementation and enforcement of Section G-3.0501 are issues that transcend the issue of young adult commissioners. Is the assembly now required to evaluate each delegation with respect to its compliance with this provision? Do underrepresented groups have the right to raise challenges to delegations that fail to comply with this section? It is noteworthy that no form of enhanced representation or quota has ever been accorded to other underrepresented constituencies of the church, despite the church’s historic and deeply held commitment to diversity and representation.. The right to determine the persons and qualifications to serve as a commissioner has always been the prerogative of the electing presbyteries.

Another issue regarding the amendment of G-3.0501 is the possible involvement of synods in the election by presbyteries of young adult commissioners to the General Assembly, a right afforded exclusively to presbyteries. By providing for the election of commissioners by allocation to synods, and according to a method developed by synods, the presbytery-elected young adult commissioners may arguably be more accurately characterized as synod commissioners than presbytery commissioners.

Finally, the proposed amendment states that the mechanism by which such a process of rotation would be implemented is to be “agreed upon by the presbyteries.” The meaning of this is unclear, and presumably would need to be articulated by the synod and incorporated as a change to its standing rules.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Item 04-01, Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies report, proposes eight recommendations to change the structure of the General Assembly so that more time will be devoted to prayer, Bible study, and community building; that time will be

spent in those activities unique to the church: prayer, singing and Scripture reading; and that the business of the assembly be more focused through greater collaboration among presbyteries and synods.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 04-01 be approved with the following amendments. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

1. Amend Recommendation #1 as follows:

“1. *Regarding the Plenary Sessions of the General Assembly*

“Direct the Committee on the Office of General Assembly to structure the docket of each biennial meeting of the General Assembly to contain plenary sessions focused on prayer, Bible study, and community building[, not to exceed 10 percent of total plenary time in addition to daily worship services.]”

2. Amend Recommendation 3.a. as follows:

“a. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

“Shall G-3.0502 be amended by adding a new section “f.” to read as follows:

“f. *present to meetings of the General Assembly such overtures from presbyteries ~~and synods~~ that have received concurrences from at least [~~10 percent~~] [two] of the presbyteries or, in the case of overtures from a synod, concurrence by 10 percent of the synods.”*

3. Amend Recommendation 3.c. as follows:

“c. Amend Standing Rule A.8.a as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. ~~Any two commissioners may propose an item of new business, known as a commissioners’ resolution, for assembly consideration by delivering it in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two resolutions. An item of new business, in the form of a commissioners’ resolution, must be signed by commissioners representing [~~10 percent~~]-[three] [~~of the~~] presbyteries. Such resolutions must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two such resolutions.~~”

4. Add a new Recommendation 9. to read as follows:

“[9. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to prepare a concise statement for the General Assembly Mission Council (or Presbyterian Mission Agency) for the year between assemblies, to be presented at “Big Tent” or other similar events, addressing timely matters of social witness based on existing policy, on the model of the Church of Scotland’s annual “Address to the Nation.]””

#### *Rationale*

The ACSWP appreciates the work of the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies and the careful analysis it presents. The following considerations we raise arise out of the great value we place on the General Assembly. The assembly is a faith-strengthening experience as emphasized in this item. However, it is also a decision-making body whose deliberative process addresses internal church policy and structures as well as the church’s relationships to local and global society. Through its deliberative process, the assembly carries out the prophetic responsibility of the church to challenge the world with values arising from its biblical faith. With that goal in mind, we present the following considerations.

1. We are concerned that adding more worship and study experiences may constrict the time necessary for good participatory decision-making that can inspire, challenge, and educate both the church and world. This time often includes careful presentations, reflection on submitted documents, and in-depth debate. We absolutely affirm the daily worship of the assembly, which often addresses topics of the day. Thus, we suggest that Recommendation 1 be amended with a way to protect the time needed to communally process significant and complex issues and to reach decisions that enable the church to carry out its historic role of speaking God’s truth to the world as well as to the church. We are also not clear who has the responsibility to provide the additional conference programming sought.

2. We believe that imposing a 10 percent concurrence rule for overtures would have a seriously negative impact. The quality of overtures simply does not correspond to the number of concurrences. Concern for the prophetic imagination makes the ability of a single presbytery to overture the whole assembly seem an important virtue of our democratic system. Requiring one or two concurrences would seem sufficient to ensure broader importance while encouraging the church’s creativity. The process of seeking concurrences through collaboration, however, requires mechanisms and resources for consultation among presbyteries that they may not have and do not have equally. This could result in more “politicking” and “lobbying”

by special-interest groups. Such processes are not necessarily bad, provided self-reporting General Assembly rules still apply to the special-interest “affinity” groups often involved. A further concern is diversity; seeking concurrence has the danger of “diluting” distinctive concerns of presbyteries facing particular issues. Due to the likely reduced number or eliminated role of synods, we do not see a necessary need for concurrence for any synod overtures.

3. We are more inclined to accept a bit more restriction on commissioners’ resolutions. However, while the proposed rule would require more consultation among commissioners, the process of submitting commissioners’ resolutions, the requirement that signers represent 10 percent of presbyteries has some of the dangers described above. As proposed, this requirement would reduce not only the capacity of individual commissioners but restrict the assembly’s ability to receive new business addressing new developments in church and society.

4. From the standpoint of the public witness of the General Assembly, biennial assemblies affect the timeliness of the church’s voice on critical social issues. One strategy to overcome the problems of timelines would be to enhance the connection and visibility of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) or the Presbyterian Mission Agency to the church between assemblies. The proposal here would be received or approved by the GAMC/PMA in an appropriate manner and reported to the following year’s General Assembly and would be a condensed social witness statement to the church, on the lines of the Scottish General Assembly’s annual “Address to the Nation,” which seeks an evangelical concern for the welfare of the whole nation.

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### GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 04-01

*Comment on Item 04-01—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

#### 1. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 1*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 04-01, Recommendation 1, and offers the following comment:

Regarding the *Plenary Sessions of the General Assembly*, recommendation affects the inclusion of prayer, Bible study, and community building within sessions of the plenary. It is important to GACOR that the assembly and COGA remain alert and take into consideration that worship and community building needs to be inclusive and accessible, and that these sessions will be designed to take representation issues into concern. For example, recent assemblies have chosen means of communicating worship materials that are not accessible to all. Using projected screens alone for liturgy or music when persons are standing, moving, or sitting in rows that are not ranked to allow for height differences, or have other challenges to see the screens means fewer are participating in worship. The GACOR encourages planners to include participation and access issues into the process with the committee on local arrangements, facilities, and partners.

#### 2. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 3*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 04-01, Recommendation 3, and offers the following comment:

Regarding *Concurrences for Overtures and Commissioners’ Resolutions*, Recommendation 3 would dramatically increase the barriers to submitting items of business (overtures and commissioners resolutions) to an assembly. Commissioners have rarely had difficulty in discerning what are the weighty matters before them and what items require less of their time. The proposed changes would prevent all items of business from being heard at the 220th General Assembly (2012) as no overture has reached the level of having 10 percent of presbyteries (or synods) concurring—for presbyteries it would require 18. The most concurrences received, as of May 15, according to PC-biz.org, was four presbyteries on a single overture (while related families of overtures do garner a few more, none receive 18 with agreement on an issue). The GACOR views this recommendation as absolutely contrary to the principles of representation and participation in the PC(USA). A great strength of Presbyterian polity is allowing space for the Holy Spirit to move within a congregation who may take it to larger councils for further discernment. It provides for voices of dissent to be heard and access for commissioners in the minority on issues of concern to raise questions for the consideration of the wider church. Requiring this level of concurrences goes against the experience of inclusiveness and representation and promotes greater politicization of the assembly meeting, encouraging the stronger lobbying activities of affinity and advocacy groups within our communion in order to get concerns raised for consideration. No longer would the single congregation be able to suggest an issue of discussion, having been heard and approved by its presbytery. This recommendation would significantly alter access and provide a significant barrier to congregations wishing to bring concerns before the body for discussion and discernment of the will of God for the Church. Participation would be diminished in drastic ways.

#### 3. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 4*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the following comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 4:

Regarding the *Assembly's Plenary Consent Agenda*, Recommendation 4 will mandate the use of consent agendas in the business meeting of the assembly. Constituencies that GACOR advocate for are wary of “omnibus motions” and consent agendas as experience has demonstrated that these means are ways the majorities may violate the rights of marginalized groups. If the assembly goes forward with this recommendation, GACOR would caution that every effort be made to give notice and allow access for commissioners who wish to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. The ability for all commissioners and advisory delegates to participate in decision-making and in the discernment of the Spirit's will for the church may be adversely affected by these time-saving changes. Protecting the rights and privileges of commissioners and advisory delegates who find themselves in the minority is an essential identifying aspect of what it means to be Presbyterian.

#### 4. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 5*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the following comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 5:

Regarding *Young Adult Commissioners*, Recommendation 5 suggests the creation of thirty-two young adult commissioners (who would be persons under the age of 36 at the time of the assembly). The GACOR commends the committee for considering options for including more young people in the decision-making process of General Assembly with voice and vote. Having evaluated the pools of persons selected by their presbyteries to serve as commissioners, the GACOR recognizes how very many ways commissioners are selected and lifts up for your consideration the reality that it is very rare (sometimes one per assembly out of nearly 700) for commissioners to be elected who are under the age of 25 and not too much more frequent when commissioners are selected who are under the age of 35. This reality may be a negative consequence of the young adult advisory delegate positions each presbytery has (aged 17–24, many are ordained ruling elders and some have been teaching elders). While we appreciate the creative thinking the special committee did to encourage greater participation of young adults as commissioners, the proposed recommendation leaves much to be desired.

The GACOR met with the special committee and challenged them to be bold. After ten years of analyzing commissioner selection trends in presbyteries, GACOR encouraged the special committee to consider eliminating the young adult advisory delegate designation and replace that position with young adult commissioners (with voice and vote), one per presbytery (just as YAADs are distributed now). With slight adjustments of the age categories (we proposed 18–30 years of age), this would have a profound influence on the age distribution of commissioners, give greater responsibility and access to young adults, while not increasing the cost of the assembly and increasing the minimum number of commissioners per presbytery from two to three. If it be the will of commissioners to approve 04-01, Recommendation 5, there will be increased costs added to each General Assembly, while it does not significantly increase the number of persons under the age of 35 serving as commissioners and complicates the selection process of these commissioners by giving to presbyteries within geographic bounds of synods, (which may or may not be councils after the action of this assembly and the majority vote of presbyteries), the burden of working out how they will distribute the opportunity for these two additional commissioners each assembly. The reality is that most synods (exceptions are Puerto Rico and Southwest) have more than ten presbyteries within their bounds. That means if this opportunity rotates to each presbytery, that council does not get to select the additional two young adult commissioners again for a minimum of twenty years.

#### 5. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendations 6 and 7*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 04-01, Recommendations 6 and 7, and offers the following comment:

The GACOR concurs that Recommendation 6 does not hinder the election process, nor is it expected to affect representation, participation, or inclusiveness. Regarding the removal of nominating speeches for the Office of Moderator (Recommendation 7), we concur with the recommendation and rationale and see no affect on representation and participation.

#### 6. *Comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 8*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the 220th General Assembly the following comment on Item 04-01, Recommendation 8:

Recent assembly action opened up the possibility of using means of discernment other than *Robert's Rules of Order* for decision-making and deliberation in assembly committees. In the wake of that change, the GACOR has been curious about what impact new processes may have on participation. In 2010, GACOR began an experiment using a new tool to discover if there is a relationship between the process used and any resulting patterns of participation. For the second time, GACOR is gathering data through “process observation” of what happens and who participates in the decision-making processes within committees during the 220th General Assembly (2012). We will provide a report to the Stated Clerk about any patterns that may emerge and the impact different means of deliberation had on participation. The GACOR will be able to expand this work to include evaluating and recommending alternate processes to the assembly with encouragement and support. Assisting in investigating new means for decision-making processes and making recommendation to the Stated Clerk and assemblies is a continuation of their advising role.

#### 04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES

If it be the will of commissioners and the assembly to approve Recommendation 8, GACOR respectfully requests that the Biennial Review Group be directed to work with GACOR in this task. As GACOR refines ways to measure the impact choices among decision-making processes has, they can be a helpful partner in the work. For now we are recruiting multiple observers widely from diverse communities within the PC(USA), for each assembly, and working on improving the data collected and its quality. We are excited to be doing a second round of this work at the 220th General Assembly (2012) and are eager to learn more about the ways in which “how we decide” impacts “who decides.”

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*



## Item 05-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-01. See pp. 20, 21.]

*On Amending G-3.0301, G-3.0403c., and G-3.0502e. to Enable Flexible Boundaries within or Beyond the Bounds of an Existing Presbytery—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall the first paragraph of G-3.0301 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district~~ *the communities engaged by the congregations and teaching elders which compose that presbytery.* The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of ruling elders serving as moderators of committees or commissions.”

2. Shall G-3.0403c be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking~~ *Other such* actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created.”

3. Strike the text of G-3.0502e:

~~“e. approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries.”~~

### *Rationale*

The purpose of striking this language is to provide flexibility to meet the changing needs of diverse presbyteries by expanding the use of alternate presbytery structures beyond the exclusive use of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations to foster innovation across the church.

It allows synods flexibility to assist presbyteries to respond to rapidly changing regional dynamics that might allow for mission outreach and church planting restricted by the current method of defining boundaries of a presbytery.

It supports the context and spirit of the new Form of Government, which attempts to provide a more flexible framework for the future work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

It allows for more innovative structures in mission, staff procurement, and relationship building, opening possibilities for presbyteries to work in creative, innovative ways.

It provides an opportunity to promote discussion about the unity and diversity of the work of presbyteries.

The purpose of striking General Assembly approval in G-30502e is to streamline the launching of new initiatives, as current biennial assemblies may delay any initiatives for more than two years.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-01

*Advice on Item 05-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 05-01.

### *Rationale*

Item 05-01 would change the G-3.0301 definition of presbyteries by removing their geographical bounds (“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congre-

gations and teaching elders within that district. ...”) and substituting a non-geographic description of each presbytery as being “the communities engaged by the congregations and teaching elders which compose that presbytery.”

Additionally, Item 05-01 would amend G-3.0403c to permit synods to create non-geographic presbyteries for missional purposes other than to meet the needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations without requiring General Assembly approval, and would amend G-3.0502 by deleting the General Assembly charge to approve “the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0502e).

The purpose of Item 05-01 is to provide flexibility for diverse presbyteries by means of a faster and more local determination of presbytery boundaries so as to allow for “more innovative structures in mission, staff procurement, and relationship building.” The means to do this proposed by Item 05-01 raises several constitutional issues.

An historic and foundational understanding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is that the church is called into being as a community whose true unity is in Jesus Christ (*Book of Order*, F-1.0302a). The missional diversity of congregations within a presbytery cannot negate that unity but is expressive of this church as a missional body within the whole Church as it seeks to be united with Christ in the power of the Spirit (*Book of Order*, F-1.0401). The presbyteries are assigned responsibility and power to develop strategy for the mission of the church in their geographical districts (*Book of Order*, G-3.0303a), with each congregation in those strategies and any mission partnerships to be “engaged in the mission of God in its particular context” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0101). Through its synods, the church exercises its responsibilities and powers for the presbyteries active in mission in geographic proximity to one another and “... assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church ...” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301c).

While the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has provided for non-geographic presbyteries, that has been approved only within the limited framework of the mission needs of racial ethnic and immigrant congregations (*Book of Order*, G-3.0403c), and then only following review of how language and culture so define the particular context in which the racial ethnic and immigrant congregations are engaged in mission that there is missional need to include them in less geographically bounded presbyteries. It is finally the whole church, through the action of the General Assembly, which must approve a synod’s creation of a non-geographic presbytery; this is not a regional decision alone.

In defining a presbytery as “the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within the communities engaged by the congregations and teaching elders which compose that presbytery,” Item 05-01 provides for the possibility that presbyteries could overlap because they would be bounded by their congregations’ and teaching elders’ missional spheres of “engagement” rather than by geographic lines. This would result in a potential for confusion or at least reduced clarity about responsibilities and accountability in the church’s mission. Approving a presbytery’s boundaries as being in accordance with its mission program could also provide for gaps in the church’s jurisdiction in a given region.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that ecclesiastical relocation of one or more congregations from one presbytery to another necessarily must have an impact on the fellowship, order, and mission commitments of the congregations of both the original presbytery and also the new presbytery of membership. Item 05-01 does not provide for the participation of those fellow congregations in evaluating the need for the ecclesiastical relocation of a congregation that is otherwise remaining in place, for reviewing a congregation’s request for membership, or for a consistent set of standards for synod consideration of that impact.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) wishes to accomplish the stated intent of Item 05-01, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly instead answer with its response to Recommendations 6a and 6b of the Report of the Mid Council Commission (Rec-004), and refers the assembly to the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on that recommendation.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 05-01.

#### *Rationale*

Non-geographic presbyteries have been formed when language, culture, or a sure loss of representation in a context of segregation have moved the church to just decisions to form spaces and structures that assured representation and voice for a variety of racial ethnic constituencies. The church’s awareness of the power of racism, and/or the inability of the church when these presbyteries were formed to accommodate and hear the voices of ruling and teaching elders who were fluent primarily or solely in a language other than English, put in motion the processes that resulted in the formation of a variety of nongeographic presbyteries, starting in the 19th century and continuing to our time.

At the time of reunion, it was assumed that all nongeographic presbyteries would soon be realigned (see The Articles of Agreement 7.6–7.7). Many nongeographic presbyteries have realigned. Those that did not were permitted to continue as nongeographic presbyteries, either because of a continuing situation of racial and cultural tension or because of language barriers that were hard to meaningfully transcend. Today, there are five nongeographic presbyteries in the PC(USA)—Dakota, Hanmi, Midwest Hanmi, Eastern Korean, and Atlantic Korean-American. A move to form another nongeographic Korean-language presbytery that came to the 219th General Assembly (2010) was approved in committee and came to the floor, but failed when commissioners both Korean American and non-Korean American rose to speak to the primacy of the historic Presbyterian value of diversity, even in cases where continuing language barriers make communication and representation difficult.

It is clear from this history, then, that the formation of nongeographic presbyteries has occurred when barriers of language or racism have rendered life and ministry together so difficult that the church in its wisdom has allowed what has always been an extraordinary circumstance to take place.

Now, there is a new call to form nongeographic presbyteries. This new call does not arise from barriers of language and racism that are difficult to transcend, but because people who agree with each other on issues of theology or polity find it so difficult to be a friend to their colleagues in ministry with whom they disagree that they are moved to sever relationships of proximity and form new relationships based on like-mindedness and affinity.

While our history does provide a framework for the formation of nongeographic presbyteries, there is no historical precedent for forming nongeographic governing bodies that gather teaching elders, ruling elders, and congregations on the sole basis of agreement. The argument that our unity will be strengthened by not having to work or meet together cannot be sustained on the basis of history, theology, or Scripture. Making a value of positivity cannot outweigh that which is lost in a diversity of perspectives called together by God to help in the often-difficult process of discerning the Spirit's leading. The hope for greater flexibility, innovation, and creativity in mission and ministry cannot find strong foundation in our inability to work together and find ways to serve together despite our differences. We can find no basis on which the arguments put forward for allowing the formation of nongeographic presbyteries based on affinity of position can be sustained.

## Item 05-02

**[The assembly answered Item 05-02 by the action taken on Item 05-12, Recommendations 1.–4. See pp. 20, 21.]**

*On Creating a Committee on Synod Boundaries—From the Presbytery of St. Andrew.*

The Presbytery of St. Andrew overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to dismiss the Commission on Middle Governing Bodies with thanks for its members' faithful service and work, and create a Committee on Synod Boundaries composed of one teaching elder and one ruling elder appointed by each existing synod (to be initially convened by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and then to elect its own moderator) that is directed to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) a recommendation for new synod boundaries replacing the current sixteen synods with six to eight synods.

### *Rationale*

#### A. *Regional Mission and Witness*

The first duty of all councils of our church is to participate in God's "mission for the transformation of creation and humanity" (F-1.01); furthermore, "councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ" (G-3.0101).

Because synods provide a broader base for mission than is usually available to individual presbyteries, synods have historically seized opportunities to plan, promote, and perform regionally based mission that would not be possible without the pooled energy, resources, and oversight of a larger body than a single presbytery.

The Synod of Living Waters, for example, developed its global mission project—*Living Waters for the World*—more than fifteen years ago to train, equip, and support congregations and presbyteries in the Deep South for taking small-scale, community sized clean water systems to communities in need. This project has enhanced the mission of many congregations and presbyteries and created the opportunity for them to send teams throughout the world. This mission training project has now expanded far beyond the boundaries of the Synod of Living Waters, empowering many congregations—both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian—to bring Good News and clean water into twenty-three countries, to date.

Significantly, the training and equipping model developed by *Living Waters for the World* has now been adopted by the Synod of the Sun, which has developed its *Solar Under the Sun* program for training and equipping congregations to bring affordable solar power to those in need.

While it is certainly possible for these and other such programs to continue if their sponsoring synods are no longer councils of our church, there will be no future regionally *mandated* missional conversation as now exists by the requirement for synods to meet at least biennially, and therefore the likelihood of the development of any *new* regional mission programs such as these examples is highly unlikely. The reality is that without the broad base of support a synod provides, these successful mission projects would not have taken root and grown.

Synods have the opportunity to design and delve into ministry and mission endeavors specific to the demographics and demonstrated needs of their particular regions. Early historic examples of such ministries in our country include the establishment of hospitals and schools, as well as mission efforts with and for racial ethnic and immigrant groups within a region. In the latter case, it has been the existence of a “critical mass” of population at the synod level that has facilitated an efficient and effective witness that would simply not have been possible within the bounds of one or two presbyteries. Synods have been and continue to be that council of the church especially tailored for the conducting of advocacy and justice ministries for ethnic minority groups within the church, as well as for championing and coordinating the church’s witness in higher education among PC(USA)-related schools and colleges and on public university and college campuses.

Another very important role of synods has been supporting presbyteries in the transformation of congregations. The health of congregations is key to the health of the entire denomination. Synods can and have worked directly with presbyteries in their efforts to strengthen the mission and ministry of their congregations. In this way, presbyteries in less populated, more rural areas, have opportunities to participate more directly in ministry efforts to immigrant fellowships in urban areas within their synod’s bounds—while large, urban presbyteries have opportunities to participate more directly in ministries of compassion, justice, and transformation in rural and economically challenged regions of their synod.

#### B. *Mutual Accountability for Regional Adaptive Work*

Rather than viewing the practice of the Christian faith as a purely individual matter, Reformed Christians practice their faith together, in community. A significant historic role of church councils in the Reformed tradition is to provide the accountability that is necessary in a large, diverse Christian community like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

At the same time, as distinct from forms of church government in which authority is exercised downward from the few to the many, the Presbyterian form of government assumes that accountability is exercised with mutuality—government by those who are governed (or their chosen representatives).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is simply too large geographically to exist without *some* form of regional governing presence. And the proposal to create that presence by means of regional administrative commissions (of the General Assembly), while economically enticing, creates a situation in which the governed are no longer the ones who choose those to whom they are immediately accountable—since the regional commissions will necessarily be elected by the full General Assembly, rather than by those from within the regions over which their authority will be exercised.

In this time of enormous change in the life of our church, we are working at every level of organization to do the absolutely essential adaptive work that will result in a healthy and vital 21st century church. In the last century, it was determined that our church’s mission demanded the formation of non-geographic presbyteries to help welcome certain immigrant and racial ethnic groups into our denomination. Today, some are suggesting that the road to renewed vitality and health will require us to think differently about geographic boundaries and jurisdictions of our presbyteries generally. Such conversations and explorations will be *infinitely* more difficult without the existence of synods as councils—and again, will place the decisions about approving any proposed realignments (not to mention the work of *strategizing* about the merits and viability of such proposals) in the hands of commissions not elected by those directly affected, and not directly affected by the decisions they make.

While we do not know fully what our church will look like in the decades ahead or how it will be organized, if it is to be a Reformed church, then it must continue to faithfully embody the essentials of not only Reformed faith, but also Reformed polity. Simply put, we believe that removing our church’s *regional* councils, while retaining its *national* council, gives the General Assembly too much authority, and removes governance too far from those who are governed.

#### C. *Conclusion*

Without question, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a denominational structure that was designed for a church that no longer exists. But we believe that a better approach would be to retain our current—and historic—structure of four councils, while reducing the *number* of synod councils, creating a sustainable regional structure for the decades ahead because roughly twice as many presbyteries would be able to pool their resources to fund each synod’s structure—which could, in fact, be quite minimal. We further believe that such a structure and issues related to funding it should be addressed by a gathering of presbyters elected directly from the existing synods, and that their goal should be to design a structure that reduces the number of synods by at least one-half.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-02 from the Presbyteries of Mid-Kentucky, Pittsburgh, South Alabama, and North Alabama.**

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-02**

*Advice on Item 05-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that there are no constitutional issues at stake in the formation of a committee or commission by the General Assembly. The assembly is empowered to do so by G-3.0109.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution draws attention to the fact that a committee's actions are reported to the council that created it, and its recommendations shall require approval of that council.

The requirement of the present overture that any recommendation of the committee be brought back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) is consistent with the requirement of G-3.0502d that the General Assembly is given responsibility for "organizing new synods, or dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining previously existing synods or portions of synods."

The committee further notes that this matter is closely related to issues being addressed in the report of the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils, and the General Assembly's response to this overture should be consistent with its response to that report and its recommendations.

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-02**

*Advice and Counsel on item 05-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 05-02.

*Rationale*

The item seeks a middle ground, between the elimination of synods suggested by the Mid Council Commissions Report and retaining the current structure and number of synods. Retaining synods would assist with the retention of racial ethnic ministry structures, many of which have traditionally been stronger at the synod than at the presbytery level. Additionally, the argument made in the overture regarding innovative mission projects that are made possible by presbyteries working together is compelling.

**Item 05-03**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 05-03. See pp. 20, 21.]**

*On Amending G-5.05a Regarding a Session's Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-5.05a be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“Such joint witnesses shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination involved. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the congregational council shall petition the next higher councils or governing bodies to resolve the conflict. In instances in which the constitutions of the denominations involved contain mandatory yet conflicting provisions, the individual congregation shall retain the express right to determine, through its session, which one of these will be the authoritative ruling standard for that congregation.”~~

*Rationale*

The existing wording of G-5.05a mandates a process that provides little chance of success in resolving conflicting mandatory provisions between constitutional standards held by union congregations. In reality, current practice is simplistic, unrealistic, and inadequate: it assumes easy, rapid resolution to conflicts, yet provides no viable way of resolving conflicting decisions that emanate from higher governing bodies/councils.

While the simplistic wording in G-5.05a might be interpreted as implying that conflicts between mandatory provisions within constitutions may be quickly and easily resolved through referral to the next higher council, in fact this is very unlikely. A more plausible scenario is that each of the next higher councils simply would declare only their own particular constitu-

tional standard to be binding, thus affording an inquiring union congregation neither resolution nor further recourse or appeal. Furthermore, such deliberations could take extended periods of time, potentially locking the individual congregation in a state of ambiguity, frustration, and inaction that might hinder or cause irreparable damage to its unity and witness.

Throughout its entire history, the Presbyterian church has displayed strong, genuine, and justified confidence in its member congregations' ability to faithfully follow God's call to new life and anointed mission. The church has frequently declared and affirmed the Spirit's leading in the course of making decisions and shaping its life and mission. If such declarations are more than empty boasts—if they in fact truly reflect genuine faith and deep confidence—there should be little concern or problem in granting union congregations the express right to choose between conflicting provisions. Indeed the strongest, clearest testimony to the church's trust in the Holy Spirit and confidence in its congregations might well be granting to each union congregation the freedom and right to determine, for and by itself, the appropriate and fitting constitutional standard that best reflects its faith and aids its mission to glorify God and expand the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-03

*Advice on Item 05-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 05-03.

#### *Rationale*

Item 05-03 would amend G-5.05a on resolving conflict between mandatory provisions of the denominational standards governing congregations in joint witness (formerly, “union” or “federated” churches).

In that the Christian witness of two or more congregations of different denominations serving jointly in mission is by its nature informed and ordered by two or more constitutions or sets of standards, there is the potential for those constitutions to differ on one or more points. When such differences involve mandatory provisions, the Form of Government requires the governing council of the congregation to petition the higher councils of each denomination to review and resolve those differences:

Such joint witnesses shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination involved. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the congregational council shall petition the next higher councils or governing bodies to resolve the conflict. (*Book of Order*, G-5.05a)

This gradated jurisdiction expresses the historic principles of church government central to presbyterian polity that were adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1797:

That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies [councils], till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority. (See *Book of Order*, footnote at F-3.02, Principles of Presbyterian Government.)

These principles together demonstrate that the church is one body, having both unity and diversity within and among its parts. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds these principles to be foundational for its organization; it derives and restates from them the basic provisions of order in F-3.0201 through F-3.0209 to articulate the connectionalism of the interdependent structures of the PC(USA).

As described in the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government adopted by the 195th General Assembly (1983):

Presbyterian polity seeks to express the wholeness and unity of the church by insisting upon the interrelatedness of all the parts. Each congregation, for example, is but one part of the whole. The limited vision and often quite homogeneous composition of any single congregation needs the balance of perspective and broader inclusion of the other governing bodies. Particular congregations are a necessity for the function of the whole church but they are to be understood “as a local expression of the universal church.” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153)

If a congregation in joint witness has conflicting constitutional mandates, the historic principle that the next larger body of the church should resolve the conflict continues to apply, with the efforts of the denominations informed by the same ecumenical respect for each other's constitutional order that suggested and permitted the original agreement to enter into joint witness.

That Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commitment to ecumenicity is specifically affirmed in G-5.0101, which states that this church “at all levels seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ and will be open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical groups. It will seek to initiate, maintain, and strengthen relations with other Reformed and Christian entities.” Councils of this church are not independent in their ecumenical relations but participate in them on behalf of the whole church. A congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) “... is not of itself

a sufficient form of the church ...” (G-1.01) but, organized under the authority of a presbytery and functioning under the PC(USA) Constitution, participates in the whole church. For a PC(USA) congregation in joint witness to disregard the responsibility of the partner denominations in joint witness to work together to resolve conflicting constitutional mandates would be to depart from basic principles of presbyterian governance and from the ecumenical spirit and commitments of this denomination.

Item 05-03 is presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012) as an amendment to permit congregations in joint witness the “express right to determine, through their session(s)” which denominational standard should be followed by that congregation when mandatory provisions of their applicable constitutions conflict. Such amendment would permit a session to exempt its congregation from a mandatory provision in the absence of language in that mandatory provision expressly permitting a process for such an exemption. That this action would be specifically “for that congregation” and be intended to support and serve only its joint mission would not change the fact that a congregation would be empowered to depart from the Constitution independently of the whole church. Given that the “express right” would be exercised at the discretion of the session whenever it would determine that there were conflicting mandatory provisions of the constitutions of the partners in joint witness, there could be multiple local departures from the PC(USA) Constitution.

Item 05-03 is proposed as a means to improve upon G-5.0505a by making the resolution of conflicting mandatory constitutional provisions something that could be accomplished with more efficiency. This indicates an assumption that the next higher councils or governing bodies of churches in joint witness must necessarily take such time in their ecumenical responsibility that the congregation’s unity and witness in mission would be damaged by the due process of G-5.0505a. The church has addressed such a concern about its constitutional procedures for resolving differences more generally, with acknowledgment of the perspective of those who feel that the resolution they seek can and should be arrived at promptly:

The church follows the intention of its own polity, with careful study of Scripture and a sincere desire to be obedient to its Lord. As Presbyterians, we believe that taking seriously our own “Form of Government” and applying it to particular situations with integrity and caution is the best way to assure that God’s will for us will be discerned.

The imperfections and errors of the church are usually quite clear to those within who are impatient with the slow processes by which the church rectifies past mistakes or with the reluctance of the church to take a particular action. Such concern and impatience are signs of passionate conviction. Yet the careful and sometimes tedious processes of our polity have been designed out of the historical experience of the church as it has sought to deal with conflict. (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 152, report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government)

When the church through a presbytery approves “creation of a joint witness between congregations of this denomination and congregations of other Christian churches that recognize Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, accept the authority of Scripture, and observe the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper” (*Book of Order*, G-5.05), it does so prayerfully and with a constitutional responsibility for resolving conflict of contradictory constitutional mandates. Failure of the immediate next level of the church to fulfill that responsibility adequately in terms of the joint witness of a congregation can be addressed by such existing constitutional means as special administrative review or remedial judicial process.

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-03

*Comment on Item 05-03—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 05-03 presents the following issue that the assembly should consider:

A joint congregational witness between a PC(USA) congregation and one or more Christian churches is created when the mission strategy of a presbytery requires it (*Book of Order*, G-5.05). So while a congregation can express a desire to be part of a joint congregational witness, presbytery action, in light of a presbytery’s strategy for mission, is necessary for its creation. Item 05-03 would give a congregation, through its session, “the express right to determine” which one of the denominations’ constitutional provisions “will be the authoritative ruling standard for that congregation” when there are conflicting mandatory provisions. This would prevent each of the denominations’ next higher councils or governing bodies, including the presbytery whose strategy for mission led to the creation of the joint congregational witness, from exercising their current authority to resolve the conflict.

The *Book of Order*, F-3.0206, states, “a higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal.” Further, F-3.0203 notes, “all councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution.” Indeed, our polity envisions a system of unity, mutuality, and accountability where councils communicate, collaborate, and work together to make important decisions impacting the faith and mission of the church. Our polity presupposes a fellowship of love and trust that is lived out in shared relationship with one another and where important constitutional matters are not decided unilaterally, but where lower councils work with higher councils to prayerfully discern the mind of Christ together, communicating with them and helping them understand how conflicting constitutional provisions may impact their congregation’s faith and mission in a given context, as well as the mission of the presbytery. It is through dialogue and working together through such difficult decisions that congregations and their presbyteries can help the whole

church understand more fully what it means for us to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (F-1.0301). Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider whether such action in Item 05-03 is a departure from and contrary to the Historic Principles of Presbyterian Government including F-3.0206 and the principal where “the larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller” (F-3.0203).

## Item 05-04

**[The assembly disapproved Item 05-04. See pp. 20, 21.]**

*On Amending G-5.0401 Regarding a Union Presbytery’s Right to Decide Between Conflicting Mandates—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-5.0401 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The union presbytery shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination represented in the union. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, any mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases where the others are permissive. ~~Where there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the union presbytery shall overture the highest council or governing body of the denominations involved to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment.~~ *In instances in which the constitutions of the denominations involved contain mandatory yet conflicting provisions, the union presbytery shall retain the express right to determine, for and by itself, which one of these will be the authoritative ruling standard for that presbytery.*”

### ***Rationale***

The existing wording in G-5.0401 mandates a process that provides little chance of success in resolving conflicting mandatory provisions between constitutional standards held by union presbyteries. In reality, current practice is simplistic, unrealistic, and inadequate: it assumes easy, rapid resolution to conflicts, yet provides no viable way of resolving conflicting decisions that emanate from higher governing bodies/councils.

While the simplistic wording in G-5.0401 might be interpreted as implying that conflicts between mandatory provisions within constitutions may be quickly and easily resolved through referral to the next higher council, in fact this is very unlikely. A more plausible scenario is that each of the next higher councils simply would declare only their own particular constitutional standard to be binding, thus affording an inquiring union presbytery neither resolution nor further recourse or appeal. Furthermore, such deliberations could take extended periods of time, potentially locking the individual presbytery in ambiguity that may hinder and even damage its unity and witness.

Throughout its entire history, the Presbyterian church has displayed strong, genuine, and justified confidence in its member councils’ ability to faithfully follow God’s call to new life and anointed mission. The church has frequently declared and affirmed the Spirit’s leading as it makes decisions and shapes its life and mission. If such declarations are more than empty boasts—if they in fact truly reflect genuine faith and deep confidence—there should be little concern or problem in granting union presbyteries the express right to choose between conflicting provisions. Indeed the strongest, clearest testimony to the church’s trust in the Holy Spirit and confidence in its congregations might well be granting to each union presbytery/council the freedom and right to determine, for and by itself, the appropriate and fitting constitutional standard that best reflects its faith and aids its mission to glorify God and expand the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-04**

*Advice on Item 05-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 05-04.

### ***Rationale***

Item 05-04 would amend G-5.0401 on resolving conflict between mandatory provisions of the denominational standards governing union presbyteries. It proposes that “[i]n instances in which the constitutions of the denominations involved contain mandatory yet conflicting provisions, the union presbytery shall retain the express right to determine, for and by itself, which one of these will be the authoritative ruling standard for that presbytery.”



In allowing a union presbytery to determine for itself which denomination's constitutional provision should apply when mandatory standards conflict, this amendment would violate the Historic Principles of Church Government adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1797:

That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies [councils], till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority. (See *Book of Order*, footnote at F-3.02, Principles of Presbyterian Government.)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds these principles to be foundational for its organization, and has restated them as basic provisions of order in F-3.0201 through F-3.0209 to articulate the connectionalism of the interdependent structures of this church. To be a council of the PC(USA) is to participate in its life within this constitutional gradation that includes all sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly.

If a presbytery becomes a union presbytery, as a council of the PC(USA) it does so in expression of the constitutional provisions for its embodiment of the church's commitment to ecumenicity:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ and will be open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical groups. It will seek to initiate, maintain, and strengthen relations with other Reformed and Christian entities. (*Book of Order*, G-5.0101)

However, when a plan of union for a presbytery and a comparable council or governing body of another Reformed body is approved by the presbytery's synod and by the General Assembly, the presbytery remains an integral part of the PC(USA). The union presbytery is not separated out from the church and relegated to connection in name only; rather, through it the church develops a new relationship within the whole body of Christ. With its new ecumenical character the presbytery continues in its mission as a council governed by specific constitutional procedures such as the conflict-resolution provision in G-5.0401 and also by the historic foundational principles of order and governance in F-3.0201 through F-3.0209.

Item 05-04, favoring efficiency, proposes to improve upon the procedure in G-5.0401 for resolving conflict between mandatory constitutional provisions by leaving the wider church and the partner denomination(s) out of the review and approval processes for amending the union presbytery's constitutional governance. Such constitutional independence in resolving conflicts is inconsistent with Presbyterian order.

The Form of Government does assist potential union presbyteries in preparing to meet potential constitutional conflicts in that it requires that there be "adoption of a plan of union by two-thirds vote of each presbytery or governing body that is party to the union. The synod and/or governing body having jurisdiction over each of the uniting bodies shall approve the plan of union" (*Book of Order*, G-5.0402) as well as approval by the General Assembly (G-3.0502e). A presbytery contemplating mission as a union presbytery has an opportunity to enhance the efficiency of the resolution of possible future constitutional conflicts when it prepares for synod approval, with its potential partner(s), a plan of union developed out of faithful and objective discussion of the two or more constitutions under which the union presbytery is to function. Experience in communication between the would-be partners and mutual knowledge of each other's order and mission, including exploration of any areas of acknowledged differences, are one means provided for in the Form of Government for helping prevent or resolve constitutional conflicts. Additionally, a failure of the immediate next level of the church to fulfill that responsibility adequately in support of the union presbytery's life and mission can be addressed by such existing constitutional means as special administrative review or remedial judicial process.

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#### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-04

*Comment on Item 05-04—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 05-04 presents the following issue that the assembly should consider:

Currently, a "... presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may unite to form a union presbytery with one or more comparable councils or governing bodies, each of which is a member of another Reformed body, with the approval of the synod ..." (G-5.04). Item 05-04 holds when there are conflicting mandatory provisions between the union presbytery's denominations' constitutions, this overture would give to the presbytery "the express right to determine, for and by itself, which one of these will be the authoritative ruling standard for that presbytery." It would remove from each of the denominations' highest council or governing body their current authority to resolve the conflict.

The *Book of Order*, F-3.0206, states, "a higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal." Further, F-3.0203 notes, "all councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as

provided in this Constitution.” Indeed, our polity envisions a system of unity, mutuality, and accountability where councils communicate, collaborate, and work together to make important decisions impacting the faith and mission of the church. Our polity presupposes a fellowship of love and trust that is lived out in shared relationship with one another and where important constitutional matters are not decided unilaterally, but where lower councils work with higher councils to prayerfully discern the mind of Christ together, communicating with them and helping them understand how conflicting constitutional provisions may impact their faith and mission in a given context. It is through dialogue and working together through such difficult decisions that presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly can help the whole church understand more fully what it means for us to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (F-1.0301). Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider whether such action in Item 05-04 is a departure from and contrary to the Historic Principles of Presbyterian government including F-3.0206 and the principal where “the larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller” (*Book of Order*, F-3.0203).

## Item 05-05

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-05. See pp. 20, 21.]

*On Adding G-3.0301d to Clarify the Right of Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-3.0301 be amended by inserting a new section “d.” in order to clarify the right to freedom of conscience for individual congregations. The new section “d.” shall read as follows:

*“d. A presbytery may receive congregations as member churches any congregation that petitions for membership regardless of whether or not that congregation lies within the geographical boundaries of the presbytery. A congregation may petition a presbytery to join it upon a two-thirds vote of those members attending at a regularly called congregational meeting. The presbytery shall vote to receive the congregation at its next regularly scheduled meeting by a majority vote of those attending.”*

### ***Rationale***

#### 1. *The Amendment Is Needed*

This amendment, which allows for porous boundaries of a presbytery, is needed to continue and deepen our connectional heritage. Our denomination is struggling in its communal life, theological understanding, and missional and social witness. While there are disagreements over cause, reasons, and severity, we are losing members and are increasingly torn by controversy and deep disagreement. We struggle to maintain and advance our mission, while embroiled in internal issues. Debates over ordination standards, authority of Scripture, the person of Christ, and the nature and limits of salvation (to name just a few) have all but completely occupied our attention for decades. These debates, often bitter and rancorous, have damaged our unity and troubled our peace. We are not only losing members but whole congregations who feel they no longer belong in the communion, hold its values, or share its language even when the words are the same.

Our experience, and the experience of the churches that desire to unite with the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, is that in spite of some shared theological language and vocabulary, there is a vast and growing divide within the PC(USA). There can be no denying that members of the PC(USA) on both sides of the debates perceive and believe that those “across the aisle” are speaking a very different language of faith and community.

The effect of all this is that the church is moving rapidly from diversity to division. What was a tendency five years ago has become a trend. More churches are withdrawing, some informally, some formally. Increasingly per capita contributions to governing bodies are being withheld or redirected. Mission funds, special offerings, and contributions are being diverted outside the PC(USA) at a heightened rate.

It is a challenge to maintain union with those who are headed toward disunion. How do we retain and maintain a viable communion among disaffected congregations? How can we remain together in ministry and mission in an age where locale no longer dictates our connection? The culture of the church is no longer defined by regional allegiance. Something broader and better must take its place.

With our recent votes on changes to the *Book of Order* and ordination standards, a new wave of congregations is now considering leaving the PC(USA). We view this as a tragedy that can be avoided. We seek to permit porous presbyteries where neighboring churches can transfer their membership.

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara, through this amendment, seeks to retain as many churches as possible by providing a way of living together in peace, unity, and purity. We also hope to reclaim some congregations that have previously united with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Some of these churches are reportedly less than satisfied with that decision because they have a commitment to greater connectionalism and the full inclusion of women.

## 2. *The Amendment Is Missional*

It is essential that any presbytery be focused on a positive vision of mission. Therefore, establishing porous presbyteries that will then consist of congregations and leaders who commit to:

- Following Christ in mission, cultivating fellowships that wish to start new churches, innovative ministries and leadership development that will result in healthy and reproducing churches.
- Planting churches and fostering new initiatives to reach the un-churched and de-churched populations of our area.
- Intentionally develop leadership for Hispanic, Asian, and other racial ethnic communities.
- Providing support for international movements with a common goal of reaching the lost.

## 3. *Objections and Responses*

Objection: This action will take churches and mission support from other presbyteries.

Response: The reality is that churches are looking to leave in any case and would take their mission support with them. With the repeal of G-6.0106b, this is becoming a mass movement. It is better to provide a structure to allow these churches and their mission support to stay within the PC(USA) instead of being lost to the PC(USA) altogether.

Objection: This will not be enough. There are disaffected churches all across the country.

Response: We see these porous presbyteries as providing hope and an effective model.

Objection: There are congregations within the current boundaries of the one presbytery that would not want to be a part of a self-described evangelical presbytery.

Response: If this were approved we recognize that there are churches within the current geographic boundaries of one presbytery that might prefer to align with another presbytery. We recognize that it would be appropriate for another presbytery to accept into its membership and for those churches to unite with that presbytery upon a 2/3 vote of their congregation and reception by that presbytery. While we do not desire to disassociate with any of the churches in a presbytery, we recognize that their sense of integrity and mission might lead them to that step. We would continue to honor their ministries in friendship and collegiality.

Objection: Isn't this just laying the groundwork for eventual disunion?

Response: The purpose of this proposal is for us to continue to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to continue disaffected congregations as member churches of the PC(USA), and, if possible, to reclaim some congregations for the PC(USA) that have already left. We are committed to this!

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-05

*Advice on Item 05-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 05-05.

#### *Rationale*

Item 05-05 would add to G-3.0301 as a fourth “responsibility and power” of presbyteries:

d. A presbytery may receive congregations as member churches any congregation that petitions for membership regardless of whether or not that congregation lies within the geographical boundaries of the presbytery. A congregation may petition a presbytery to join it upon a two-thirds vote of those members attending at a regularly called congregational meeting. The presbytery shall vote to receive the congregation at its next regularly scheduled meeting by a majority vote of those attending.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the responsibilities and powers of the presbytery, like those of the session, synod, and General Assembly, are grounded in the notes of the Church (F-1.0303, G-3.0101): providing that the Word of God is truly preached and heard, the Sacraments rightly administered, and a covenant community of disciples of Christ is nurtured. These three notes are grounded in our confessional heritage (see *The Book of Confession*, 3.18) as charac-

teristic of the work of the whole church, and were not created as an arbitrary list of powers peculiar to one or another of its councils. Inserting in the powers of the presbytery a fourth responsibility and power that is not grounded in the church's confessional heritage both disturbs the basic structure of Chapter Three and suggests that the presbytery's power to dismiss and receive congregations is a power on the order of the notes themselves. If the General Assembly agrees with the intent of this overture, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the appropriate place to insert it would be as a subparagraph "g" in G-3.0303.

### 1. *Constitutional Issues of Connectional Accountability*

Constitutional procedures for a determining presbytery membership and boundaries are developed within a system of accountability based on the foundational principles and standards of the Constitution. At the heart of presbyterian structure are the principles of organic unity, connectional discernment, and hierarchical order, which are expressed and demonstrated through the interdependence of sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly as gradated councils, each having responsibilities and powers affecting those next higher and those next lower. These principles of governance, restated in the *Book of Order* in F-3.02, were adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1797:

That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies [councils], till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority. (See footnote at F-3.02, Principles of Presbyterian Government]

In keeping with these historical principles, the Form of Government specifies numerous responsibilities of presbyteries for their member churches (e.g., "organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members; overseeing congregations without pastors; establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them ..." G-3.0301a). These are powers of the presbytery to be exercised in consultation with its congregations, rather than powers to be exercised by the congregations themselves.

Similarly the Constitution does not give to presbyteries the power to reconfigure themselves but charges the synod as the next higher council with responsibility for:

c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. (*Book of Order*, G-3.0403c)

In exercising this power synods are to consider the faithful concerns and mission interests of their presbyteries' congregations before presenting for General Assembly approval a proposal to reshape the mission relationships of the congregations in those presbyteries. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that Item 05-05 seeks to allow for the possibility of the creation of non-geographic presbyteries but does not address or render without effect G-3.0403c as it restricts synods' creation of such presbyteries to those the church deems "necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations."

### 2. *Constitutional Issues of Geographical Accountability*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the Constitution defines a presbytery as "the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district" (G-3.0301). The geographic nature of a presbytery, as it corporately expresses the mission and ministry of at least ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders (G-3.0301), facilitates and significantly informs its capacity for participating in its mandated relationships of accountability and review with its member congregations and its teaching elders, as well as with its synod. The geographic nature of a presbytery is not solely related to the G-3.0403c restriction on synod creation and General Assembly approval of non-geographic presbyteries.

The responsibility of a larger or higher council for the smaller or lower councils within its jurisdiction is finally one belonging to the whole church, fulfilled through the General Assembly as the council charged with "approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0502e). Underlying the role of the General Assembly in the moving of a congregation from one presbytery to another is its responsibility as the council of the church that "constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0501).

Furthermore the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that by allowing for reshaping councils apart from the foundational principles of our polity the proposed changes would have a potential impact not only on governance but also on the legal implications of our polity in the secular courts, including with regard to the trust clause in G-4.0203 as it specifies that all church property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### 3. *Constitutional Issues of Procedural Accountability*

In addition to concerns about Item 05-05's inconsistency with constitutional principles, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that specific procedures sought by Item 05-05 are inconsistent with current related provisions left unaddressed by the proposed addition of G-3.0301d:

First, Item 05-05 emphasizes the independent role of a congregation in petitioning “upon a two-thirds vote of those members attending at a regularly called congregational meeting” another presbytery to “join” it, when the business to be transacted at congregational meetings does not include such petitioning or consideration of and action upon a proposal to depart from the presbytery (G-1.0503).

Second, as a process parallel to the moving of membership of a teaching elder of the presbytery to the roll of another presbytery, this change is constitutionally understood as “dismissal” by one presbytery to another presbytery (G-3.0307). It is the presbytery that dismisses one of its members, rather than a congregation that by its own action can require consideration of such a change in its original and in any intended next presbytery, reconfiguring both and doing so without review by the synod and approval of the General Assembly. Item 05-05 would permit a congregation to bypass its presbytery's constitutional role as the council authorized to dismiss a congregation.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) wishes to accomplish the stated intent of Item 05-05, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly instead answer with its response to Recommendation 6.b. of the Mid Council Commission (Item 05-12), and refers the assembly to the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on that recommendation.

#### **ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly disapprove Item 05-05.

#### *Rationale*

Non-geographic presbyteries have been formed when language, culture, or a sure loss of representation in a context of segregation have moved the church to just decisions to form spaces and structures that assured representation and voice for a variety of racial ethnic constituencies. The church's awareness of the power of racism, and/or the inability of the church when these presbyteries were formed to accommodate and hear the voices of ruling and teaching elders who were fluent primarily or solely in a language other than English, put in motion the processes that resulted in the formation of a variety of non-geographic presbyteries, starting in the 19th century and continuing to our time.

At the time of reunion, it was assumed that all non-geographic presbyteries would soon be realigned (see The Articles of Agreement 7.6-7.7). Many non-geographic presbyteries have realigned. Those that did not were permitted to continue as non-geographic presbyteries, either because of a continuing situation of racial and cultural tension or because of language barriers that were hard to meaningfully transcend. Today, there are five non-geographic presbyteries in the PCUSA—Dakota, Hanmi, Midwest Hanmi, Eastern Korean, and Atlantic Korean American. A move to form another non-geographic Korean-language presbytery that came to the 219th General Assembly (2010) was approved in committee and came to the floor, but failed when commissioners both Korean American and non-Korean American rose to speak to the primacy of the historic Presbyterian value of diversity, even in cases where continuing language barriers make communication and representation difficult.

It is clear from this history, then, that the formation of non-geographic presbyteries has occurred when barriers of language or racism have rendered life and ministry together so difficult that the church in its wisdom has allowed what has always been an extraordinary circumstance to take place.

Now, there is a new call to form non-geographic presbyteries. This new call does not arise from barriers of language and racism that are difficult to transcend, but because people who agree with each other on issues of theology or polity find it so difficult to be a friend to their colleagues in ministry with whom they disagree that they are moved to sever relationships of proximity and form new relationships based on like-mindedness and affinity.

While our history does provide a framework for the formation of non-geographic presbyteries, there is no historical precedent for forming non-geographic governing bodies that gather teaching elders, ruling elders, and congregations on the sole basis of agreement. The argument that our unity will be strengthened by not having to work or meet together cannot be sustained on the basis of history, theology, nor Scripture. Making a value of positivity cannot outweigh that which is lost in a diversity of perspectives called together by God to help in the often-difficult process of discerning the Spirit's leading. The hope for greater flexibility, innovation, and creativity in mission and ministry cannot find strong foundation in our inability to work together and find ways to serve together despite our differences. We can find no basis on which the arguments put forward for allowing the formation of non-geographic presbyteries based on affinity of position can be sustained.

## Item 05-06

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-06. See pp. 20, 21.]

*On Amending G-5.05a, Joint Congregational Witness—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-5.05a be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. Such joint witnesses shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination involved. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. ~~Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the congregational council shall petition the next higher councils or governing bodies to resolve the conflict.~~ *Wherever the constitutions of the denominations hold conflicting mandatory provisions, it remains the express right of the congregation to determine, through its session, which one of these provisions will be held to be the authoritative and ruling standard for that congregation.*”

### *Rationale*

The current wording in G-5.05a requires a process that provides little chance of success in resolving conflicting mandatory provisions between the constitutional standards held by union congregations. The current procedure is simplistic, unrealistic, and inadequate, as it assumes easy and rapid resolution to conflicts and provides no way to resolve conflicting decisions from higher governing bodies/councils.

While the simplistic wording in G-5.05a might imply that conflicts between mandatory provisions within constitutions may be quickly and easily resolved through referral to the next higher council, this is, in fact, very unlikely. It is far more likely that the next higher councils will only declare their particular constitutional standard as binding leaving inquiring congregations without resolution and with no further recourse or appeal. Furthermore, such deliberations could take extended periods of time, locking the congregation in ambiguity that may hinder and even damage its unity and witness.

The Presbyterian church has through the whole of its history displayed a vibrant confidence in the ability of its member congregations to faithfully follow God’s call to new life and anointed mission. The church has frequently declared and affirmed the Spirit’s leading as it makes decisions and shapes its life and mission. If such declarations are more than empty boasts but actually reflect a genuine faith and deep confidence, there should be little concern or problem in granting union congregations the express right to choose between conflicting provisions. Indeed, there may be no better or clearer evidence of the church’s trust in the Holy Spirit and confidence in its congregations than declaring the right and granting the freedom to union congregations to decide for themselves the appropriate and fitting constitutional standard that best reflects its faith and aids its mission to glorify God and expand the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-06**

*Advice on Item 05-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer Item 05-06 with its response to Item 05-03.

### *Rationale*

Item 05-06 to amend G-5.05a as written is nearly identical to Item 05-03. Such variation as exists is minor and does not alter their common intent as expressed in the rationales. It is the determination of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the constitutional issues presented are the same.

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### **OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-06**

*Comment on Item 05-06—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 05-06 presents the following issue that the assembly should consider:

A joint congregational witness between a PC(USA) congregation and one or more Christian churches is created when the mission strategy of a presbytery requires it (*Book of Order*, G-5.05). So while a congregation can express a desire to be part

of a joint congregational witness, presbytery action, in light of a presbytery's strategy for mission, is necessary for its creation. Item 05-06 would give a congregation, through its session, "the express right" to determine which one of the denominations' constitutional provisions "will be held to be the authoritative and ruling standard for that congregation" when there are conflicting mandatory provisions. This would prevent each of the denominations' next higher councils or governing bodies, including the presbytery whose strategy for mission led to the creation of the joint congregational witness, from exercising their current authority to resolve the conflict.

The *Book of Order*, F-3.0206, states, "a higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal." Further, F-3.0203 notes, "all councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution." Indeed, our polity envisions a system of unity, mutuality, and accountability where councils communicate, collaborate, and work together to make important decisions impacting the faith and mission of the church. Our polity presupposes a fellowship of love and trust that is lived out in shared relationship with one another and where important constitutional matters are not decided unilaterally, but where lower councils work with higher councils to prayerfully discern the mind of Christ together, communicating with them and helping them understand how conflicting constitutional provisions may impact their faith and mission in a given context. It is through dialogue and working together through such difficult decisions that presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly can help the whole church understand more fully what it means for us to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (F-1.0301). Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider whether such action in Item 05-06 is a departure from and contrary to the Historic Principles of Presbyterian government including F-3.0206 and the principal where "the larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller" (F-3.0203).

## Item 05-07

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-07. See pp. 20, 21.]

*On Amending G-5.0401, Conflicting Mandatory Provisions Between Constitutional Standards of Union Presbyteries—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-5.0401 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~"The union presbytery shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination represented in the union. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, any mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases where the others are permissive. Where there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the union presbytery shall overture the highest council or governing body of the denominations involved to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations involved hold conflicting mandatory provisions, it remains the express right of the union presbytery to determine for itself which one of these provisions will be held to be the authoritative and ruling standard for that presbytery."~~

### *Rationale*

The current wording in G-5.0401 requires a process that provides little chance of success in resolving conflicting mandatory provisions between the constitutional standards held by union presbyteries. The current procedure is simplistic, unrealistic, and inadequate, as it assumes easy and rapid resolution to conflicts and provides no way to resolve conflicting decisions from higher governing bodies/councils.

While the simplistic wording in G-5.0401 might imply that conflicts between mandatory provisions within constitutions may be quickly and easily resolved through referral to the highest council, this is, in fact very unlikely. It is far more likely that the respective councils will only declare their particular constitutional standard as binding leaving inquiring presbytery without resolution and with no further recourse or appeal. Furthermore, such deliberations could literally take years locking the presbytery in ambiguity that may hinder and even damage its unity and witness.

The Presbyterian church has, through the whole of its history, displayed a vibrant confidence in the ability of its councils to faithfully follow God's call to new life and anointed mission. The church has frequently declared and affirmed the Spirit's leading as it makes decisions and shapes its life and mission. If such declarations are more than empty boasts but actually reflect a genuine faith and deep confidence, there should be little concern or problem in granting union presbyteries the express right to choose between conflicting provisions. Indeed, there may be no better or clearer evidence of the church's trust in the Holy Spirit and confidence in its councils than declaring the right and granting the freedom to union presbyteries/councils to decide for themselves the appropriate and fitting constitutional standard that best reflects its faith and aids its mission to glorify God and expand the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-07**

*Advice on Item 05-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 05-07.

*Rationale*

Item 05-07 to amend G-5.0401 as written is nearly identical to Item 05-04, and includes an almost identical rationale. It is the determination of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the constitutional issues presented are the same.

**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-07**

*Comment on Item 05-07—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 05-07 presents the following issue that the assembly should consider:

Currently, a "... presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may unite to form a union presbytery with one or more comparable councils or governing bodies, each of which is a member of another Reformed body, with the approval of the synod ..." (G-5.04). Item 05-04 would vest the power to form a union presbytery with the presbytery itself, without the approval of synod. Further, when there are conflicting mandatory provisions between the union presbytery's denominations' constitutions, this overture would give to the presbytery "the express right to determine, for and by itself, which one of these will be the authoritative ruling standard for that presbytery." It would remove from each of the denominations' highest council or governing body their current authority to resolve the conflict.

The *Book of Order*, F-3.0206, states, "a higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal." Further, F-3.0203 notes, "all councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution." Indeed, our polity envisions a system of unity, mutuality, and accountability where councils communicate, collaborate, and work together to make important decisions impacting the faith and mission of the church. Our polity presupposes a fellowship of love and trust that is lived out in shared relationship with one another and where important constitutional matters are not decided unilaterally, but where lower councils work with higher councils to prayerfully discern the mind of Christ together, communicating with them and helping them understand how conflicting constitutional provisions may impact their faith and mission in a given context. It is through dialogue and working together through such difficult decisions that presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly can help the whole church understand more fully what it means for us to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (F-1.0301). Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider whether such action in Item 05-07 is a departure from and contrary to the Historic Principles of Presbyterian government including F-3.0206 and the principal where "the larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller" (*Book of Order*, F-3.0203).

**Item 05-08**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 05-08. See pp. 20, 21.]**

*On Amending G-3.0403c. and G-3.0502e. to Bring Flexibility to the Ways Presbyteries Relate to Each Other—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.*

The Presbytery of Mississippi overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall G-3.0403c be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

"c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, ~~subject to the approval of the General Assembly~~, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created."

2. Amend G-3.0502 by deleting "e." as follows:

~~"e. approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries."~~



*Rationale*

The Mid Council Commission (MCC) is recommending to the General Assembly that synods be discontinued as councils and their ecclesiastical functions be vested in “five regional administrative commissions” of the General Assembly. The MCC is also recommending that the General Assembly begin the process of creating “regional judicial commissions, rooted in various regions, to serve as courts of appeal to decisions of presbytery PJs and as courts of original jurisdiction in remedial cases against presbyteries, or upon reference from presbytery PJs.”

It is unnecessary to discontinue synods as councils in order to bring more flexibility to the way that presbyteries relate to one another. The Form of Government already allows synods to decide to reduce their function, retaining only “judicial process and administrative review,” the same two functions that would be retained under the MCC’s proposal (G-3.0404). Administrative and judicial review of presbyteries will thus go on under the current system or under the MCC’s suggestion, with the only difference being the number of bodies that will be doing this work. Having only five regional commissions verses the current system of sixteen synods could save some funds, but in having three times as much work to do, and in having much larger distances to cover, each commission might very well incur greater administrative costs than would synods that chose to reduce their function under the current Form of Government.

The MCC also recommends that the General Assembly’s authority “to approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries” be eventually transferred to the newly created regional administrative commissions.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) entrusted the MCC with the authority that is now described in G-3.0502d and e—the authority to restructure synods and to approve synods’ restructuring of presbyteries. If the General Assembly desires to devolve these authorities to regional bodies, it would be just as effective to remove the indicated portions of G-3.0403c and G-3.0502e. Under such a system, synods alone would have the authority to permit presbytery realignments within their bounds, and such changes could be made in a more expeditious way. The General Assembly would appropriately retain the authority to approve the restructuring of synods.

A principal reason for retaining the current system of synods rather than moving to a system of regional commissions of the General Assembly has to do with representation. The commissioners to synod are chosen by their constituent presbyteries and each presbytery is guaranteed at least one teaching elder and one ruling elder to represent it (G-3.0401). In contrast, five regional commissions would of necessity oversee a larger number of presbyteries than the sixteen synods do. Unless these new commissions were so large as to be unwieldy, they would be unable to include even one representative from each presbytery.

The MCC states that it seeks to promote “the full expression of rich diversity in membership, participation, and decision-making.” It would be a pity if the presbyteries themselves were to lose representation in the bodies entrusted with their oversight, only in the pursuit of flexibility that our current system already allows or in the pursuit of financial savings that may or may not materialize.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-08**

*Advice on Item 05-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 05-08.

*Rationale*

The stated intent of Item 05-08 is to bring more flexibility to presbyteries’ interrelationships by removing the requirement of General Assembly approval of synod actions to organize, divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries or to create non-geographic presbyteries.

Item 05-08 first seeks deletion of “subject to the approval of the General Assembly” from the charge to synods in G-3.0403c regarding their responsibilities for supporting the work of presbyteries in their bounds:

c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, ~~subject to the approval of the General Assembly~~, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created.

The second proposed action in Item 05-08 is parallel to and completes the first, deleting G-3.0502e so as to remove from the General Assembly its responsibility for “approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, united, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries.”

In the Form of Government, G-3.0403c and G-3.0502c state and also limit the responsibilities of synods for presbytery boundaries, in keeping with the basic principles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that its presbyters (ruling elders and

teaching elders) “shall come together in councils in regular gradation” as sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly (F-3.0203), and that “[a] higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one ...” (F-3.0206).

These constitutional principles are derived from and restate the Historic Principles of Church Government adopted in 1797:

That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church; that a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern; and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies [councils], till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority. (See *Book of Order*, footnote at F-3.02, Principles of Presbyterian Government)

With this presbyterian understanding of the interdependent responsibilities of councils, the General Assembly, being made up of elected commissioners from all of the presbyteries and constituting “the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0501), is also organically connected with the whole church through the synods.

The Constitution provides in G-3.0403c and in G-3.0502c for that continuity in the oversight of the boundary definitions of presbyteries; there is an organic connection between a synod as one region of the church encompassing a limited number of presbyteries and the General Assembly representing all the presbyteries of the church. The initiative of one or more presbyteries for revising their boundaries and jurisdiction, and of the synod having jurisdiction of those presbyteries, is received for review and approval in accord with the “collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church” expressed through the General Assembly.

The existing requirement that the General Assembly approve changes in the boundaries of presbyteries is not in place so as to restrict synods in the exercise of their charge in G-3.0403c, but is one means by which the mission of the church in a particular region is appropriately overseen and coordinated with that of other regions and the church as a whole. No region of the church, no synod, exists independent of the life of the whole church.

The rationale for the overture suggests that the amendments would increase the “flexibility” in which presbyteries would relate to each other in support of their congregations’ mission. This would come from reducing the amount of time, open interpretation, and representative review in the context of the wider mission of the church that is now necessary for securing General Assembly approval for basic changes in presbyteries’ jurisdiction. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes, however, that merely removing the requirement of General Assembly approval would not eliminate the role of the assembly in exercising oversight and review of the work of synods (G-3.0502b,c), which would include their actions related to organizing, dividing, uniting, or combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries. It would only eliminate the need for prior approval.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that removing the phrase from G-3.0403c would not in and of itself permit the formation of non-geographic presbyteries for purposes other than meeting the needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. The benefits identified in the rationale would have only limited impact apart from the approval of additional amendments creating greater flexibility in presbytery composition.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises that the approval of this amendment, together with another amendment eliminating synods as ecclesiastical councils, could have the effect of permitting presbyteries to organize and/or create new presbyteries without any required approval from higher councils of the church (under the “reserved powers” clause in F-3.0209).

Requiring General Assembly approval of regional actions that increase or diminish the representative presbytery membership of the General Assembly is consistent with the principles of connectionalism presented in the Foundations and developed in the Form of Government; the changes proposed in Item 05-08 are inconsistent with F-3.0203 in particular.

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#### **ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 05-08.

#### *Rationale*

Non-geographic presbyteries have been formed when language, culture, or a sure loss of representation in a context of segregation have moved the church to just decisions to form spaces and structures that assured representation and voice for a variety of racial ethnic constituencies. The church’s awareness of the power of racism, and/or the inability of the church when

these presbyteries were formed to accommodate and hear the voices of ruling and teaching elders who were fluent primarily or solely in a language other than English, put in motion the processes that resulted in the formation of a variety of non-geographic presbyteries, starting in the 19th century and continuing to our time.

At the time of reunion, it was assumed that all non-geographic presbyteries would soon be realigned (see The Articles of Agreement 7.6-7.7). Many non-geographic presbyteries have realigned. Those that did not were permitted to continue as non-geographic presbyteries, either because of a continuing situation of racial and cultural tension or because of language barriers that were hard to meaningfully transcend. Today, there are five non-geographic presbyteries in the PCUSA—Dakota, Hanmi, Midwest Hanmi, Eastern Korean, and Atlantic Korean American. A move to form another non-geographic Korean-language presbytery that came to the 219th General Assembly (2010) was approved in committee and came to the floor, but failed when commissioners both Korean American and non-Korean American rose to speak to the primacy of the historic Presbyterian value of diversity, even in cases where continuing language barriers make communication and representation difficult.

It is clear from this history, then, that the formation of non-geographic presbyteries has occurred when barriers of language or racism have rendered life and ministry together so difficult that the church in its wisdom has allowed what has always been an extraordinary circumstance to take place.

Now, there is a new call to form non-geographic presbyteries. This new call does not arise from barriers of language and racism that are difficult to transcend, but because people who agree with each other on issues of theology or polity find it so difficult to be a friend to their colleagues in ministry with whom they disagree that they are moved to sever relationships of proximity and form new relationships based on like-mindedness and affinity.

While our history does provide a framework for the formation of non-geographic presbyteries, there is no historical precedent for forming non-geographic governing bodies that gather teaching elders, ruling elders, and congregations on the sole basis of agreement. The argument that our unity will be strengthened by not having to work or meet together cannot be sustained on the basis of history, theology, nor Scripture. Making a value of positivity cannot outweigh that which is lost in a diversity of perspectives called together by God to help in the often-difficult process of discerning the Spirit's leading. The hope for greater flexibility, innovation, and creativity in mission and ministry cannot find strong foundation in our inability to work together and find ways to serve together despite our differences. We can find no basis on which the arguments put forward for allowing the formation of non-geographic presbyteries based on affinity of position can be sustained.

## Item 05-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-09. See pp. 20, 21.]

*On Extending the Mid Council Commission or Establishing a Successor Administrative Commission—From the Presbytery of San Diego.*

The Presbytery of San Diego overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:

1. Extend the commission for the Mid-Council Commission or establish a successor administrative commission for the purpose of continuing the charge to
  - a. act upon requests of presbyteries and synods, with the authority of the General Assembly to approve “the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries” according to G-3.0502e.;
  - b. continue consulting with sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the wider church on the mission and function of higher councils;
  - c. develop models that reflect the roles of higher councils in our polity and the changing context of our witness in the United States and their relationships with other councils;
  - d. implement, within the powers granted it, any decisions forwarded from the 220th General Assembly (2012) and approved by presbyteries regarding the form and function of higher councils with a report to the 221st General Assembly (2014); and
  - e. report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) of its findings and any recommended *Book of Order* changes.
2. Approve the following experiment for 2012–2014: with the approval of the effected presbyteries and under the oversight of the Mid-Council Commission or a successor administrative commission established for this purpose
  - a. allow congregations to become AFFILIATE members of their GEOGRAPHIC presbyteries,

b. allow these congregations to become MEMBERS of other presbyteries within their geographic regions for ecclesiastical oversight, COM, and CPM authority, and spiritual/missional/relational support, under the following stipulations:

- (1) congregations would be responsible for creating a plan to intentionally connect for shared ministry within the GEOGRAPHIC presbytery with which they are affiliated,
- (2) congregations would have voice but not vote in the GEOGRAPHIC presbytery with which they are affiliated,
- (3) the GEOGRAPHIC presbytery would have to approve release of the church's property to another Reformed body if the congregation decides to leave the PC(USA),
- (4) congregations would have full rights, voice, and vote in their presbytery of MEMBERSHIP within their region,
- (5) congregations would split their per capita giving between the two presbyteries,
- (6) if the experiment does not work, congregations would be allowed to return to their GEOGRAPHIC presbytery. If the experiment does work, the congregation and the presbyteries are empowered to make the experiment official.

### ***Rationale***

The Mid Council Commission (formerly Middle Governing Bodies Commission) has been extremely helpful in developing models consistent with the new Form of Government's stated goal of being more missional and flexible. Recognizing that the original time commitment for those serving on the Mid-Council Commission expires at the convening of the 220th General Assembly (2012), we believe it is important to recognize their contribution and to offer them the opportunity to continue the work they have begun. Alternatively, establishing a successor administrative commission with the authority paralleling the existing commission is imperative to providing a means by which the General Assembly may continue supporting the development of models of healthy councils between biennial assemblies.

The experiment proposed in this overture was developed by the following executive presbyters from eight synods:

#### Executive Presbyter, Presbytery, Synod

Ken Baker, Presbytery of San Fernando, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
 Wendy Bailey, Presbytery of Monmouth & Presbytery of New Brunswick, Synod of the Northeast  
 Mike Cole, Presbytery of New Covenant, Synod of the Sun  
 Rich Cooper, Presbytery of Western Kentucky, Synod of Living Waters  
 Clark Cowden, Presbytery of San Diego, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
 David Dawson, Presbytery of Shenango, Synod of the Trinity  
 David Dobler, Presbytery of Alaska, Synod of Alaska-Northwest  
 Tom Evans, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Synod of South Atlantic  
 Julia Leeth, Presbytery of Stockton, Synod of the Pacific  
 Marianne Rhebergen, Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, Synod of the Northeast  
 Cory Schlosser-Hall, Presbytery of North Puget Sound, Synod of Alaska-Northwest  
 In Yang, Hanmi Presbytery, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
 Kevin Yoho, Presbytery of Newark, Synod of the Northeast

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-09**

*Advice on Item 05-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

Item 05-09 proposes two separate actions, the first of which proposes the extension of the charge to continue the work of the present Mid Council Commission, with some amendment of the charge, or to establish a new commission with the amended charge; and the second of which proposes an experiment by which congregations be permitted to be dismissed to membership in another presbytery while maintaining an affiliate relationship with its presbytery of origin. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the two action items be divided and addressed separately.

Regarding proposed action 1, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution offers the following advice:

The first action item does not require constitutional interpretation. The actions proposed fall within the power of the General Assembly to form an administrative commission and to delegate powers to it, under G-3.0109. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes, however, that it is similar in intent to Recommendation 5 of the Mid Council Commission report. It also notes that should the assembly approve this overture in place of Recommendation 5 that a possible conflict of roles between the Commission and the Regional Administrative Commissions envisioned in Recommendation 4 of the Mid Council Commission report could arise.

Regarding proposed action 2, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to disapprove the proposed action. The second action item addresses matters that require constitutional interpretation. The item proposes creation of an experimental period during which actions not currently permitted in the Constitution could be performed. Item 05-09 would call for these actions to be “under the oversight” of the proposed commission; however there is no constitutional mechanism by which such transfers could be accomplished. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly cannot approve or delegate powers that are contrary to the Constitution, or which override the constitutional powers and responsibilities of other councils. In particular, the overture would contradict constitutional provisions regarding the composition of presbyteries (G-3.0201) and the formation of non-geographic presbyteries (G-3.0403c), and (potentially) the power of presbytery regarding “organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations” (G-3.0301a), and of synods and the General Assembly to concur in such transfers (G-3.0403c; G-3.0502). In order to grant such powers the Constitution must first be amended through the process contained in G-6.04. The proposal is similar to Recommendation 6.b. of the Mid Council Commission report, which does propose specific constitutional amendments to accomplish such transfers of congregations. The present item lacks a request to amend the Constitution to provide for such actions.

If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of action item 2, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly answer this overture with its response to Recommendation 6.b. of the Mid Council Commission report, and refers the assembly to the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on that recommendation.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-09

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly disapprove Item 05-09.

#### *Rationale*

The overture suggests a half measure, somewhere between approving the Mid Council Commission Report and disapproving it. The experiment with the formation of nongeographic presbyteries, which ACREC does not support, would be difficult to undo if the church discerned that this was not wise in two years. Being affiliated with one presbytery while having voice and vote in another would produce confusion and not move the church to a better place.

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## Item 05-10

**[The assembly answered Item 05-10 by the action taken on Item 05-12, Recommendation 6. See pp. 20, 21.]**

*On Delaying Actions Regarding the Creation of Non-Geographic Presbyteries Until at Least 2016—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Thank the General Assembly Mid-Councils Commission for its work.
2. Delay actions regarding the creation of non-geographical presbyteries until at least 2016.

#### *Rationale*

While added flexibility in enabling the mission of the church is to be applauded, the impact of implementing all the recommended changes immediately would be too great for the system to accommodate at one time.

This proposal for non-geographic presbyteries undermines the historic understanding that God speaks through the voice of the people because it decreases the breadth of voices involved in discerning the will of God. We will be less likely to benefit from the voice of those who differ from us. And it will increase polarization within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a whole.

The possibility of non-geographic presbyteries will actually distract us once more from attending to the mission of God in the world through Christ’s church as we focus on institutional reorganization.

Non-geographic presbyteries will further dissipate the voice and presence of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), making the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) even more irrelevant in the United States.

Non-geographic presbyteries will result in a greater disparity between poorly resourced and richly resourced presbyteries.

Non-geographic presbyteries will create a fundamentally different church that will bear little connection with its historic nature.

The desire to create new missional partnership can be and is already being done within and between current geographic presbyteries.

Geographic proximity is a value. When times are tough we need to sit beside each other in the flesh and not entrust our communication to the easily combustible mediums of email, Twitter, and Facebook.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-10

*Advice on Item 05-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 05-10 presents no new issues requiring constitutional advice. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers the assembly to its advice on Recommendation 6 of the report of the Mid Council Commission (Item 05-12).

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 05-10.

#### *Rationale*

Item 05-10 suggests positive and faithful ministry partnerships are already being formed in creative ways in a number of places, and points out some of the problems that may well result from allowing the formation of nongeographic presbyteries based on affinity. Waiting would allow the church more time to discern the Spirit's leading on this significant change in our polity and our understanding of the church.

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## Item 05-11

**[The assembly approved Item 05-11 with amendment. See p. 20, 21.]**

*On Transferring the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley to the Presbytery of Geneva—From the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.*

**The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the dismissal of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley and the transfer of the church membership to the Presbytery of Geneva and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the synod.**

#### *Rationale*

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, unanimously approved the requested transfer of membership at its annual congregational meeting on January 29, 2012. The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley approved the transfer of the church to the Presbytery of Geneva at its stated meeting of March 3, 2012. The Presbytery of Geneva plans to approve the admission of the first Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York, at its stated meeting on March 20, 2012.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-11 from the Presbytery of Geneva and the Synod of the Northeast.**

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## Item 05-12

*Mid Council Report to the 220th General Assembly—From the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils.*

**The General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils recommends that the 212th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**[The assembly referred Item 05-12, Recommendations 1.–4. to a task force. See pp. 20, 21–22.]**

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes to take effect at the close of the 222nd General Assembly (2016):

a. Shall G-3.04, The Synod, be deleted, including Sections G-3.0401 through G-3.0406) and Section G-3.05 (including G-3.0501–.0503) be renumbered as G-3.04 (G-3.0401-.0403).

b. Shall G-3.03, The Presbytery, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-3.03 THE PRESBYTERY

“G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibilities

“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of ruling elders serving as moderators of committees or commissions.

“The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders.

“The presbytery is responsible for the *life, ministry, and government* of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations *throughout its region* become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

“[The remainder of this section to remain the same.]

“G-3.0302 Relations with ~~Synod and General Assembly~~ *the Church*

“The presbytery has a responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship ~~to synod and~~ *with other presbyteries and to the General Assembly* by:

*“a. consulting with other presbyteries in their region about creating regional mission partnerships for racial ethnic advocacy and support, mission, and ministry projects, and other programs of shared life, diversity, and connection to the larger church*

~~“a. b.~~ electing commissioners to ~~synod and~~ General Assembly and receiving their reports;

~~“b. c.~~ electing ruling and teaching elders to be readers of standard ordination examinations;

~~“e. d.~~ seeing that the guidance and communication of ~~synod and~~ General Assembly are considered and that any binding actions are observed and carried out;

~~“d. e.~~ proposing to ~~synod or~~ General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church; and

~~“e. f.~~ sending annually to ~~synod and~~ General Assembly statistical and other information according to the requirements of those bodies. [The remainder of G-3.03, G-3.0303–.0307 to remain the same.]”

2. Instruct the synods, in consultation with their constituent presbyteries, to develop and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) plans to transfer assets, funds, projects, and programs to the appropriate trusts, foundations, or entities of their choice for implementation by the synods by the close of the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

3. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a committee to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk and to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014):

a. Recommendations, including any necessary changes in the *Manual of the General Assembly*, for the appointment of five regional administrative commissions to facilitate churches and presbyteries to fulfill their missional objectives when realignment is necessary and also to support the presbyteries and regions in promoting the full expression of rich diversity in membership, participation, and decision-making (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103);

b. Recommendations, including any necessary changes in the *Book of Order* and the *Manual of the General Assembly*, in order to continue to facilitate and support the racial ethnic ministries that have historically been supported by the synods.

c. Any additional editorial changes to the *Book of Order* that will be made necessary by the action of Recommendation 1.

4. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a committee to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk and to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations, including any necessary changes in the *Book of Order* and the *Manual of the General Assembly*, to create the necessary number of regional judicial commissions, rooted in the various regions, to serve as courts of appeal to decisions of presbytery permanent judicial commissions (PJs) and as courts of original jurisdiction in remedial cases against presbyteries or upon reference from presbytery PJs.

**[Financial Implications: (2013) \$33,520, (2014) \$20,190—Per Capita]**

**[The assembly approved Item 05-12, Recommendation 5. with amendment. See pp. 20, 22.]**

5. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a commission to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk to do the following:

a. By direction of the 220th General Assembly (2012), or upon a majority affirmative vote of the affected presbytery or presbyteries or a majority affirmative vote of the presbyteries in the affected synod or synods, the commission is authorized to act and work in cooperation with the Committee on Synod Boundaries as the General Assembly to

i. organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing; and

ii. approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries by synods.

b. Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) ~~and to the 222nd General Assembly (2016)~~ all actions taken on its behalf.

~~[e.—To cease existence and transfer all authority to the regional administrative commissions as soon as the regional administrative commissions have been constituted.]~~

**[Financial Implications: (2013) \$19,070, (2014) \$22,440—Per Capita]**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 05-12, Recommendation 6. with comment. See pp. 20, 22.]**

6. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

a. Shall G-3.0403 be amended by adding a new section “d.” to read as follows:

*“d. approving the formation of provisional nongeographic presbyteries for particular missional purposes, upon petition of ten or more congregations and ten or more teaching elders within its bounds, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries. The petition shall include a plan outlining the missional purposes of the proposed presbytery and continuing covenant relationships with existing presbyteries. Such presbyteries shall have all the rights and powers of presbyteries, except that they shall not have the authority to dissolve, dismiss, or divide congregations or to approve the sale, mortgage, lease, or transfer of the real property of its constituent congregations without the consent of the congregation’s presbytery of origin. This provision shall expire December 31, 2021, at which time all presbyteries formed under this provision shall be dissolved and their congregations and teaching elder members dismissed to their presbyteries of origin.”*

b. Shall G-3.0303 be amended by adding a new section “g.” to read as follows:

*“g. approve the temporary dismissal of congregations, for particular missional purposes, to another presbytery within the synod or to another geographically contiguous synod, subject to G-3.0403c and G-3.0502e, with the following conditions: (1) the congregation shall continue to affiliate with the presbytery of origin for the purpose of mutual blessing, and shall have voice at presbytery meetings, except in matters related to conditions (2) and (3) in which they shall have voice and vote; (2) the congregation may not sell, mortgage, transfer, or lease its real property without the consent of the presbytery of origin; (3) the congregation may not be dissolved, divided, or dismissed without the concurrence of the presbytery of origin; (4) distribution of per capita or mission funds remitted may be divided according to a covenant between the presbytery of membership and the presbytery of origin; (5) all relationships established under this provision shall be rescinded December 31, 2021, and may be rescinded at any time by vote of either presbytery in consultation with the congregation.”*

**[Comment: That the commission be thanked and commended for its work on the report. That the congregations be encouraged to engage in collaborative missional endeavors, irrespective of their locations within particular presbytery geographic boundaries.]**



[The assembly approved Item 05-12, Recommendation 7. with amendment. See pp. 20, 22.]

7. ~~[Establish]~~ **[Direct the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to appoint]** a task force to review the nature and function of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly, specifically with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context **[to report back to the 221st General Assembly]**. **[We commend the narrative of the Mid Council Commission report to the church and ask that a study guide be created for that purpose.]**

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$15,050, (2014) \$9,855—Per Capita]

[The assembly approved Item 05-12, Recommendation 8. with amendment. See pp. 20, 22–23.]

8. In light of what we have heard in our conversation with the church identifying a critical condition concerning lack of confidence in the substance and direction of racial ethnic ministry, we recommend

a. ~~[that]~~ **[Instructing]** the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) ~~[be empowered]~~ to appoint a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force exclusively to review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA), reporting its findings for implementation to the 221st General Assembly (2014); and

b. that this task force be comprised of representatives from

—racial ethnic church leadership;

—racial ethnic caucus leadership;

—the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC);

—presbytery leadership; ~~[and]~~

—the General Assembly Committee on Representation;

**[—a representative from Racial/Ethnic Women’s Ministries;]**

~~[e.—that this task force be independent from the OGA task force in Recommendation 3. above; and]~~

d. that this task force be charged specifically to address the issue **[and the lack]** of language access, sensitivity, and resourcing (particularly as relates to the Spanish and Korean languages) within the existing frame of council operation, as well as within the context of any ~~[regional administrative structure that might emerge as a result of the repurposing of synods]~~ **[any councils]**.

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$15,050, (2014) \$9,855—Per Capita]

[Note: Furthermore, in our conversations with the church we found significant interest in developing a new mechanism (1) to review the models in mid councils and congregations of racial ethnic ministry that are operating successfully in the denomination with particular focus on, but not limited to, those noted in the Report of the Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force; and (2) to explore the viability of a nationally organized racial ethnic ministry advocacy model on the local and/or cluster congregation level. While it is not within our charge formally to recommend so, the assembly may nevertheless wish to consider assigning these additional responsibilities to the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force recommended above.]

### *Rationale*

*“How are those governing bodies best organized to be responsive both to the Spirit of Christ and the changing opportunities for discipleship? Are [the structures of history] the best platforms for carrying our mission into the future?” (From the Rationale of the charge to the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies, Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 275)*

### *Our Charge*

The Assembly Committee on Middle Governing Body Issues recommends that the 219th General Assembly (2010) direct the Moderators of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010), in consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee, to appoint twenty-one persons to a General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies with the understanding that the Moderators, as they make their appointments, shall make an intentional effort for theological diversity. The commission shall have the following focus and powers:

1. The commission will consult with sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the wider church on the mission and function of middle governing bodies. Such a process should include:

a. current diversity in the role and functions of middle governing bodies.

b. demographics and financial realities that affect the role and function of synods and presbyteries.

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- c. the role of each governing body in its oversight role—presbyteries of congregations, synods of presbyteries, and General Assembly of synods—both historically and in present experience.
  - d. relationships with General Assembly agencies in role and function.
2. The commission will develop models that reflect the roles of middle governing bodies in our polity and the changing context of our witness in the United States and their relationships with other governing bodies.
  3. The commission will prepare a report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) of its findings and any recommended Book of Order changes. Recommendation for future roles and responsibilities will also be made to the 220th General Assembly about changes in middle governing bodies that may best serve the in the 21st century.
  4. The commission will implement, within the powers granted it, any decisions forwarded from the 219th General Assembly (2010) and approved by presbyteries regarding the form and function of middle governing bodies with a report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).
  5. By direction of the 219th General Assembly (2010), or upon a majority affirmative vote of the affected presbytery or presbyteries or a majority affirmative vote of the presbyteries in the affected synod or synods, the commission is authorized to act as the General Assembly according to
    - a. G-13.0103m: “to organize new synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods or portions of synods previously existing;”
    - b. G-13.0103n: “to approve the organization, division, uniting, or combining of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries by synods.”
  6. The commission will supervise the Special Administrative Review Committee on Puerto Rico and act on any recommendations they may make within the powers given to the commission.
  7. The actions of the commission shall require a two-thirds majority for approval. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 274–75)

### *The Commission*

The Reverend Tod Bolsinger, moderator, Los Ranchos Presbytery, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
The Reverend José Manuel Capella-Pratts, Presbiterio de San Juan, Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén  
Elder Warren B. Cooper, Philadelphia Presbytery, Synod of the Trinity  
The Reverend Karen E. Dimon, Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery, Synod of the Northeast  
Elder Miriam Dolin, San Francisco Presbytery, Synod of the Pacific  
The Reverend Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo, Salem Presbytery, Synod of Mid-Atlantic  
The Reverend James B. Harper, Greater Atlanta Presbytery, Synod of South Atlantic  
Elder Robert Hay Jr., Greater Atlanta Presbytery, Synod of South Atlantic  
The Reverend Liza Hendricks, Western Reserve Presbytery, Synod of the Covenant  
Elder Viola Hickson Lee, Mission Presbytery, Synod of the Sun  
Elder J. Roger Lee, Seattle Presbytery, Synod of Alaska-Northwest  
Elder Kelli Lowe, Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery, Synod of Mid-America  
The Reverend Terry Newland, Sheppards & Lapsley Presbytery, Synod of Living Waters  
The Reverend José Olagues, Grand Canyon Presbytery. Synod of the Southwest  
Elder Barbara Ranta, Seattle Presbytery, Synod of Alaska-Northwest  
The Reverend Sam Roberson, Charlotte Presbytery, Synod of Mid-Atlantic  
The Reverend Richard H. Rojas Banuchi, Presbiterio de San Juan, Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén  
Elder David Seung-II Rue, M.D., Sacramento Presbytery, Synod of the Pacific  
Elder Jane D. Smith, Riverside Presbytery, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii  
Elder William L. Stafford, Milwaukee Presbytery, Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
The Reverend Laura Stellmon, Utah Presbytery, Synod of the Rocky Mountains  
The Reverend John W. Vest, Chicago Presbytery, Synod of Lincoln Trails

### *Staff to the Commission:*

The Reverend Jill M. Hudson, Associate Stated Clerk  
The Reverend Dan Saperstein, Advisory Committee on the Constitution  
Angela Lucear, Sr. Administrative Assistant  
Andrew Yeager-Buckley, Program Assistant

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### ***Rationale: An Executive Summary***

#### A Season of Experimentation for Adapting to a Rapidly Changing World

*The changing cultural context, the shifts that middle governing bodies are themselves already making, and a new domestic mission frontier all make this the right time, God's time for us to examine the role, function and form of presbyteries and synods. (From the rationale of the charge to the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies, Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 275*

At the heart of the eight formal recommendations the [Mid Council Commission](#)\* has offered to the General Assembly is a twofold proposal that necessitates the constitutional changes suggested above:

1. The flattening of denominational hierarchy and bureaucracy by repurposing synods as [Multi-Presbytery Missional Partnerships](#). This will be accomplished by eliminating the ecclesiastical responsibilities of synods as councils of the church, referring permanent judicial commission functions to another created structure, and creating regional administrative commissions of the General Assembly to offer ecclesiastical accountability for boundary decisions between presbyteries and to facilitate the church's commitment to diversity.

2. The reinvigorating of presbyteries as the locus of support for missional congregations by allowing more flexibility in the formation of connectional relationships. In order to do this, we call the church to engage in a designated [Season of Reflective Experimentation](#) that will last until December 31, 2021. Among the possibilities to be explored during this season of experimentation are the creation of provisional nongeographic presbyteries and provisional presbytery realignments for specific missional purposes.

We live in a rapidly changing world and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not the same denomination it was sixty or thirty years ago, when the structural framework of our current version of Presbyterianism was developed and implemented. As we have envisioned what the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of our [post-Christendom](#) world may look like, our Commission has assumed the role of those who prepare the space, invite the artists, and affirm the creativity that already resides in our [mid council](#) system.

Based on a deep examination of our rapidly changing contexts for mission in the world, our recommendations create the conditions for [adaptive change](#) with a clear focus: "The stimulation of creative collaboration within and among presbyteries to strengthen the vitality of missional congregations in a post-Christendom world."

The foundational ecclesiological principle behind our recommendations is articulated in our new Form of Government: the congregation—in covenant relationships called presbyteries—is the 'basic form' of the mission of God to the world.<sup>1</sup>

In order to develop our recommendations:

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\* All key terms appear the first time with an underline and are featured in the glossary in the appendix.

- We *listened deeply* to the church by means of surveys, conference calls with key constituents, and numerous conversations in every synod, at every major gathering of the church, and with key leaders in every level of the church’s life. ([See the report, “Listening \[and Looking\] Deeply: Data and Discussions”](#))

- We *learned* from experts in theology, history, and sociology, as well as from the most respected leaders in our current system about the urgency, necessity, and process of deep transformation. ([See the section, “Changing Contexts and Adaptive Change”](#))

- We *initiated a transparent and public conversation* using social media, blogs, articles, and conversations about our recommendations while they were still in “draft” stages.

- We developed a set of *Guiding Principles* that reaffirm the recently adopted new Form of Government, setting us on our way to more missional and contextual decision making, and more flexibility and freedom to experiment. ([See the report in Appendix 1, “Guiding Principles”](#))

Our recommendations were not developed in a vacuum. Throughout our process of listening, we discovered a variety of mid councils that are already producing new and creative expressions of *connectional* mission. To document these findings, our full report *lifts up models* of exemplary mid councils and *suggests key attributes* embodied in healthy councils. (See the report, [“The Colors of Vitality: Models and Attributes of Healthy Presbyteries”](#))

We bring our recommendations with *confidence* that there is already significant capacity for transformation within our system that only needs to be shared and harnessed for creative change.

### *Repurposing Synods*

Our first recommendation is to [flatten](#) the hierarchy and bureaucracy of our church by eliminating one level of *ecclesiastical structure*. We seek to stimulate structural change from the ground up. In doing so, we affirm and support multi-presbytery missional projects and programs that have been the traditional jewels of our synods and call for a commitment to reaffirm the longstanding tradition of mid council partnership for Racial Ethnic Ministries.<sup>2</sup>

We have recommended regional administrative commissions as organizational [“safe holding environments”](#)<sup>3</sup> for experimentation and collaboration that ensure wise, constitutionally consistent decision making in a larger geographic area. These administrative commissions will have the authority of the General Assembly in regards to boundary issues within and between presbyteries and to facilitate the church’s commitment to diversity.

The recommendation to repurpose the synods into multi-presbytery [partnerships](#) (and remove ecclesiastical status) responds to what we heard from the church: a call for structures that prioritize the vitality and mission of *congregations*. This recommendation separates out the three traditional functions of a synod—ecclesiastical oversight of presbytery boundaries, judicial appeal, and shared ministry and mission—into three different arenas:

- Ecclesiastical oversight will now be accomplished through five regional administrative commissions of the General Assembly whereby representatives of the constitutive presbyteries within a region will gather *as needed* and have the authority necessary for responding quickly and constitutionally to petitions to change presbytery boundaries and transfer of churches. These commissions will also have the responsibility to ensure our church’s commitment to diversity within each region.

- A committee will work with the Office of the General Assembly to discern a more effective “appellate court” system that is separate from these regional administrative commissions.

- Relationships and programs for shared ministry and mission across greater regions can continue or be developed through the initiative of the presbyteries within those regions. The works of ministry that have been supported by the mission giving of a synod can be retained in whatever forms the affected presbyteries determine will most effectively support their mission.

These *multi-presbytery missional partnerships* will become arenas for more connectional life as congregations and presbyteries decide to support and engage in relationships that are the most fruitful expressions of congregations in mission. This proposal to repurpose synods is the larger canvas in a secure constitutional frame that is meant to stimulate widespread collaborative creativity for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ.

### *A Season of Reflective Experimentation*

We propose a designated season of reflective experimentation with new models of missional governance, through the adoption of two significant temporary changes in our [polity](#):

- We propose that the church amend the Constitution to permit synods to organize provisional nongeographic missional presbyteries, upon petition of sessions and teaching elders, with the concurrence of affected councils.

- We further propose that during this season of reflective experimentation presbyteries may dismiss congregations, with the concurrence of all affected councils, to another presbytery (either provisional or currently constituted). We propose

that this season of reflective experimentation expire December 31, 2021, and recommend that the 222nd General Assembly (2016) be charged with designing and making provision for the evaluation of the season of experimentation.

These proposals are intended to *entrust presbyteries* with the flexibility and responsibility of working together to discern and create mid council structures and relationships that will enable their missional congregations to thrive and adapt.

We envision this season of reflective experimentation to stimulate engagement, learning, and missional collaboration within every context of the broader church. We envision churches that are given—within the proper relational and constitutional bounds—the flexibility and freedom to create new presbyteries or to become members of existing presbyteries within their larger region for achieving specific missional purposes. We envision presbyteries being formed through shared calling, shared commitments, and with a shared conviction to continue to build relationships, partnerships, and understanding both within and among various presbyteries. This will naturally require more cooperation, more collaboration, and more trust (of which we will have more to say later in this report).

We envision churches in conversations within their presbyteries of origin creating covenants of shared life and “mutual blessing” even while they create new provisional presbyteries or provisionally become members of other presbyteries.

We envision churches being committed to both their local neighborhoods and to a growing network of relationships and missional opportunities in a world where communication allows more creativity and opportunity for change.

We envision possibilities like those of the City Classis of the Reformed Church of America<sup>4</sup> that has created a mid council for the express purpose of planting new urban congregations and developing urban church planting leaders. We envision possibilities like the Fresh Expressions of the United Kingdom that has called for both “neighborhood” and “network” church structures.<sup>5</sup> We envision the potential for much deeper engagement by the emerging leaders of our church as a new generation that is fluent in the language and mores of our flat and *networked* world are given the trust and freedom to create and share in the accountability and oversight of new forms of ministry and covenanted life.

We dream of the creation of provisional presbyteries formed to express different deeply held missional callings of congregations and their leaders.

We envision different presbyteries in the same larger geographic area (perhaps even sharing the same staff) that come together with a special call for urban ministry, suburban ministry, rural ministry, reconciliation ministry, revitalizing congregations, or planting new congregations.

We envision churches free to move from one presbytery to another in a particular region in order to better live out their calling. We envision that some will want to be in smaller, more localized presbyteries; while others will want larger, more programmatic presbyteries; still others will choose to be part of “virtual” presbyteries that are spread across larger geographic areas.

Mostly, we envision a new generation of emerging leaders—who are most at home in what Doug Pagitt calls the [Inventive Age](#)—to become more personally involved in the reinvention of missional congregations supported by thriving, focused presbyteries in a denomination that is fully embracing the challenges of our rapidly changing world.

We offer these recommendations in the hope that they will energize the whole church to a season of more engaged partnership, collaboration, and creativity for bringing the mission of the God’s kingdom into diverse and rapidly changing local contexts.

*These proposals shift the focus of our connectional structures to presbyteries and congregations; refocus the church on mission, discipleship, and shared covenants; and train our focus on the post-Christendom cultural landscape, the future before us, and a new generation of leadership that is already emerging.*

#### *Further Work*

From the beginning of our work, the commission understood that our charge was limited to mid councils. However, our data collection, which was one of the largest listening projects ever conducted in the PC(USA), provided a broad and deep look at the perspectives of session members, presbytery and synod leaders, focus groups of racial ethnic constituencies, young pastors, large and small presbytery moderators and executive staffs, and a substantial “at large” representation of Presbyterians, all of whom rated and commented on our ecclesial structures. After a sustained and thorough time of listening to the church, it became clear to us that at least two issues beyond our focus on mid councils need to be lifted up for further work, expressed in Recommendations [7](#) and [8](#).

Our data clearly shows that many Presbyterians are calling for a shift from the top-down model of our current structure to a model that is characterized by a church-wide commitment to build up and support local congregations. Generally, congregations do not feel well supported by General Assembly agencies. Only 26 percent of session-level respondents rated the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) “excellent” or “very good” and only 33 percent gave those ratings to General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). There is a significant disconnect between local congregations and the agencies of the

General Assembly. We therefore call for the creation of a task force to review the nature and function of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly, specifically with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context.

The response throughout the church to our recommended change in the ecclesiastical status of synods heightened our awareness that there is need for a longer, more thorough examination of the conditions and possibilities of racial ethnic ministry in the context of changing ecclesial structures. The commission created its own task force to consult with leadership across the church and offers a report of its findings (see [Report from the Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force](#)). In response to these concerns, we recommend the creation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force to ensure that the advocacy for racial ethnic ministries, which has been traditionally located in synods, continue in the new ecclesial structures that emerge in the PC(USA).

Lastly, we offer the church some observations of underlying issues identified in our research that go beyond structural concerns of mid councils but are vital to the health and transformation of the PC(USA).

### *Conclusion*

Our report and recommendations invite the church to live into what has been called the “[adjacent possible](#)”.<sup>6</sup> It invites us to be a people who together take wise, deliberate, and *provisional* steps; who *experiment* with ways of being together; who “*try on*” relationships; who make *temporary* covenants without fully leaving behind the historical and geographical connections that have shaped our denomination to date.

Our proposal *does not require* change at the congregational or presbytery level, but *allows for flexibility, freedom, and authority* for those who endeavor to work out our connectional convictions in developing strategies, creating structures, initiating ministries, and sharing projects, all while being protected by the constitutional oversight of a regional administrative commission and a clear expiration date for what—God willing—will be a bold season of experimentation for a changing church in a changing world.

### Changing Contexts and Adaptive Change

*“How can we have enough freedom to imagine and articulate a real historical newness in our situation?”*

*Walter Brueggemann*

### *Our Vision*

We envision a larger geographic canvas, a secure frame of constitutional accountability, and creative, collaborative leaders experimenting in creating missional communities for sending disciples into the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We envision elders and congregations in thoughtful, bold experiments within and across presbyteries having as much flexibility as they need to create new models of “[covenant communities of missional congregations](#).”

We envision presbyteries as “[learning communities](#)” committed to a constant process of examining what works and adapting the organization to meet ever-changing needs.

We envision a growing commitment to [cultural proficiency](#), enriching and expanding each others’ cultural experiences, and demonstrating the gospel of Christ, which calls us all to be participants.

We envision innovative, practical expressions of [parity](#) between teaching and ruling elders, a cornerstone of Reformed polity, by encouraging experiments where churches and elders willingly take the steps necessary to discover what elder-led councils look like in a world full of demands.

We envision a growing number of specific, covenanted communities made up of churches that are uniquely called to the risks, experimentation, and leadership capacity that will be required to develop new churches and “[worshipping communities](#)” and support young congregational experiments.

We envision even more established congregations who join together either permanently or provisionally for a season of time to fulfill a call to nurture small or struggling congregations in bold and generous acts of partnership.

We envision “[network](#)” [presbyteries](#) existing alongside “[neighborhood](#)” [presbyteries](#) that better express and respond to the multiple ways that we live and build relationships in our world today.<sup>7</sup>

We understand that one commission cannot possibly envision all the ways that Presbyterian connectionalism can be expressed in intentional, covenantal life together.

We believe that the church is longing

- for a revitalization of healthy missional congregations,;
- to see more diverse, gifted, passionate, and engaged leadership collaborating for the mission of Jesus Christ;
- to stimulate the creation of new worshipping communities to live out the gospel to a world in need;
- to strengthen the bonds of congregational covenants;
- to exercise creativity for developing new models of a shared life of discipleship in a post-Christendom context;
- to trust one another more.

*Toward a Vibrant Picture of Post-Christendom Presbyterianism*

We want to catalyze the church to see with new eyes. We want to encourage faithful ruling and teaching elders to engage in collaborative works of missional artistry. We call upon the Spirit to inspire new visions of vibrant missional congregational life that faithfully witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a post-Christendom world. We invite ruling and teaching elders to converse and experiment around two pivotal questions of our time:

- What does a vital missional congregation in a post-Christendom context really look like?
- What leadership, structures, and covenant relationships will enable those missional congregations to flourish?

In this report, we see ourselves as “stretching a larger canvas,” creating a “strong frame” of constitutional oversight, and inviting congregations and presbyteries to engage in collaborative, contextual, and *provisional* creative experimentation. In addition, we have provided the “colors” of vibrancy that are already being used in the church—models that have been given generously to all of us from different places where experimentation is already occurring and have drawn attention to the spaces in the canvas where more work is needed.

We have listened to the church. We have learned from experts. We have talked and prayed long. We have discovered much to share. In addition to two significant recommendations, we offer reports, raise issues, and make five additional recommendations to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church in a world that is rapidly changing—which is where we begin.

*Presbyterians in a Post-Christendom World: The Changing Context of Mission in the 21st Century*

*The changing cultural context, the shifts that middle governing bodies are themselves already making, and a new domestic mission frontier all make this the right time, God’s time for us to examine the role, function and form of presbyteries and synods. (From the rationale of the charge to the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies, Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 275)*

*In such a situation of profound change, it is no surprise that the ecclesial structures developed for Christendom appear to have less relevance after Christendom. Darrell Guder*

Like all [mainline Protestant](#) denominations in the United States, the PC(USA) feels like a church in crisis. For at least four decades our numbers have diminished at a steady rate. We desperately hold on to dying congregations and yet fail to see the imperative need to plant new communities of faith. What we now call mid councils—presbyteries and synods—feel like relics of the past. Created for a different time, we are incapable of supporting their lumbering bureaucracies today. Our biennial General Assemblies are locked in endless battles over regulations and persist in making social proclamations to which no one seems to pay much attention. We wonder if it is possible to maintain unity in the midst of great diversity, and we have no clear sense of what that unity might actually look like.

Christianity is like a river with many branches. Like others before it, the Presbyterian stream could run its course. It could disperse into nothing. Its water could run dry. But, it is just as likely that this stream will experience a resurgence of living water. For many, this is a time of hope and new life. It is a time of emergence and the birthing of new ways of being Christian—perhaps even new ways of being Presbyterian.

*A Denomination in Decline*

It is well known that practically every mainline Protestant denomination—and increasingly, many of the evangelical denominations—has experienced a significant decline in membership and overall strength since the middle of the 20th century.<sup>8</sup> The experience of the PC(USA) is consistent with this overall trend. The membership of the PC(USA) is now half of what its predecessor denominations were in 1965, a loss of more than 2,000,000 members.<sup>9</sup>

In 2008, as the PC(USA) celebrated the 25th anniversary of Reunion, the denomination had experienced a net loss of almost 1,000,000 members since the 1983 merger, from 3,131,228 to 2,140,165. By 2010, our membership had further dropped to 2,016,091—a decrease of almost 36 percent over the course of twenty-seven years.<sup>10</sup> Though the rate of decline is

less severe, the number of PC(USA) congregations has also dropped from 11,662 in 1983 to 10,560 in 2010, a loss of nearly 9.5 percent. In every year since Reunion, we have lost more congregations than we have gained.<sup>11</sup>

For the congregations that remain, the situation is often dire. We are an increasingly aging denomination, with a median age of 61. The average size of PC(USA) congregations has been significantly reduced over the past quarter century. It is now the case that half of all congregations have a membership of 100 or less.<sup>12</sup> During this same time, average worship attendance has also dropped significantly.<sup>13</sup> The percentage of these shrinking congregations that can afford to employ an installed pastor has decreased dramatically. In 2010, 44 percent of PC(USA) congregations had no installed pastor.<sup>14</sup>

The reasons for this overall decline in church membership are often debated. Though a widespread assumption persists that denominational controversies cause people to leave their local congregations, research has long demonstrated that this is not the case.<sup>15</sup> Membership losses among all mainline Protestant denominations have been steady and consistent for half a century, regardless of particular leaders or particular controversies.

Presbyterian statistician Jack Marcum has suggested a variety of explanations for the decline of the PC(USA), all of which ultimately come down to the fact that every year we lose more members than we gain. Low birth rates are a significant cause.<sup>16</sup> It is also the case that we lose more members to transfers than we attract.<sup>17</sup>

Most significantly, however, is the reality that we are not reaching out to newcomers or investing in new church development.<sup>18</sup> As a denomination, across all geographic areas, we are not planting enough new faith communities. Between 2000 and 2010, only 226 new churches were chartered.<sup>19</sup> This is simply not sustainable. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of the 21st century must be a denomination that encourages and nurtures new church development.

#### *Diminishing Resources*

What the membership decline of our denomination means for mid councils is clear. Though individual financial giving to congregations has steadily increased since Reunion,<sup>20</sup> the sharp decline in membership has created significant funding problems for presbyteries and synods. For years, we have depended on human and financial resources from local congregations to fund and provide leadership for these middle judicatories. As both types of resources are increasingly strained at the local level, it is obvious that there is less and less available to sustain the older bureaucratic models of church governance.

#### *Unsustainable Bureaucracies*

The evolution of presbyteries as the characteristic feature of Presbyterian polity in the United States is an important element of our contextual understanding. Presbyteries as we know them today developed from [ecclesial institutions](#) in Calvin's Geneva that were responsible for church order, discipline, ordination of ministers, continuing education, mutual encouragement, and missionary work. Joseph Small notes that while order, discipline, ordination, and mission have prevailed as the major responsibilities of presbyteries, theology and mutual encouragement are no longer central. "Without the corporate engagement of pastors and elders in biblical, theological, and ecclesiological inquiry, ecclesial order is easily bureaucratized while discipline is either ignored or factionalized."<sup>21</sup>

Small goes on to describe how church judicatories became *governing bodies*, which were quickly bureaucratized in parallel with the bureaucratization of American society in the middle of the 20th century.<sup>22</sup> In the 1970s, presbyteries were further transformed into *mission agencies* and were expected to carry out mission of their own, rather than function primarily as support for the mission of local congregations. Over time these bodies became complex and cumbersome bureaucracies.<sup>23</sup> Synods became equally bureaucratized and program driven. At both levels, the demand for professional staff—predominantly drawn from teaching elders—contributed to the gradual clericalization of the church as the role of teaching elder eclipsed the role of ruling elder.

This approach to mid councils made sense and actually worked quite well for an American society that valued bureaucracy and the organizational models of the corporate business world. At the time of these developments, the church had enough members to sustain such complex structures. But in today's globalized world of flatter organizational structures, and with the realities of a much smaller and less resourced church, these bureaucratic and program driven mid council models are anachronistic, burdensome, and unsustainable. In response, most mainline Protestant denominations are moving away from centralized bureaucracies to flatter, more fluid structures.<sup>24</sup>

#### *The Quest for True Parity*

A central element of John Calvin's [ecclesiology](#) was the rejection of [clericalism](#). By instituting the ecclesial offices of elder and deacon, Calvin broke down the distinction between "clergy" and "laity."<sup>25</sup> It follows, then, that the basic structure and polity of Presbyterianism in the United States demands parity between what have traditionally been called *teaching elders* and *ruling elders*. At the time of Reunion, these traditional titles were changed to *minister of the Word and Sacrament* and *elder*. This change in language, along with the gradual bureaucratization of middle governing bodies, led to the very kind of clericalism that Calvin intended to avoid—pastors were considered true ministers and elders were relegated to supporting roles.<sup>26</sup>



The return to the traditional titles of teaching elder and ruling elder in the new Form of Government represents a desire within the church to reverse this clericalizing trend. However, without accompanying structural changes to bureaucratic mid councils, the idealism of parity between teaching elders and ruling elders will remain impractical.

Ruling elders must balance their ecclesial commitments with the demands of their careers and the general busyness of contemporary life. Many functions of mid councils are being carried out by volunteers instead of paid staff because of diminishing resources and budget cuts. This means longer and more frequent meetings in already tight schedules. Additionally, taking time off from work for church meetings is much less acceptable in today's culture than it was in the past. Does true parity exist when participation in mid councils is understood as part of the job description of teaching elders but ruling elders are forced to either take time off from work or not participate at all? Are we able to ensure representation from younger professionals, hourly wage workers, and single parents?

As we will see, parity between teaching elders and ruling elder is consistent with the values of emerging generations. Can we develop structures and practices that move this parity from a professed ideal to a lived reality?

#### *Differences, Divisions, and Conflicts*

As we have already noted, research demonstrates that denominational controversies are not, as many often assume, the primary cause for membership losses in mainline Protestant denominations like the PC(USA). Nonetheless, we must consider the realities of the "[post-10-A](#)" world in which we now live. After decades of conflict, congregations dissatisfied with recent changes in ordination standards are leaving the denomination and/or considering the creation of new Reformed bodies.

When the process of Reunion formally concluded in 1991, rumblings of discontent were quick to surface when a seventeen-member Special Committee on Human Sexuality produced a controversial report called "Keeping Body and Soul Together: Sexuality, Spirituality, and Social Justice." Although the General Assembly did not approve this report, its reverberations were felt across the denomination. While this was not the first time human sexuality was addressed by the General Assembly, it did mark the beginning of a long and sustained season of open conflict about the issue. Six years later, when the "fidelity and chastity" clause was added to the *Book of Order*, the matter was far from settled. Division and dissension increased with every subsequent debate and vote on ordination standards, leading up to and including the 2010 General Assembly approval of Amendment 10-A, which replaced the "fidelity and chastity" clause, and its eventual ratification by a majority of presbyteries in 2011.

Two realities of this twenty-year period of conflict and constitutional maneuvering need to be reckoned with. First, while faithful Presbyterians were engaged in meaningful mission and ministry to a broken and hurting world, the success of these endeavors was often overshadowed by persistent denominational controversies. Second, as our denomination experienced significant declines in membership, it has been difficult to address new ways of approaching ministry in a rapidly changing world while being continually engaged in internal theological conflict. As a result, polarized factions within the church are now ill-equipped to work together as an effective church for the 21st century.

Our biblical and theological traditions exhort us to dwell together in Christian unity. This unity should serve as a witness to the world, pointing people to Christ's vision of God's kingdom. Unfortunately, discord and disunity are more typical characteristics of our public witness. Though our theology and polity encourage unity, we are increasingly incapable of sustaining significant relationships across party lines.

Nonetheless, it may be that our discord more accurately reflects *failed institutional practices* than a disregard for Christian unity. Our polity is guided by parliamentary procedure and the processes of constitutional emendation, both of which rely on divisive debates and polarizing votes. This approach assumes that it is possible and desirable for the church to arrive at a single conclusion that will resolve a given conflict. We have relied on *conflict resolution* rather than *polarity management*.<sup>27</sup>

This method has not served us well. Resolving differences on important, complex, and controversial matters is not accomplished through parliamentary procedures. Biblical and theological discernment has become a competitive and political process in which there are always winners and losers.

Denominational structures and practices aimed at achieving a singular stance on a controversial issue is a remarkably mono-cultural approach during an era marked by commitments to multiculturalism, diversity, and pluralism. Is it possible for a multiplicity of Christian perspectives on controversial issues to exist within a single church?<sup>28</sup> Is it possible to develop structures and practices that allow Presbyterians to express with integrity diverse biblical and theological commitments?

When it comes to theological differences within our denomination, human sexuality is only the tip of the iceberg. Some have even argued that these differences constitute distinct religious traditions and cultures that cannot be reconciled. Whether that is true or not, without creative and flexible structures and practices, we will continue to wage battles designed to decide winners and losers. In the end, we will all lose.

#### *Multiculturalism and Racial Ethnic Representation*

Diversity and multiculturalism are professed values of the PC(USA), but it is clear that this is still not our reality. Even though, in relative terms, racial ethnic minorities are growing while the white majority is decreasing,<sup>29</sup> we are still an

overwhelmingly white church in terms of membership and culture. In this respect, the church is not keeping up with demographic and cultural shifts within the wider American society. Census Bureau projections indicate that by 2050 current minorities will become the majority in the United States.<sup>30</sup>

Is our church capable of adapting to this new reality? How can we be intentional in the development of ministries that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural composition of the United States? What kinds of structural models can be developed in order to ensure the full participation of racial ethnic constituencies in all the councils of the church? How can we grow as a multicultural church that ministers effectively to and with first generation immigrants as well as second and third generations whose language, cultural characteristics, and worldviews are becoming different from their predecessors?

Beyond racial diversity, religious diversity is also becoming more and more pronounced in American society. Yet Robert Wuthnow has exposed how poorly American Christians are doing at engaging this growing pluralism.<sup>31</sup> At macro-levels of Christian theology and in local expressions of Christian communities, it seems that interreligious dialogue and cooperation have been more idealistic than experienced in reality. While our laws protect against religious discrimination and promote religious freedom, our cultural engagement with diversity has been superficial at best and mired in ignorance at worst. Christian leaders and congregation members have survived, in part, by burying their heads in the sand and ignoring the diversity that is growing around them. Yet this is becoming less and less possible as populations of non-Christians grow ever more numerous and involved in public discourse. Wuthnow challenges religious leaders, especially those in the dwindling Christian majority, to develop more effective and meaningful ways of interacting with the religious diversity of our culture.

Expanding our focus to global realities, Philip Jenkins has chronicled how the historical locus of Western Christianity in Europe and North America is being supplanted by the exponential rise of Christianity in the global South, especially in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.<sup>32</sup> The long-held dominance of Europeans and North Americans in global Christianity is a thing of the past and, given trends in both the Western world (in which Christianity is waning) and the developing world (in which Christianity is flourishing), this seems unlikely to change in the future. The post-Christendom reality of Christianity in the United States, about which we will say more below, is no longer simply a matter of the [disestablishment](#) of mainline Protestantism and the dwindling sense of influence and relevancy the church has in public discourse. Rather, our post-Christendom status has been reduced even further. Not only has mainline Protestantism lost its place in American culture, we have lost our dominance in Christianity around the world. A telling reality check in this regard is the 2011 vote of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico to end its 139-year mission relationship with the PC(USA).<sup>33</sup>

In addition to getting its own house in order, the PC(USA) needs to figure out its identity as a minority communion within the wider body of global Christianity.

### *Living in the “Posts”*

Human beings have a tendency to view our history chronologically. More specifically, we tend to think of history *diachronically* (that is, through time) rather than *synchronically* (one period at a time) or *synoptically* (all at once). We most often consider our present with respect to our immediate past. We outline history as a succession of periods, realizing, of course, that the boundaries between periods are often fuzzy. Living in the midst of massive cultural change, it is now common to understand ourselves as living in a variety of “posts.”

### *Post-Christendom*

For centuries, Christian religion and culture dominated the Western world. This was especially true in American culture up through the middle of the 20th century. But this is no longer the case. Christianity in general—and, for Americans, Protestantism in particular—is no longer the definitive center and shaper of culture. “Christendom”—the triumphal reign of Christianity in Western culture—is over.

Theologian Douglas John Hall provides a concise summary of cultural shifts that help us understand this development.

Many influences have brought about this historiographic change: the decline of Christianity in the West; the decline of the West itself; the failure of the modern vision; the new consciousness of their own worth on the part of non-European people; a critical perception of the technological society on the part of many who have experienced its most advanced forms; the impact of religious and cultural pluralism, especially perhaps in North America; and (not least of all) the self-criticism of serious Christianity, its recognition of its own questionable triumphalism, of patriarchalism, of the equation of the Christian mission with Euro-American imperialism and so forth.<sup>34</sup>

For mainline Protestant churches like the PC(USA), this means that we are no longer part of the cultural “establishment.” We must struggle for visibility and battle numerous competing institutions and elements of popular culture for the interest, time, and resources we used to take for granted in our membership. Sunday morning is no longer sacred time in American society. Across the country, Presbyterians rarely represent a significant percentage of local populations.<sup>35</sup> Our influence in the public square is greatly diminished. When our General Assemblies make bold public statements about social issues, we wonder if anyone is paying attention.

Missional theologian Darrell Guder helps us understand the structural implications of these shifts for a denomination like the PC(USA).

In such a situation of profound change, it is no surprise that the ecclesial structures developed for Christendom appear to have less relevance after Christendom. Whereas at one time it was the task of presbyteries, as one expression of a Christendom structure, to ensure that the church carried out all its duties in a region, there may now be better ways of doing that.<sup>36</sup>

Like all mainline Protestant denominations, the PC(USA) must come to terms with what it means to be a post-establishment, post-Christendom church in the 21st century.

### *Post-Denominational*

At the same time as Protestantism in general has lost its cultural cachet, the appreciation of distinct denominational identities has become less critical to the average American Protestant. The great variety of Protestant denominations in the United States is the result of both theological and ethnic differentiation among European peoples who settled on this continent. As these groups continued to develop with time, as cultures mixed, as people moved throughout the country, and as populations shifted from the relative isolation of rural communities to highly concentrated urban centers, denominational identity has become less and less important. In the contemporary marketplace of religious options, in which there are negligible costs—financial or cultural—for switching between congregations and faith communities, denominational affiliation is no longer the primary reason people choose a particular church. “Brand loyalty” is no longer a compelling factor in the growth or success of a congregation.

In his compelling essay on the theology of denominations, Barry Ensign-George reminds us that *denomination* is a “middle term between congregation and church” that “binds congregations together in formal patterns of mutual life.” Ensign-George defines *denomination* as “a contingent, intermediary, partial and permeable embodiment of the church which binds together multiple congregations in a shared commitment to live together in a particular pattern of common life which is built on shared decisions about theological adiaphora and essentials.”<sup>37</sup> While previous generations may have balked at words like “contingent” and “permeable,” it is exactly this more fluid understanding of larger church life that must be at the center of any discussion about the PC(USA)’s self-understanding as a denomination in a changing world.

What does it mean to be a Presbyterian *denomination* in this larger [post-denominational](#) cultural context? Are there in fact distinctive features of our form of Christianity that will—or should—persist in this era? How much can we change and adapt before we stop being Presbyterian? Does that even matter anymore?

### *Postmodern*

Perhaps the most misunderstood “post” in which we find ourselves is the radical shift from modernism to [postmodernism](#) that characterized the 20th century and continues to shape the 21st. In fact, this monumental “post” is at least in part responsible for the other “posts” we have considered. In the postmodern era, the multifaceted ways in which Western culture was transformed by the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment have been called into question. New ways of perceiving the world and our place in it have taken root. As a waning fixture of a Western culture that is being dramatically reshaped, the church must come to terms with what postmodernism means for our expression of the gospel.

### *Embracing the Pathos of Our Situation*

Having surveyed a variety of ways in which the context of mission and ministry is rapidly changing, we must recognize that this is a [kairotic](#) moment for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Walter Brueggemann, who has suggested that *exile* is a fitting metaphor for the situation in which the U.S. church now finds itself,<sup>38</sup> describes the *embrace of pathos* as a critical moment in the exercise of prophetic imagination.<sup>39</sup> “How,” asks Brueggemann, “can we have enough freedom to imagine and articulate a real historical newness in our situation?”<sup>40</sup> His answer lies in the embrace of pathos and the willingness to engage the very real possibility of our own demise.

Brueggemann notes that we have a remarkable propensity for numbness about death. Apathy—the absence of pathos—characterizes our attitude toward the institutions that we rely on for order, security, and meaning. We refuse to recognize failure. We cling to familiar patterns and structures. We want to pacify our grief and reassure ourselves that everything is going to be okay.

Prophetic imagination cuts through these tendencies and brings us face-to-face with the realities of our situation. In order to move us into a place where we can envision new realities, we must first confront the sobering realization that our current trajectory is leading us to death.

When some in our church suggested that our denomination is “deathly ill,”<sup>41</sup> many reacted with defensive protests that there is still plenty of life and vitality in the PC(USA). Anecdotal evidence, drawn from positive experiences in thriving congregations and with faithful people, is offered as a counter-narrative to the “deathly ill” diagnosis. We hold fast to evidence that God is doing good things in our midst.

But we cannot let these legitimate signs of God’s Spirit moving throughout our church obscure the equally evident reality of our slow but steady demise—a “doomsday scenario” based on a statistical projection suggests that our membership

could shrink to zero in just twenty years.<sup>42</sup> We must hold these realities together in creative tension. For all of our genuine vitality, there are also critical indications of death. Our declining numbers, aging congregations, diminished resources, and debilitating conflicts cannot be ignored any longer. We must not move too quickly to obscure the grief of our situation with comfort or hope, as important as these are. We must embrace the pathos associated with admitting that what we are doing is not working.

More bluntly, we must admit that we are dying in order to experience rebirth.

#### *A New World*

As it turns out, observers of both culture and religion have been eagerly reporting that now is in fact an era of change, rebirth, and emergence throughout Western and global culture.

Change is happening to us, whether we initiate or not. The multifaceted impact of [globalization](#) has flattened our world in a way unprecedented in human history.<sup>43</sup> Networks of innovation and adaptation we cannot see enmesh us in complex connections through such systems as stock markets, gas prices, and global disease. The human condition cannot be understood locally or nationally, but only globally.<sup>44</sup> [Web 2.0](#) and [wiki culture](#) have changed the way we collaborate and innovate across the globe.<sup>45</sup> Hierarchies and bureaucracies are being eclipsed by flat, decentralized, and egalitarian organizational models.<sup>46</sup> Within these emerging networks of relationships and collaboration, imagination and experimentation drive innovation in new and exciting ways.<sup>47</sup>

Various suggestions have been made for how we might understand the intersection of these cultural revolutions and the church. In a recent analysis of American Christianity over the past 200 years—a relatively short period of time that has seen remarkably quick and far-reaching change—Doug Pagitt divides our history into four successive periods: the *Agrarian Age*, the *Industrial Age*, the *Information Age*, and what he calls the *Inventive Age*.<sup>48</sup> Most pertinent to our discussion is the transition from the Information Age to the Inventive Age, which Pagitt describes as a shift from being *consumers* of information to *producers and participants*. If the Information Age was characterized by television and the mass consumption of information on the internet, the Inventive Age is typified by Web 2.0, wiki culture, and social networking. “The Inventive Age is one in which inclusion, participation, collaboration, and beauty are essential values. It is the age of ownership and customization and user-created content.”<sup>49</sup>

Phyllis Tickle has developed an influential [stratigraphy](#) of Christian history which suggests that every 500 years the church engages in a cultural and ecclesiastical “rummage sale” that sifts through the dead and dying elements of the past en route to a new expression of life and faith. The latest of these, in the midst of which we currently find ourselves, Tickle labels [the Great Emergence](#).<sup>50</sup>

As Tickle narrates it, the Great Emergence began in the 20th century with the publication of Albert Einstein’s “Special Theory of Relativity,” followed by Heisenberg’s “Uncertainty Principle.” These revolutionary concepts changed the way we think about the world by pointing out that the very act of observation changes the object being observed.<sup>51</sup> An analogous development in literary studies called deconstruction suggested that truth is also relative and dependent on the act of interpretation. All the while, rapidly accelerating technological advances and unprecedented changes in family structures and gender roles were radically changing American culture. In some respects, the hierarchal and centralized structures of midcentury Protestant denominations grew in response to this destabilization of traditional American life. But as these denominations experienced post-Christendom disestablishment, traditional religion was greatly challenged. “Spiritual but not religious” became a popular alternative, an alternative that Reformation Christianity was not prepared to engage.<sup>52</sup> The world was changing. The triumphant certainty of modernity gave way to the ambiguity, uncertainty, and humility of post-Christendom life in a postmodern world.

#### *Emerging Church Responses to Our Changing World*

In some cases, the church has reacted to these shifts in defensive or fundamentalist ways.<sup>53</sup> In other cases, the church has tried to change and adapt along with the rest of the world, recognizing that these changes are not threatening or challenging, but liberating and life-giving.

Hierarchal and bureaucratic forms of ecclesial structures are giving way to [network theory](#) and [crowd sourcing](#).<sup>54</sup> [Bounded-set](#) understandings of church membership are being replaced with [center-set](#) approaches.<sup>55</sup> Philosophically and theologically, narrative is taking priority over logic.<sup>56</sup> All of these can be understood as Christian adaptations to the changing contexts of our flat, networked, postmodern, post-Christendom world.

Theologian Tony Jones suggests a variety of ways in which the still developing [emerging church movement](#) is reconciling Christian faith and practice with the changing world. In descriptive statements that Jones calls “dispatches from the emergent frontier,” one can recognize specific reflections, responses, and adaptations to the changing contexts of our world. Here are some of the dispatches most pertinent to our inquiry, paired with concepts from the changing contexts we have discussed.

Dispatch from the Emergent Frontier	Changing Contexts
Emergents find little importance in the discrete differences between the various flavors of Christianity. Instead, they practice a generous orthodoxy that appreciates the contributions of all Christian movements. <sup>57</sup>	Post-denominationalism Differences, Divisions, and Conflicts Multiculturalism
Emergents reject the politics and theologies of left versus right. Seeing both sides as remnant of modernity, they look forward to a more complex reality. <sup>58</sup>	Differences, Divisions, and Conflicts Embrace of complexity, ambiguity, paradox, and plurality Suspicion of certainty
The emergent movement is not exclusively North American; it is growing around the globe. <sup>59</sup>	Multiculturalism New global Christianity Post-colonial, post-Christendom
Emergents see God’s activity in all aspects of culture and reject the sacred-secular divides. <sup>60</sup>	Post-Christendom Quest for true polarity and anti-clericalism
Emergents believe that an envelope of friendship and reconciliation must surround all debates about doctrine and dogma. <sup>61</sup>	Differences, Divisions, and Conflicts Suspicion of certainty Critique of objectivity Relativity
Emergents find the biblical call to community more compelling than the democratic call to individual rights. The challenge lies in being faithful to both ideals. <sup>62</sup>	Shift from individualism to community
Emergents believe that theology is local, conversational, and temporary. To be faithful to the theological giants of the past, emergents endeavor to continue their theological dialogue. <sup>63</sup>	Challenges to old assumptions and authorities Deconstruction Suspicion of certainty Embrace of complexity, ambiguity, paradox, and plurality
Emergents believe that awareness of our relative position—to God, to one another, and to history—breeds biblical humility, not relativistic apathy. <sup>64</sup>	Relativity Critique of objectivity
Emergents believe that truth, like God, cannot be definitively articulated by finite human beings. <sup>65</sup>	Suspicion of certainty Embrace of complexity, ambiguity, paradox, and plurality
Emergents embrace paradox, especially those that are core components of the Christian story. <sup>66</sup>	Suspicion of certainty Embrace of complexity, ambiguity, paradox, and plurality
Emergents believe that church should function more like an open-source network and less like a hierarchy or bureaucracy. <sup>67</sup>	Globalism and flattening Networking, Web 2.0, and wiki culture Shift from individualism to community
Emergents downplay—or outright reject—the differences between clergy and laity. <sup>68</sup>	Quest for true polarity and anti-clericalism Post-Christendom

What can Presbyterians learn from these innovations? To be sure, in pockets of the PC(USA) the emerging church movement has already taken root and is yielding creative new ways of being church. But how might this movement inform our project of reimagining the structure of our denomination at the mid council level?

### *Geography Isn’t What It Used to Be*

In our flat and networked world, geography does not mean the same thing it once did. Transportation, information, and communication technologies have redefined how we answer the timeless question, “Who is my neighbor?”

As we consider what it means to be Presbyterian in a flat, networked, post-Christendom world, we must be open to expressions of connectionalism that neither Calvin nor the founders of American Presbyterianism could have possibly imagined.

Theologian and historian Craig Van Gelder addresses how this changing reality intersects with Presbyterian polity.

“A key turn in the missional church conversation has been its shift toward focusing mission on every congregation’s immediate context rather than on some distant community. This remains a pivotal impulse. Yet the geographical focus of the missional church on particular places in which churches are located must be complemented by consideration of the non-geographical character of community life today. The question, who is my neighbor? is now much more complex. It is not enough merely to focus on an immediate geographic neighborhood. If one does, one will likely discover that the neighbors’ tightest relational networks may span hundreds of thousands of miles. Building relationships with neighbors and participating in their lives and living spaces must engage virtual, as well as physical forms of community. ... The classic Christendom pattern of the geographical parish must be rethought for churches in the west that are inheritors of the state church traditions from Europe (Roman Catholic and mainline denominations in particular). One the one hand, the parish concept points toward a particular locale as a focus for missional participation... On the other hand, the natural flows of community life are often no longer primarily neighborhood based...”<sup>69</sup>

According to Van Gelder, our polity must take into consideration the changing nature of our relationships. What was once assumed—that neighbor meant proximity—is much more complex in a flat and networked world. People of all generations now maintain relationships across vast distances. Churches develop meaningful partnerships in countries around

the world. As the world becomes at once more connected and more distant, the church needs to live into and help shape this reality for the cause of Christ.

*From Changing Contexts to New Models*

This section of our report has attempted to summarize as succinctly as possible the incredible ways in which the contexts for mission and ministry in which we find ourselves are rapidly changing. Perhaps never in the history of the PC(USA) or its predecessor denominations has so much changed so rapidly, demanding new forms and methods of being church. As we move on from our assessment of changing contexts to new models, we suggest the following questions as guides and evaluative tools.

- Will our models help us reach [emerging generations](#)?
- Will our models support new church development?
- Will our models help us manage the polarity of our church?
- Will our models help us become a truly multicultural church?
- Will our models ensure representation and support of racial ethnic minorities?
- Will our models be flexible enough to adapt (reform) in anticipation of continuing, rapid change?
- Will our models nurture connectionalism and relationships in a flat, networked world?
- Will our models enhance true parity between ruling and teaching elders?
- Do our models reflect a missional ecclesiology?
- Will our models enable participation, creativity, and innovation?

Our commission offers a response to these questions arising from this changing context.

*A Church (and a Commission) in a Rapidly Changing World*

*The American Protestant church is in a wholesale struggle about what it means to be a denominating group of Christian believers ... Doing traditional functions in new ways is likely inadequate. Eileen Lindner*

*Beyond the congregation, however, mainline Protestant institutions are in a state of deep crisis and desperately in need of renewal. After this journey, I am more convinced than ever that if American religious institutions are to regain their spiritual grounding, they will need to listen to and learn from the spiritual practices of local congregations. Diana Butler Bass*

*How does the church truly regain its understanding of itself as called and sent, remembering that the term mission means, in fact, 'sending' (see John 20:21)? How does the church move beyond the idea that Christian identity is basically a geographical or cultural or organizational concept?<sup>70</sup> Darrell Guder*

*If western societies have become post-Christian mission fields, how can traditional churches become then missionary churches?<sup>71</sup> Lesslie Newbigin*

As we have already demonstrated, we are living in a moment of rapid, intense, global and cultural change. Every sector of public and private life—every institution, every organization and, for our purposes, every church—is facing a moment of intense transition. (Indeed, even our commission was renamed in the middle of our work because the denomination adopted a new Form of Government.) In this report, the Mid Council Commission of the 219th General Assembly (2010) sought to answer one looming question that was at the heart of our very formation: “*How are governing bodies best organized to be responsive both to the Spirit of Christ and changing opportunities for discipleship?*”

To answer this question, the Mid Council Commission offers two bold recommendations that will require the engagement and assent of the whole church and changes to our Constitution. This is not a quick fix. Nor is it anything near a final or perfect answer. *But these recommendations alter the way we address our deepest challenges and engage the church in processes of learning and reinvention that could shape the church for decades to come.*

From our conversations, readings, and reflections, we offer a variety of perspectives and recommendations for creating the conditions that will equip the whole church to create councils and support congregations who winsomely proclaim and demonstrate the gospel and mission of Jesus Christ in the world.

The rationale for the creation of our commission also asked a second question that guided us in our pursuit of an answer to the first: “*Are the structures of history the best platforms for carrying our mission into the future?*”

Our response is a clear “Yes and No.”

*Yes*, the theological, ecclesiological, missional, and relational *structures* that make up our Presbyterian tradition and ethos are exactly the platforms we need for carrying our mission into the future. Our commitment to the mission of Jesus Christ, our passion for collaborative and relational connectionalism, our rich theological history, our hard-won wisdom for including all voices and perspectives are the *cultural and identity structures* that indeed provide the foundation for our mission.

*No*, after extensive listening to the church, consulting with experts from the fields of theology, history, polity, and sociology, after reading both deep and wide in the lessons of change that are coming out of every institution in the world today, and after considering the changing contexts in which we live, we can say clearly that the structures of mid councils (formerly middle governing bodies) and the institutional mental models that they have been based upon (especially in the regulatory and *institutional* era of the just past century)<sup>72</sup> are not adequate for the “changing opportunities for discipleship” that engage and challenge us today.

We believe that the changing cultural contexts of our day require deep adaptation as opposed to anxious striving for simple solutions. Our proposal creates the conditions for adaptive change at the mid council level—change that is consistent with our theological values and for the express purpose of *revitalizing missional congregations in a post-Christendom world*.

Scholars and practitioners of adaptive change<sup>73</sup> call for an approach that has large-scale, group learning as the core practice. As disciples (literally, “learners”) of Jesus Christ, this is an expression of our most treasured identity. Adaptive change requires creating organizational “safe holding environments” where experimentation and risk taking can take place. As members of communities founded on the grace and forgiveness of God, this is familiar terrain. Adaptive change requires group transformation in order to address our greatest challenges. It addresses underlying and competing values, and especially “giving the work back to the people who are most affected” to experiment with new approaches for addressing their biggest challenges.

If we can recapture our own conviction that, as theologian Emil Brunner stated, the *essence* of the congregation is the fellowship of believers who are joined in love for the mission of God in its local context,<sup>74</sup> then the essence of the presbytery is *the covenant relationship of those congregations*, (which Darrell Guder helpfully defines—and will become our working definition—as “*Covenant Communities of Missional Congregations*”).

*Further, if the essence of the presbytery IS the covenant relationship of the churches that are joined together for missional ends, then exploring and experimenting with the practices and possibilities that arise from this understanding will be at the heart of any faithful and lasting adaptation.*

*In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God’s mission in the world...As it participates in God’s mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks...a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God’s activity in the world (F-1.0404)*

As we have listened to the church, we heard considerable yearning in every layer of the church’s life, from ordained officers to frustrated folk in the pews, to see these deeply shared biblical convictions flourish once again:

- To discover practices and ways of being church in a post-Christendom context.
- To engage in evangelism that sees people come to faith and be baptized as followers of Jesus Christ.
- To experience more relational and less regulatory ways of being connectional.
- To focus on mission to the world not denominational fights.
- To plant new congregations, to birth new worshipping communities.

We believe this is the voice of the Spirit in the church and we contend that if every structure of our church is committed to the health and vitality of local congregations as the locus of God’s mission in the world, then these convictions will become the practices that bring revitalization.

So instead of affirming structures that only protect us from the dysfunction of a few, we offer a proposal for the “*maturing, motivated, and the missional*”; that is, those who are willing to work together to draw upon the historic values of our past and faithfully reinterpret them to engage a far different world than any of our forbearers imagined.

### *Maturing*

By this we mean that we need structures for lifetime learners, for continually adapting disciples, for those who are restless to keep pressing on, growing, discerning, surrendering, and humbly staying open to the word of God and the voice of the Spirit. We need structures that give freedom to fail and encourage self and communal expression. We need structures that

will call us to live in mutual submission and growing trust as we grow in wisdom, understanding, faithfulness, and fruitfulness. We need structures that adapt to and accommodate those who are committed to building trust through transparency, accountability, and congruence of belief and life. We need structures that allow for both clearly communicated convictions and the patience to respectfully be with others who we believe are in error. We envision many more structures where the system honors, values, rewards, invests in, and even adapts to those who are willing to take responsibility for shaping the healthy and the good; permission-giving structures that are built around shared agreements, covenants, values, and convictions rather than around top-down enforced alignment.

### *Motivated*

Creative people in presbyteries all over the country are experimenting and innovating—aligning around shared missional passions and faith convictions—giving a fresh expression to their deepest beliefs. We are constitutionally called to be an elder-led, context specific, collaborative church. While we need regulations that enable us to fulfill our fiduciary responsibilities, provide accountability, and ensure that all decisions that are made are consistent with our theology and polity. We also need room to try new things, to affirm risk-taking, and to give space for discernment. We need structures that reward passion and motivation; that generously celebrate innovation; that respectfully collaborate in one creative leap of faith after another; that encourage big risks, big failures, and the deep learning that comes from them

### *Missional*

Missional congregations are those where the central organizing principle is personal and communal participation in the mission of God in Jesus Christ to redeem and heal all of creation. To be a missional congregation means that the discerned calling of a community of believers to serve in the world as Christ's witness is the result of their gathering, worship, and sending. To be a missional PC(USA) means that we live in the conviction that every structure beyond the congregation exists so that *congregations* can fulfill *their* mission.

In today's culture, many are weighed down by endless debates, issue politics, and suspicion of other's motivation. The church is hindered from being missional within this environment. As a result, many congregations and councils are not thriving because they have turned inward, focusing on survival.

If there is one clear missional conviction that is growing into a chorus of shared enthusiasm throughout many diverse contexts in the church, it is *making a fundamental priority of new church development*. A church-wide initiative envisions 1,001 new worshipping communities.<sup>15</sup> We contend that number is way too low. Can we imagine mid councils that would enable us to conceive birth, nurture, and mature new generations of missional worshipping communities? How would seminaries and other entities charged with the development of leaders support this conviction?

At the heart of adaptive change is the requirement to “give work back to the people most affected.” We believe that the constitutional changes we propose are an expression of the conviction that health and vitality, faithfulness, and fidelity will only come about through *more* congregational engagement, *more* personal responsibility-taking, *more* passionate convictions, more freedom and creativity within safe, clear shared boundaries than ever before. We must have structures that encourage adaptation toward health and faithfulness, toward those who are willing to keep *maturing*, who are *motivated* to take on the mantle of calling and personal responsibility by continually re-engaging and re-committing to each other, and who are from start to finish utterly committed to the *missional* principle of the local congregation as the primary locus for participating in the mission of Jesus Christ in every context.

To that end we offer these questions to encourage this larger conversation:

- What if presbyteries were formed and shaped by diverse and multi-dimensional relationships and missional convictions with the purpose of serving missional congregations?
- What would it look like, what would change, how would we reconfigure our presbytery life if the very essence of it was relational, communal, and covenantal?
- What if the only purpose of regulations (which are indeed necessary) was to safeguard those defining values?
- What would it look like if we had structures that encouraged each congregation to discern whatever configuration of presbytery would nurture its unique and shared missional calling as it lives its life in mutual submission to other congregations?
- What would be the possibilities for presbyteries shaped around specific callings, including birthing new missional communities, the unique challenges of a particular context, or shared partnership in specific mission endeavors?<sup>16</sup>
- What if we allowed change for our denomination to come NOT only from a centralized strategy of a General Assembly Commission, but instead from every locale of the missional frontier, the congregations and presbyteries that are actively engaged in the mission of God in particular contexts?



In *To Change the World*, University of Virginia sociologist, James Davison Hunter, wrote,

*Change is often initiated outside of the centermost positions. When change is initiated in the center, then it typically comes from outside of the center's nucleus. Wherever innovation begins, it comes as a challenge to the dominant ideas and moral systems defined by the elites who possess the highest levels of symbolic capital.*"

For true lasting change to occur (even within an institution) those in the “center” and those “outside of the center” must be engaged in the conversation.<sup>77</sup> It is the *interaction* of the margins and the center that creates the new possibilities. *And it is exactly that interaction—and the lively experiments that would come from it—that we recommend become the primary work of the church for the next season.*

For a generation of Presbyterians who were reared on political, regulatory, and institutional approaches to problem solving, this recommendation will stretch us tremendously. We will need to develop the capacity to learn from our rich diversity; to have hard conversations about competing values and often unspoken issues that keep us from health and growth; and mostly to *trust each other* enough to attempt innovative experiments—many of which will likely fail—in order to find successful adaptations that will take us into our future together.

Historian and President Emeritus of Union Theological Seminary, Louis Weeks said, “No group of Christians has adaptation more in their DNA than Presbyterians.” We concur. A tradition that reconceived a communal function for what had been “bishops”; that adapted its polity from the European church-state models to a completely new context in a then new country; and rethought and reproduced its core values in numerous diverse contexts worldwide through its mission endeavors, has the capacity to revitalize itself for a post-Christendom and increasingly post-denominational context.

In his book on “the natural history of innovation,” Steven Johnson writes about the “adjacent possible.”<sup>78</sup> The “adjacent possible” is the new innovation, the new discovery, that is only possible by first taking one step, or making one decision. The only way to get from the phonograph to the iPod is through a series of steps. Innovation does not come through giant leaps, but through one trial-and-error attempt at a time.<sup>79</sup> That first step leads to more possibilities that could not otherwise happen, like how opening one door into a hallway offers more doors that could not be seen from the previous room. The “adjacent possible” also always allows for the possibility of returning back through the one door we have passed through and trying a different option.

Our proposal invites the church to live into the “adjacent possible.”<sup>80</sup> It invites us to be a people who together take wise, deliberate “provisional” steps; who experiment with ways of being together, who “try on” relationships, who make temporary covenants without fully leaving behind the historical, geographical connections that have shaped our polity to date.

Steven Johnson’s contention is that all innovation is “the story of a gradual but relentless probing” of what could come next given the pieces and parts at our disposal. We advance, he writes, “by taking available resources and cobbling them together to create new uses.” So, while the condition we find ourselves in is dire, our capacity for change has never been greater. As we will show you, not only is our situation urgently in need of all the wise creativity we can express, but the “available resources” available to us are significant, indeed.

#### *Becoming a Community of Missional Artists, Architects, and Collaborative Designers*

Perhaps the greatest capacity for transformation is our people. Our proposal soberly affirms and joyfully celebrates that the most important work necessary to reinvent the church for a post-Christendom context will not be found in our structures. It is sobering to know that we cannot make the transition to a fully engaged, contextually effective, faithfully missional, post-Christendom church through an act of a commission or even a General Assembly. *Transformation requires large numbers of people to begin to act differently.*

We have been privileged to be in a long, passionate, and expanding conversation with Presbyterians across the geographic, cultural, and theological spectrum. We joyfully contend that there is a holy restlessness throughout the church—indeed a growing frustration—to embrace the challenge of our changing context of our world as the calling of our generation. We believe that restlessness and frustration is the work of the Spirit that is calling forth “missional artists, architects, and collaborative designers” to work together to re-create the church for the next generation.

To that end we offer these suggestions discerned from our commission conversation with a restless church.

#### *Reengage the Pew in Presbyterian Shared Life, Mission, and Governance*

Can we envision a day when a *presbytery* gathering might be the most valuable and anticipated meeting in the life of a *congregation*? Can we envision what it would take for Presbyterians to so *personally experience* the depth, vibrancy, and community of shared life with *other congregations* in a presbytery that the most engaged, committed, and creative elders would lobby to be in presbytery leadership? Can we envision a time when the jokes about “committees” will fade into the background and Presbyterians will be known for our commitment to a shared life that wisely combines mission, governance, and community in effective and edifying ways?

We believe that we have the potential to see this kind of life and vitality if mid council leaders would truly embrace, listen deeply, and reorganize their life together for a clear purpose: *to reengage “the pew” in the shared life, mission, and governance (in that order!) that is the Presbyterian tradition.*

Since most presbyteries are served and supported by an older generation of elders and pastors who understand a shared obligation to “connectionalism,” there is indeed a crisis of leadership and participation in many presbyteries across the country. Stories of the difficulties of finding people to serve on committees, garnering volunteers to serve as representatives to General Assembly, and “recruiting” younger elders and pastors to take on any role beyond the congregation are legion. For a generation of Presbyterians who have used per capita, mandatory meetings with roll call attendance, and mandated terms of committee service to “fuel” the structures of mid councils, it will take significant amounts of creativity and persistence to reinvent presbyteries as communities and gatherings that are valued for what they bring to the congregation and how they stretch all of us to see beyond ourselves.

We need presbytery life that offers both the wise fiduciary and ecclesiastical accountability we require (and value the most according to our data!), as well as being “*balconies*” offering those “on the ground” a greater perspective of Christ’s work in the world than any one congregation can provide. Presbyteries need to be understood and experienced as a “covenant community” that shares the mission of mutually strengthening missional congregations. Presbyteries need to reconsider every program, every project, and every asset with one clear mandate: *Does it engage, equip, and serve the congregation as the expression of the mission of God in its local context?*

We have long celebrated the beauty of shared leadership between “elders” and “ministers”. With the adoption of the new Form of Government, the primacy of “elders”—both ruling and teaching—as a genuinely collaborative and complementary form of shared leadership has been reaffirmed. We concur wholeheartedly and believe that if presbyteries were to develop practices, styles, and leadership functions that are shaped demonstrably and witness completely to our deeply held value of *shared rule* by both teaching and ruling elders (indeed, we long for the day when we will only speak of “elders” without having to distinguish between the two!), we will see not only the development of wise structures of presbyteries but also revitalized missional congregations.

In addition, even the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council need to be reviewed as to how their practices serve presbyteries in their mission to serve congregations. Over and again, stories were told about the pervasive distrust of General Assembly, about the amount of resources that go into our six-part structure, the lack of an effective and clear national strategy toward immigrant populations, and the ways in which the GAMC “competes” with presbyteries and synods for giving dollars. A flatter hierarchy with a focus on the congregation as the center of the mission of the church will not be complete until the church reconsiders the bureaucratic structures of GAMC and eliminates any competition for power or resources between the GAMC and OGA. These conditions foster a bureaucratic mentality at a time when we need to do get back to mission and ministry, doing “whatever it takes” to revitalize local congregations. It is not within the purview of commission to make such recommendations, so we call on the 220th General Assembly(2012) to establish a task force to review the nature and functions of the General Assembly offices and departments in light of the charge given to us.

#### *Growing in Cultural Proficiency to Engage an Increasingly Multicultural Context*

*... As it participates in God’s mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks ... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity... (Book of Order, F-1.0404)*

Perhaps the greatest potential for church-wide transformation beyond a Christendom context is the deep commitment to valuing the rich diversity of the church. Diversity is our strength. We can and must develop and deploy this strength with wisdom and ability. Our proposal calls for deliberate decision making about structures that will ensure that our commitment to racial ethnic advocacy and inclusion is strengthened in a less structured, less regulated era. In addition, we call on the church to develop our “cultural proficiency” (a process that focuses on organizational transformation and individual transformation) in every level of the church’s life.

Cultural Proficiency derives from the work of Terry Cross, a First Nation clinical social worker, who observed that European American clinicians in the center where he worked were not providing competent care to their Eskimo and First Nation clients because they were not taking into account the cultural perspectives and experience of the people they were working with. As a result, Cross developed a set of tools to help people understand and respond more effectively to the differences between them,<sup>81</sup> and some of those tools for understanding Cultural Proficiency are in [Appendix 3](#).

Thus, Cultural Proficiency is about valuing diversity in people for the gifts they bring to the culture of an organization and the interactions between individuals. The tools of cultural proficiency work towards better self-awareness, clear articulation of core values, and a process that results in positive, effective interactions among the people and the systems of a diverse environment.

Cultural Proficiency acknowledges that patterns of oppression are embedded in the structures of organizations. Without direct intervention and intentional efforts to change, organizational cultures perpetuate systemic patterns of oppression, even where individuals within the organization do not intend to discriminate or marginalize those who do not belong or participate in the dominant culture.

Cultural Proficiency also acknowledges that change does not happen overnight, that people and organizations move on a continuum from highly exclusive and oppressive organizations and behaviors to highly inclusive organizations and behaviors. It is built on a foundation that aligns the principles of inclusivity in diversity with the core values and mission of the organization. It also acknowledges that organizations are resistant to change and that the causes of resistance must be taken into account and addressed openly in order to bring about cultural transformation within an organization.

The goal of Cultural Proficiency Initiative is to transform the organizational culture integrating the best of organizational practices and church values so that it becomes and serves as a model for a healthy church.

As we grow in cultural proficiency, we envision that without exception, all of God's children will be able to contribute their given gifts and talents thus leading to healthier, more faithful expressions of the gospel of Christ in and through our congregations.

We envision that our facility to engage new immigrant communities and those communities who have long been marginalized will be strengthened. We believe that we will better discern practices and approaches to ministry and structures of governance, accountability, and support that will enable us to engage an ever expanding mission field of possibilities.

We charge all sectors of the church to a commitment to grow in Cultural Proficiency to engage a rapidly multicultural world into enriching and expanding each others' cultural experience. As a result we shall be able to better express the beauty of the gospel of Christ which calls all of us to be participants.

#### *Develop Capacity to Lead Congregational Transformation*

Perhaps the most crucial element to reinventing the church for a post-Christendom age is the lack of *transformational* leadership capacity within the church as a whole. Over and over again, the single biggest factor cited both positively and negatively focused around the ability and strength (or lack) of leadership in local leaders. Most of us have been trained for stewardship of Christendom congregations, but the changing conditions of the day require different leadership capacities. The church needs to work with seminaries, committees on preparation for ministry, and General Assembly entities to transition the processes for leadership preparation from a Christendom stewardship model to a post-Christendom leadership-as-transformation model. Executive presbyters (EPs) need to become mentors in change leadership. Ruling and teaching elders with gifts in congregational transformation need to be identified and called into roles as EPs, mentors, and advisors. We need to avail ourselves of and learn from those in other fields who are already in the middle of organizational transformation. We believe that this next season of experimentation will serve to develop the transformational leadership gifts of a whole new generation of church leaders. Different contexts challenge us all to learn how to lead differently.

#### *Rebuild Trust*

*"Regulation cannot do what the loss of trust has undone." Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010)*

Of all the "non-structural issues" that we have identified, perhaps the single greatest gift that this commission can raise up for the church is to say as loudly and as clearly as we possibly can that there is a crisis of trust in our denomination and that it, more than anything else, is the single greatest threat to the vitality and future existence of the church.

Congregational leaders don't trust presbyteries. Presbyteries don't trust synods. Synod leaders see themselves as the "breakwater" protecting the church from the General Assembly (which might be the least trusted system of all.) As the report from our commission's Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force states, *"Also prominent in the commission's polling of the church were the expressions of deep and abiding mistrust—fueled by a general absence of meaningful connection to the national, regional and even local judicatories."*

We do not believe that this is due to any individual persons acting in any particularly egregious and untrustworthy ways. Indeed, we believe that the great majority of General Assembly, presbytery, and synod staff members and leaders are trustworthy people. But the system itself fosters mistrust.

Generations of attempting to solve problems by constitutional fiat have left us without the ability to build relationships with those who deeply disagree with us. We have trusted that our membership in presbyteries and synods, and our participation in council deliberative processes and committee assignments, would be context enough to build trust. Once again, a reliance on compliance with regulation has not only sapped our creativity, it has made it impossible for us to give ourselves enough "room" to trust each other again. Indeed, at the center of the commission's own work of deliberation was a commitment to transparency through our entire process. We have used media, including social media, to engage in a

conversation with the entire church. We have traveled many miles, engaged in numerous conversations, and listened deeply to people who disagree with each other (and often ourselves!) about the causes of concern and the potential future of the church. We have engaged people from across various spectrums in a conversation with full disclosure, even taking our most provocative proposals to the church before the final report was finished to allow input. Within the commission itself, we have come to realize that, for the sake of the mission, nothing can substitute for taking the time to build relationships, work through conflicts, and get beyond the stereotypes that we each bring into any circumstance. Indeed, we needed to learn to trust each other enough to become comfortable with discussing, debating, and finally deciding to bring even these proposals to the church.

Perhaps the greatest effect of our proposals is that it will by necessity bring the church closer. Now, for *congregations* to have more flexibility they will necessarily practice discernment within both *presbytery* and *General Assembly* processes. While the flexibility to experiment comes with built-in mechanisms to ensure relational and constitutional fidelity, the true test of our trust will come as we allow room for others to create presbyteries that are different than our preferences and maybe even contradictory to our convictions.

Barry Ensign-George offers “[theological friendship](#)”<sup>82</sup> as a different possibility for nurturing the rebuilding of trust. Theological friendship is based on the conviction that in conversations both *about* and *with* the Triune God, *we are brought closer to each other through transformation*. This is not the result of regulation or polity, but intentional spiritual practice. Trust, like friendship, takes time to cultivate and flourishes in the “space between created differences.” Ensign-George encourages us to hold on to the values, and live in the relational realities of both diversity *and compatibility* as an opportunity for continued transformation as a spiritual practice to which we willingly and, yes, voluntarily enter in. “Communities of theological friendship flourish through *diversity and a wise attention to compatibility* ... Communities of theological friendship recognize the need for diversity that genuinely stretches *and* the importance of willingness to join in a shared journey with a particular group of people.”<sup>83</sup> As Ensign-George reminds us, this very practice of trust-building through friendship could become an act of witness to a deeply divided world. “Theological friendship, which is to say, incorporation into friendship with Jesus Christ, is what we are empowered to offer to a world rife with disconnection’s long and deadly reach (even in our world that prides itself on being connected!).”

The Confession of 1967 has this poignant line: “*The quality of their relation with other persons is the measure of the church’s fidelity.*”<sup>84</sup> Trust is the life blood of a community. Without rebuilding trust we will never have the quality of relationships that we desire. We are under no illusions about the sorry state of trust in our denomination and know that our proposals will not pass through the assembly without it. We also believe that if we engage in this provisional presbytery experiment, we will need to trust each other more than some of us think possible. We hope that even the conversations about our recommendations will be a spur for rebuilding the trust to truly enable us to be a dynamic missional denomination again.

## The Reports

### *Our Process*

Our commission convened via conference call on October 14, 2010, to inaugurate our oversight of the Special Committee of Administrative Review, Boriquen (SCARB) and to give a brief orientation for the commissioners. Our first official commission meeting was on November 4–6, 2010, in Baltimore, Maryland. At that meeting we agreed that our commitment to the church would be:

- To be a *listening* commission...
- To be an *experimenting* commission...
- To be a *discerning* commission...
- To be a *transparent* commission

Over the next fifteen months we convened meetings in Orlando, Seattle, Indianapolis, and Dallas; we learned from church experts on demographics, history, polity, and theology; we invited executive and general presbyters from around the country to offer us perspective; and we engaged some of the most creative leaders in the church to share their observations and learning with us.<sup>85</sup>

In order to listen to the broader church, we contracted with Presbyterian Research Services to conduct surveys and gather data from a wide swath of the church; we conducted focus groups in every synod, at every large denominational event, and in consultations with group of executive presbyters, synod executives, the GAMC, and the OGA Executive Team. In addition, we had smaller group consultations with representatives from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the General Assembly Committee on Representation, and a host of conference calls with specific focus group constituents. (See the next section for more details.)

From the very beginning, our commission endeavored to create a transparent conversation with the entire church. We used social media and blog postings to reflect back to the church our observations, we traveled extensively throughout the country to engage in discussions, and we called upon church leaders, theologians, and historians to help us gain perspective. In addition, we looked at models in other denominations, consulting especially with the City Classis of the Reformed Church of America, and invited two mid council leaders who had recently led reorganization teams in their respective mid councils to share their insights.

For the better part of a year, we listened. Consultations were held in every synod. A survey was developed and phone consultations with diverse demographic groups were provided by Presbyterian Research Services. Additional consultations, conversations, and presentations were conducted by commission members for Big Tent, NEXT Church Conference, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Mission Council, The Association of Executive Presbyters, The Clerks Conference, The Moderators' Conference, the Synod Executive Forum (twice) as well as consultations with representatives from Synod of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Synod of the Northeast, and a number of individual conversations with presbytery and synod leadership.

A summary of the data collected from these listening sessions is provided in next section and the full data reports are in [Appendix 4](#). At the same time, we charged a group with doing even more research into the changing context of our world. Both brought substantive reports to our Indianapolis commission meeting.

At our final two commission meetings, in response to these reports, and in the interim between, with considerable discussion, debate, and time for discernment between commission members and with leaders in the larger church, the recommendations that are included here took shape.

### *Looking (and Listening) Deeply: Data and Discussions*

The mandate from the 219th General Assembly (2010) required the administrative commission to:

...consult with sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the wider church on the mission and function of middle governing bodies. Such a process should include

- a. current diversity in the role and functions of middle governing bodies,
- b. demographics and financial realities that affect the role and function of synods and presbyteries.
- c. the role of each governing body in its oversight role—presbyteries of congregations, synods of presbyteries, and General Assembly of synods—both historically and in present experience.
- d. relationships with General Assembly agencies in role and function.” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 212 of printed copy, pp. 274–75 of the electronic version)

In order to fulfill this mandate, the commission contracted with Presbyterian Research Services (PRS) to conduct surveys of session, presbytery, and synod leaders, and to gather data from focus groups including leaders of large and small presbyteries, young pastors, African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Middle Eastern, and Asian American church leaders. The data design also included an “open invitation” survey for individuals from all over the denomination to provide input for administrative commissioners to consider.

In addition to these formal research activities, a team of two commission members met in consultation with each of the sixteen synods, and members of the commission personally interviewed participants at the following events: The Big Tent, two Board of Pensions regional meetings, the General Assembly Mission Council, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and the Coordinating Council of Korean American presbyteries.

All of these data were provided to all commission members, and a summary report was presented to the commission prior to their consideration of proposed models or changes in the constitution. The data collected in this process is voluminous, and summaries of the data are contained in Appendix 4. In response to the mandate from the 219th General Assembly (2010), this report will summarize the data reported in the four mandated categories.

### *Current Diversity in the Role and Functions of Middle Governing Bodies*

The PRS survey assumed that diversity meant demographic diversity, when the intent of the General Assembly was diversity in role and function, not demographics. Nonetheless, the Models subgroup gathered a significant amount of data as to how presbyteries and synods are currently operating in the current context. These data are more helpful to this mandate (please see the following report, “[The Colors of Vitality: Trends and Attributes in Transformational Presbyteries](#)”). It may be helpful for this report to note that while presbyteries and synods operate in vastly different ways depending on whether they are highly urban, highly rural, small or large, the differences relate primarily to *form*, *not function*. All presbyteries and synods seem to retain the same functions and roles, in keeping with the *Book of Order*, but how those functions are carried out varies widely throughout the denomination.

*Demographics and Financial Realities That Affect the Role and Function of Synods and Presbyteries*

When session members were asked to rate their presbytery membership and leadership for how well it represented the racial ethnic, age, economic, rural/urban, size, and theological diversity demographics of their churches, most participants responded that the representation was “effective.” When asked to assess the size of their presbyteries, 58 percent of respondents reported that their geographic size was “about right” and 64 percent reported that the number of congregations was “about right.” Size and demographic realities of either presbytery or synod did not seem to be big issues among the participants in the various surveys and focus groups.

In contrast, financial realities were a significant issue. Seventy-two percent of presbytery leaders reported that their finances have decreased in the past five years, and more than half of presbyteries predict continued reduction in revenue, programs, membership, and attendance in the next five years. Insufficient funding and lack of support from congregations were listed by presbytery leaders as two major obstacles to accomplishing their mission. Sixty-eight percent reported that worship attendance had decreased in the past five years. Two-thirds of synod leaders believe that presbytery giving to synods will decrease in the next five years, and only one-third of presbytery leaders report that their relationship to the synod was “excellent” or “very good.” About half of synod and presbytery leaders are familiar with their council’s budget, but 77 percent of presbytery AND synod leaders feel that less per capita should go to synods.

The PRS survey asked presbytery leaders whether congregation support was an obstacle, but in our consultations we heard very clearly that the question that most needs to be asked is: *How does the presbytery support the congregation?*

*The Role of Each Governing Body in Its Oversight Role—Presbyteries of Congregations, Synods of Presbyteries, and General Assembly of Synods—Both Historically and in Present Experience*

When asked how supportive presbyteries have been to congregations, only 30 percent of session members responded “very” or “a little supportive,” suggesting that most session members do not see presbytery as highly supportive of their congregation. The highest scores in this arena were for support when congregations are in crisis (40 percent either “very” or “a little” supportive). This would suggest that when congregations need an outside influence, presbytery is there and is generally supportive. Otherwise, presbytery plays a very minor role in the life of the congregation.

When survey participants were asked what roles or functions their presbytery carried out most effectively they (very generally) rated fairly high the ecclesiastical responsibilities such as review of records, ordaining and receiving ministers, electing commissioners, working with candidates, and having a nominating committee (40–45 percent). They are less positive about presbytery’s role in initiating new programs, visiting with sessions, and providing a strong vision for area Presbyterians.

Only about one-third of sessions provided an opinion on the question, “which term best summarizes your congregation’s relationship with the synod” over the past two years? Indeed, more than half responded “not enough contact on which to base an opinion” (52 percent; another 12 percent are “not sure”). Of those with an opinion—36 percent of the total—only 21 percent responded either “excellent” or “very good.” One of the clear themes of the conversation data (synod consultations and conversations at other “events”) was that although connectionalism is highly valued, there is also a sense that the communication between the governing bodies is a major problem. The governance structure is seen as a hindrance, and participants longed for more focus on mission; less on rules. When participants were asked, “What is working well in middle governing bodies?”, the most common response was “no response.” Of those who did respond, there was clear support for racial ethnic ministries and the programs and processes that support pastors, both in the call process and in their ministry. The comment, “We’re better at closing churches than at planting them,” seemed to sum up the frustration with rule-based processes vs. the messy work of evangelism and relationships. There is frustration with presbyteries that care more about their projects than they do their congregations.

No empirical data were collected related to the historical roles of each governing body. Members of the commission perceived that one of the changing contexts in which the church is living is the notion that congregations should support a large bureaucracy. In today’s world, congregations are more inclined to wonder how their per capita dollars support their own ministries, not the larger bureaucracy of which they are a part.

*Relationships with General Assembly Agencies in Role and Functions*

In multiple conversations with synod executives, the lack of trust and consternation with the General Assembly organization and structure was repeatedly articulated. Indeed, some synod executives believed that one of the primary roles of synods was to be a “buffer” between presbyteries and a meddling and unhelpful General Assembly structure.

From the PRS report:

Majorities of sessions and leaders report that [they]... had related in some way with three of the six General Assembly agencies in the past two years: the General Assembly Mission Council, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

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Almost all leaders (96%) also report relating with the Office of the General Assembly, though only 35% of sessions do so.

A majority of sessions report an “excellent” or “very good” relationship with only one agency, the Board of Pensions (60%). The next highest “excellent”/“very good” total is 44%, for the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. At the low end, with 26%, is the Office of the General Assembly. ...

Many more presbytery and synod leaders than session members used “excellent” or “very good” to describe the relationship between their entity and each General Assembly agency.

The concern about these data is that the questions were answered in ways that *assumed* the role and function and focused on the quantity and quality of the relationship (e.g., “Has your synod/presbytery/ session related to the Board of Pensions in any of the following ways in the last year?” and “Which term best summarizes your relationship with the agency?”). The issue of role and function was not addressed.

### *Data Informing Commission Decisions*

As will become evident, clearly, *the data that most impacted the decisions of the commission were those that relate to the synod as a council. The data from the consultations with the synods showed that the number one change desired by respondents was to either re-define or eliminate the synod as a “governing body.”* Of sixteen synod reports, nine listed “change or eliminate synod” as a primary theme in the responses of the attendees. This refrain was also heard from the Big Tent event, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, General Assembly Mission Council, and Board of Pensions meetings. Combined with data from PRS that indicated synods should receive less per capita and that the average session member has had no connection to synod, the commission felt that there was a clear mandate from the denomination to reconsider the role that synods play.<sup>86</sup>

A second area where the data led to commission action was the role of synods related to racial ethnic ministries. When asked what is working with middle governing bodies, the most common response was either a blank or “nothing.” Nonetheless, of those who responded positively, most reported that the work of racial ethnic ministry was a positive aspect of synods. The commission recommendation regarding racial ethnic ministry is a direct result of these data.

To a lesser but not unsubstantial degree, the recommendations regarding presbyteries were also influenced by the data. The data showed that few session members saw the presbytery as a partner in their ministry. Presbyteries were generally seen as regulatory agencies. Many participants in the consultations made comments about inverting the pyramid and calling for all church councils to focus their energy and resources on the vitality of local congregations. By allowing churches some choice in their connectational relationships, one hopeful outcome is more accountability on the part of presbyteries to the health and satisfaction of their member churches.

Finally, the commission’s recommendation regarding a review of General Assembly agencies came very directly from the data that show a serious disconnect between session members and the GAMC or OGA. It was also heavily influenced by the synod executives’ comments about playing the role of “buffer” between presbyteries and the General Assembly.

### *The Colors of Vitality: Trends and Attributes in Transformational Presbyteries*

The Mid Council Commission mandate includes developing “models that reflect the roles of middle governing bodies in our polity and the changing context of our witness.” Initially the commission endeavored to learn about emerging models in presbyteries and synods with a track record of success that could be recommended to the whole church. Members researched a variety of councils both within the PC(USA) and in a few international bodies. It quickly became apparent that there is considerable experimentation across the church, however with the pace of change many of these endeavors are so new that they are just coming off the drawing board and others are continuing to adapt. While the commission had some thought that it would be possible to develop models for different sizes or types of presbyteries or synods, it became clear from conversations with mid council leaders and from data gathered that councils that reflect emerging trends were very conscious of their particular context, culture, function and need for discernment about how God might be at work in their midst.

The very concept of “models” is problematic because it suggests that a presbytery or synod could simply copy a standard form and succeed in meeting the needs of a changing society and church. Steve Yamaguchi, presbytery pastor in Los Ranchos Presbytery, spoke to the commission about the importance of councils “learning to learn” so that they are continually exploring new paths and adapting to a rapidly changing environment. The commission has concluded that the desire for “models” is an expression of the desire for technical solutions, for generic answers to challenges the church faces, when such solutions do not exist. This is not to say that councils cannot learn from one another’s experience. On the contrary, the commission wants to lift up emerging trends, celebrate the creativity of many mid councils, and offer these many good models as ‘tools’ for other’s creative use, and encourage all councils to reflect on how they can engage in adaptive conversations reflecting on their particular circumstances, calling, challenges and possibilities.

Consequently the commission first calls the church’s attention to the following trends in healthy presbyteries and synods:

*Emerging Trends*

- The number one shift in presbyteries is to *a new focus on support of congregations as the primary agents of mission in the world*—that is, instead of seeing themselves as “doing mission” and supporting mission programs, they are putting most of their energies and dollars into supporting congregations as they seek to engage in God’s mission. By the same token, the number one shift in synods is to support presbyteries.

- Presbyteries are intent on *building relationships and developing a sense of community* in the presbytery while a similar trend can be seen in some synods.

- There is a renewed emphasis on *deepening the spiritual life* of presbyteries and encouraging spiritual practices in congregations.

Related to the focus on serving congregations is *a demand for excellence in ruling and teaching elders*—for lifting up the spiritual leadership role of ruling elders, encouraging pastors to participate in ongoing spiritual formation and learning new skills in congregational transformation.

- Presbyteries and synods are *experimenting with structures and patterns of decision-making*—from down-sizing committees and staffing to using discernment practices or new technologies to connect people for meetings. Some presbyteries took a “sabbatical” for a time from all but *Book of Order* committee functions to see what emerged as important to renew or begin.

- *As giving patterns in our culture have changed mid councils are seeking ways to respond*—with different ways of cultivating generous stewards and/or encouraging people to give to their passions. They are attending to their fiduciary responsibilities while looking for new funding streams.

- *Cultural shifts and in many cases declining financial support also push mid councils as organizations to let go of some ways of doing things*—no longer offering a range of programs or providing staff to do the work of numerous committees or funding local social service agencies.

- *Changing demographics are leading some mid councils to risk doing ministry in new ways to reach out to new immigrant communities and/or younger generations*—new church developments, fellowships, and emergent worshipping communities may take different forms and use bi-vocational pastors, Commissioned ruling elders, or full-time organizing pastors. Presbyteries and congregations are conscious of the nature of their “mission field” and recognize that traditional forms of new church development may not be appropriate. The best efforts include developing “cultural proficiency” among present members of the presbytery so that they learn how “to interact effectively with people who differ from them” (“Cultural Proficiency: What Is It?” The Cultural Proficiency Group, Beverly Hills, Calif., 2003, p. 1).

*The Tools for Creating Adaptive Mid Councils*

As a commission, our deep desire is to see the whole church engaged in a wholesale process of reinvigorating congregations through reinventing presbyteries. In many places around the church today this process has already begun. The commission is convinced that what works in one presbytery (or synod) will not work in all their counterparts. There is no magic bullet, no “one size fits all” model, or even models that work for similar size mid councils. Just as congregations are unique, so are presbyteries and synods. There are a variety of factors that come into play for councils as they clarify their purpose and discover new patterns for engaging in ministry: context, size, culture, resources, leadership, etc. Instead of developing “models” that will not fit all situations or survive the test of changing times, the commission has identified components of models, an artist’s palette of primary colors that adaptive mid councils seem to take into account in shaping and painting the picture of their life. Each of these components of what might be a “model” is illustrated with a range of examples in the hope that presbyteries might use them as a palette of colors in a collaborative development of their own approach to mid council ministry.

*Focus*

In the changing context of the church and world, each presbytery needs to engage in a process of discernment, seeking clarity about its calling for this particular time. Mid councils are at different stages of this process, with some clearly recognizing that the effort to maintain comprehensive programs and mission can no longer be supported by diminishing resources and trends in voluntarism that value short-term, hands-on involvement over general giving. The commission’s research supports the conclusion in the new Constitution, *that in addition to governance*, the presbytery’s primary role is “assisting and supporting the witness of congregations” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301). The missional character of presbyteries may look different as each one determines what is most important given its context, culture, and size. Presbyteries will each have a unique focus for their life—such as a guiding biblical narrative or image, an emphasis on spiritual formation, equipping healthy congregations, prioritizing missional theology, fostering community and accountability, promoting collaboration and partnership, and/ or developing a virtual organization. The synods that are vital are recognizing new trends in the church and see their role as supporting presbyteries, focusing their energies and resources to that end.



*The Presbytery of Hudson River* developed its own discernment process beginning with a leadership retreat in which they learned about how the church and the world were changing. One of the questions they considered in small groups was what metaphors or biblical stories came to mind to explain their situation. The image of “dying and rising to new life” which surfaced that day has given them energy and focus for guiding their future. As a presbytery they now declare that they are “practicing resurrection with passion and partnership, in a changing world.” (In his book *Holy Conversations*, Gil Rendle provides a similar exercise congregations and presbyteries can use).

*Lehigh Presbytery* began work during an interim period clarifying their purpose and core values. Their explicit focus is on nurturing congregations, with the presbytery gathering as “communities for worship, spiritual renewal and Christian fellowship.” They called a teaching presbyter gifted in developing spiritual practices.

*St. Augustine Presbytery* recognized that it had to ask “who are we?” and “what are we to do?” before they could ask “how do we structure ourselves”; it was a shift from asking organizational to theological questions. The result is a commitment to strengthening missional congregations, developing new missional communities, and forming missional leaders, tasks identified by Darrell L. Guder, Henry Winters Luce Professor of Missional and Ecumenical Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, in his writings about missional ecclesiology. The presbytery tries to live out three virtues: humility, reconciliation, and trust.

*San Diego Presbytery* has discerned that it has a “missional calling,” rooted in the experience of the early church sending people into the mission field (Acts 13:1–3). The presbytery went through a three-stage process that included working with a missional church consultant, Alan Roxburgh. It sees itself today as a learning community that is shaped by spiritual, missional, and relational factors. It chooses to take a permission-giving stance and cultivates missional imagination, innovation, creativity, and thinking outside the box. Reflection on Jesus’ words in John 20:21: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you,” is leading them to explore how to move back into the neighborhood, how to discern what the Spirit is up to, and how to participate in the mission of God today.

#### *Context*

The commission defines context as “who we are in relation to where we are.” Mid councils need to ask questions about where God has placed us and recognize the characteristics of our environment and times as relevant factors in shaping a presbytery or synod’s life and calling. What are the characteristics of the geography, how do natural boundaries divide or impact travel and relationships, how dense and diverse is the population, are there a variety of people groups or is it a fairly homogeneous region? How do economic factors shape life, is the economy stable, are there a variety of lifestyles and resources represented? How are societal changes impacting the nature of life in our communities and congregations? How is the presbytery or synod taking these factors into account, not as problems to be solved but as ways to discover the opportunities and possibilities for discerning identity and engaging in God’s mission?

*Palisades Presbytery* in northern New Jersey is in the midst of a rapidly changing context, with the growth of Asian and Hispanic/Latino populations in a three county area with 2 million residents in northern New Jersey. The presbytery reflects the multi-ethnic character of the region with twelve racial-ethnic congregations out of forty-nine, plus a Korean new church development, and four immigrant fellowships. For the past few years the presbytery has had a unique staffing pattern with three, part-time presbyters; one of the three is a multicultural presbyter to resource these congregations and to assist others to transform into multicultural places of worship. With increased financial pressures, the presbytery is now re-visiting the staffing plan.

*Glacier Presbytery* in Montana, by contrast, has 3,000 members in nineteen congregations across a broad geographic region. Members may drive eight to nine hours from its eastern to western borders making connections between congregations and members challenging. The presbytery has begun rotating committee and presbytery meetings between four clusters and holding meetings by teleconference on alternate months.

*Baltimore Presbytery* with 16,000 members in its large metropolitan context has become conscious of how its congregations have become disconnected from their neighborhoods so one of its new emphases is on reconciling with the community in ways that advance God’s reign.

*Pacific Presbytery* has long been conscious of its multicultural context and the realities of a changing world. It is intentionally seeking to encourage and promote younger leaders. The presbytery is using a two year stimulus grant from its synod to encourage young congregational leaders with ideas to revitalize their congregations.

#### *Size*

What is the “right” size for a presbytery or synod? Is it large enough to sustain mission but small enough to foster community and expect accountability? A majority of those surveyed believe their presbytery is the right size, yet the commission also heard concerns across the country about financial viability on the one hand and the importance of building relationships, on the other. Larger membership presbyteries often have the advantage of greater resources but need to

consider how they establish community between congregations, and between teaching and ruling elders. Small presbyteries may experience community naturally but often struggle with how to support ministry with minimal finances. Size by itself is an insufficient means of evaluating a presbytery's health or identity but it is a reality that needs to be addressed as presbyteries look to the future and consider emerging trends.

*National Capitol Presbytery* with its 108 churches and 32,000 members identifies itself as "Missional, Pastoral and Prophetic." While it is addressing some financial challenges it continues to have resources for multiple staff and ministries. As part of its concern for pastoral well-being and a concern to build community, the presbytery requires pastors to be in a support/accountability group and name who "their own pastor" will be. Presbytery meetings are organized to promote conversation "with one another and the Holy One." The emphasis is relational, focused on "the Lord's Table not the Clerk's table." The committee on ministry hosts a dinner two to three times a year with the moderators of pastor nominating committees and new pastors where brief faith journeys are shared.

*Santa Fe and Sierra Blanca Presbyteries* together cover 90 percent of the state of New Mexico, with approximately 8,000 members in sixty-three congregations and two Hispanic new church developments. For a few years the two presbyteries explored how they might share leadership without merging. Together they called a regional presbyter to serve both presbyteries while each continues to have its own associate stated clerk. After experiencing this pattern for more than a year, when they began talking about the future, someone suggested that they create a new presbytery—not as a merger but by exploring what it would look like to start from scratch. A joint presbytery task force was appointed in 2011 with key leaders from each presbytery. A vision and values conversation at a joint presbytery meeting provided an opportunity for feedback and encouragement to continue the conversation, fleshing out more details. The process will continue into the spring of 2012 before the two presbyteries will consider voting on a proposal. While the process was initiated due to financial pressures and grief over losing some congregations, there is new energy and excitement as people sense that God is at work.

*Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery* in upstate New York, by contrast, covers four counties with 5,323 members in forty congregations within about ninety minutes of one another. The presbytery engaged in a three-year process to look at the realities and possibilities of their decreasing size, human and financial resources. They decided to hire a transitional presbyter who has consulting experience to help the presbytery with the next phase of their vision and planning. The transition process is leading them to identify ways to rebuild community and become less staff dependent. A "Creation Team" appointed by the presbytery, evaluated policies, standing rules, and bylaws in order to develop and propose recommendations for how to carry out presbytery-directives. Over the next year the presbytery will move to a new leadership pattern with fifteen council members directing the work of presbytery, overseeing fiduciary responsibilities and *Book of Order* requirements, organized in a variety of ways. By the end of 2012 they will have a virtual office and the only staff position will be a combined stated clerk and web spinner. The transitional presbyter will oversee and resource the council as they move into this new way of being and then will step aside.

### *Culture*

According to the handbook, *Studying Congregations*, edited by Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, "Culture is who we are and the world we have created to live in. It is the predictable patterns of who does what and habitual strategies for telling the world about the things held most dear." Students of culture look for patterns of life that give a community, a congregation, a presbytery, or a synod its identity. The handbook further explains that culture is not "who we always will be nor who we ought to be. It is who we are and all the ways in which we reinforce and recreate who we are." Culture includes style, attitude, emotional climate, the gifts and passions of the people and congregations. The culture of a presbytery or synod should foster trust, build community among congregations, be conscious of and ready to adapt to a changing world and the needs of younger generations and new populations. In his article "The Travail of the Presbytery," Joseph D. Small, recently retired director of Theology and Worship for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), argues for the importance of developing presbytery culture that is more relational and able to hold pastors and congregations accountable to one another. Some mid councils are working on developing a "virtual culture" that relies heavily on social networking and *Go To Meeting* types of technology, in order to be good stewards of time and resources, while still attending to relationships. Other councils emphasize a "sending culture," to nurture, guide, and strengthen congregations for witness and service in their particular context, as described by writers such as Princeton University professor, Darrell L. Guder, and Paul Hooker, executive presbyter and stated clerk of the Presbytery of St. Augustine.

*The Presbytery of Los Ranchos* in Southern California is moving from a culture of "command and control" to one of "collaborating and connecting," of recognizing the importance of being a missional learning community that is always "learning to learn." The presbytery created an "Odyssey" group to define the purpose and function of the presbytery that resulted in "flipping the presbytery," from expecting congregations to support the presbytery to a presbytery serving congregations. The process identified that the most vibrant conversations going on at presbytery meetings were happening in the narthex, so the Odyssey group asked what would happen if those conversations became *the* meeting. Now "open space" time during "presbytery gatherings" provide opportunity for people in the presbytery to offer a variety of voluntary learning and discussion forums open to all and organized by those who are present.

*Muskingham Valley Presbytery*, in rural Ohio, has made a major shift in its culture through a spiritual “Journey with Jesus” that is transforming its life and that of its congregations. The presbytery is intentional about identifying the gifts of members, encouraging spiritual disciplines, developing and supporting leaders. Several pastors and leaders have become oblates in various Catholic orders, particularly the Order of St. Benedict. The presbytery has an action learning team leading the presbytery in discernment about what it would mean to commit to “shared rhythms,” to be shaped by the Word, daily prayer, service to community, fellowship at the table, and ordering their lives around the liturgical calendar.

*The Presbytery of Western North Carolina* has a strong commitment to international and local mission through congregational partnerships. The region has a long history of supporting missionaries and is the home of Montreat Conference Center. The presbytery encourages congregational initiatives, assists with networking, and promotes projects. The presbytery’s stated focus is on congregational transformation, but it sees “strengthening churches to be faithful and vital witnesses to Jesus Christ” growing through mission partnerships and exposure to the lives of others. The presbytery’s history and culture of mission partnership supports the focus on congregational transformation which in turn generates greater vitality and mission.

*The Presbytery of the Western Reserve* values relationships between congregations and between members. For over a decade an email prayer chain has built community; cluster session visits and congregational partnerships are promoted; and, while imperfectly practiced, an attitude of “walking with” congregations is being encouraged, especially through its committee on ministry. As presbytery leaders began looking at how to implement a new focus on equipping congregations, a subtle but significant change came from reflection on Jesus’ words to his disciples about *recognizing what they had* and going into the crowd and feed the people. After years of seeing struggling congregations as “problems to be solved,” the presbytery has embraced as a core assumption, that “God has given each congregation a gift for ministry,” beginning a new approach to supporting vital congregations and being in community.

### *Function*

In the new Form of Government presbyteries continue to have a number of important responsibilities. The focus groups conducted by Presbyterian Research Services for the commission identified support for congregations as the most valued function of presbyteries. Secondly, people cited the importance of pastoral care and accountability for teaching elders. The synod consultations and focus group respondents value and would not want to lose networking and collaboration. Rule-oriented administrative processes were least valued by respondents from various settings. Sessions gave high ratings for presbytery processes in orienting new pastors, review of records, and pastor accountability, but were less complimentary about missional aspects of their presbyteries. Nonetheless, two-thirds reported the presbytery had been supportive of their congregation in the last two years.

While all presbyteries have fiduciary functions, some approach those responsibilities by targeting the support of congregational vitality as their goal. This represents a shift from monitoring the life of congregations through the lens of rules and regulations to one that seeks to build healthy relationships both internally within congregations and between the presbytery and the congregation. As noted above, some presbyteries are making concerted efforts to develop spiritual practices, encourage excellence in ruling and teaching elders, and foster community, particularly among teaching elders. Several presbyteries are experimenting with patterns of decision-making, particularly to reconsider the purpose and format of presbytery meetings, reducing time spent on “business” in favor of worship, spiritual formation, theological reflection, or generative conversations. Two synods have moved toward more virtual practices of decision-making while focusing resources on presbytery needs.

*Charlotte Presbytery* sees empowering the transformation of congregations as its most important function and has attempted to direct its staffing, structure, and resources to that end. The presbytery is clear that all congregations need to be going through transformation and is intentional about supporting multicultural learning and new church plants with most new immigrants. The third largest presbytery in the PC(USA) with 130 congregations and 39,900 members, Charlotte addresses the challenge of developing relationships by organizing five regional committee on ministry cluster teams (COM cluster team) to serve all its congregations. Each COM cluster team has co-moderators and seven to ten members. Most committee on ministry responsibilities reside with the cluster. The Church Development, Leadership Development, and Mission and Justice committees actively work through the cluster teams to offer support and deliver resources. This system is designed to bring the presbytery to the pastors and congregations as well as encourage regional identity.

*The Presbytery of Los Ranchos* declares that “the presbytery is wherever two or three congregations are gathered to partner in mission.” It encourages the initiative of congregations and people with passion partnering for mission, instead of trying to maintain its own mission and program functions. The new format of presbytery gatherings compresses business to one hour and allows for people with common interests to network during the “open space” time. The presbytery council coordinates three teams: Administrative (resources and assets), Strategic (how to do mission), and Generative (which views the presbytery from “the balcony” raising challenges and opportunities). The Presbytery pastor moderates the council which acts as the steward.

*Lehigh Presbytery*, with its thirty-six worshipping communities, also places emphasis on strengthening and supporting congregations, but as a smaller presbytery it functions very differently with minimal staff leadership and resources. With some assistance from the synod, it supports a multiyear contract with missional church consultants working with clusters of congregations. Among the presbytery's core values are affirming collaboration and partnerships; nurturing mutual trust; pursuing openness to new ideas and risk-taking; challenging individuals to discover their gifts. It models discernment and spiritual development through its gatherings. Each presbytery meeting begins with twenty minutes of Dwelling in the Word, a Bible reflection on the same Scripture passage for the whole year, which is also used by committees and congregations. They spend up to an hour in worship, an hour for education, and an hour for business. In 2011, the presbytery is engaged in studying Peter Block's book, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. Members of congregations who are not commissioners to presbytery are recruited to serve as "presence keepers," to pray for the community as it meets, pay attention to dynamics and have a gong to call attention to something the body may be missing whether it is less appropriate behavior or pointing out something worthy of praise. They are intentional about hospitality and frame presbytery service in terms of "calling."

*The Presbytery of St. Augustine*, covering nineteen counties in north Florida, reduced its committee structure by roughly 50 percent and reconceived the function of committees to exist as *resources* for ministries, not as ends in themselves. The presbytery council is empowered to carry out functions once done by separate committees: personnel, bills and overtures, review and evaluation, and worship planning. The presbytery assembly meets three times per year and includes worship with a guest preacher from outside the presbytery and a block of time for theological reflection with the business agenda at the end.

*The five presbyteries of South Carolina* hold one joint meeting each year and their presbytery executives meet monthly to nurture relationships across presbytery lines but within a geographic area that is less than one-third the size of their synod.

### *Structure*

The new Form of Government recognizes the diverse contexts and needs facing mid councils. It identifies the basic responsibilities of a council yet gives permission for them to adapt their organizational design to fit particular circumstances. Emerging models are already moving toward alternative ways of making decisions and seeking ways to "flatten" or decentralize the organization. Presbyteries and synods are experimenting with different structures to fit their needs. Given cultural shifts in how people make time commitments today, many have reduced the number and size of committees, with some only having *Book of Order* mandated committees. Instead, some encourage mission initiatives through congregational partnerships, short-term ministry teams or networks of people with a common passion, networks, and more decision-making delegated to committees, commissions, or clusters of congregations.

*Palisades Presbytery* has gone through a major restructuring of committees and staff that "flattens" the organization and allows for broader participation. The presbytery formerly had divisions to provide programs to congregations and now has three roundtables:

*Resources*: assisting congregations with property issues, development, and funding;

*Evangelism and Community Outreach*;

*Discipleship*: includes Christian Education, spiritual development, youth ministry, training, and development.

Each roundtable includes three ruling and three teaching elders who are elected, yet all meetings of roundtables are "open" so anyone can attend. Agendas for roundtables are widely publicized. Each roundtable intentionally supports parity with co-moderators, a ruling and a teaching elder. The structure is designed to shift from a few people developing ideas for programs to an open opportunity for developing ways to resource actual needs in congregations.

*Pueblo Presbytery* in Southern Colorado has organized itself into four clusters of congregations across its 35,000 square miles as a way of building on the connectional, relational values they lift up in their mission statement. The clusters enable them to "learn to live together, live to love each other, and love to serve God." All mission grants are determined by the local church clusters with each cluster sending advocates to the budget meeting. Through the clusters, the presbytery also developed peer learning groups for pastors using recommended books to help them grow as missional leaders. Accountability is taken seriously as the presbytery learns from the work of Paul Borden, author of *Hitting the Bullseye* and *Direct Hit*. The presbytery has developed a covenant process for congregations and pastors willing to commit to significant learning time and risk reorienting change; it has provided weekend consultations, workshops, and coaching.

*Baltimore Presbytery* has taken intentional steps to decentralize decision-making and encourage community among its seventy-two congregations and 16,000 members. A recent reorganization provides for three commissions to make decisions for the presbytery: Thriving and Reconciling Congregations, Spiritual Leader Development, and Presbytery Administration and Shared Witness. The presbytery council's role is to oversee implementation of presbytery decisions and hold commissions and staff accountable. The Commission on Thriving and Reconciling Congregations will work through six ministry groups with twelve congregations each, enabling congregations and leaders to learn from and with one another and

have a greater role in decision-making. Each group will be provided with \$25,000 and one day a week of a presbytery staff member's time. The committee on ministry will continue to carry out the examination and reception of incoming ministers on behalf of the presbytery.

*The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta* engaged in a major re-visioning, restructuring process to address declining vitality and church membership. The process has resulted in an effort to move from an emphasis on gate-keeping and maintenance of a large structure towards a more permission-giving culture, focused on equipping healthy, growing congregations. The decision to shift the primary function and culture was tied to a dramatic reorganization. For years the flow of energy and effort was from congregations toward programs of the presbytery and higher governing bodies. The relatively new plan calls for staff consultants to work directly with congregations, ends the maintenance of myriad committees, eliminates staff support for committees other than *Book of Order* units. The expectation is that networks of churches and people with passion for particular ministries will continue some work once done by committees and develop new initiatives.

### *Leadership*

All presbyteries need effective leadership whether paid or unpaid. Good leadership is inspirational but is expressed in a variety of styles. In an era that calls for adaptive change, it is not resident "experts" who are needed, but leaders who can help the organization continually ask the questions that lead to vision, focus, and hope. We believe that the church will need to rely more heavily than ever on real parity of ruling and teaching elders, not as a matter of technical balance but as spiritual leaders with particular gifts, functions, and responsibilities. Efforts to identify, prepare, and support younger, multicultural leaders is a sign of a vital presbytery attending to contextual and cultural shifts. Trends in leadership development in emerging models point to the importance of framing service in terms of "calling" and willingness to pursue excellence. Presbyteries promote opportunities for spiritual formation, coaching, intentional exposure to new ideas and best practices, and the creation of learning communities that encourage mutual teaching and learning.

New patterns for staffing are evolving with economic pressures and the movement to prioritize support for congregations. Larger membership presbyteries continue to have multiple staff but may deploy them differently while medium and small presbyteries are looking for creative ways to function with fewer or minimal paid staff. Thoughtful councils, experimenting with greater use of part-time or contract staff, are trying to balance reduced personnel costs with concerns about how to reduce staff responsibilities and the ethics of providing adequate benefits and support for staff. Titles and roles of presbytery staff leaders also vary from presbytery to presbytery: presbytery pastor, connectional presbyter, transformational presbyter, presbytery leader or, more commonly, general presbyter or executive presbyter. The Presbytery of Southern New England recently changed the position description and title of its full-time executive presbyter to presbyter to the spiritual community. The position is described with the images of Sentinel, Midwife, and Tender of the New Vineyards.

*Cimarron Presbytery* in Oklahoma has a ruling elder who has served for several years as a "dollar-a-year" executive presbyter as well as volunteer stated clerk and treasurer. They have minimal structure with a council and task forces. Their aim is to be responsive to what comes from the individual congregations. *South Dakota Presbytery* has a similar pattern with a "retired" ruling elder serving as Presbytery administrator.

*The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta*, with more than 44,000 members in 108 congregations in urban, suburban, and rural counties, has redirected staff roles, replacing three full-time associate executive positions with two full-time and two part-time congregation consultants. In addition, several ruling elders are being trained as additional consultant/mentors. While eliminating some positions, the presbytery added a communications/technology position.

*Muskingham Valley Presbytery's* transformation includes implementing a nominating process with clear criteria, communication of high expectations, and consideration of spiritual gifts for people serving presbytery committees and ministries. A number of ruling and teaching elders have received training in specific congregational processes so that they can serve as consultants.

*The Presbytery of Great Rivers* in Illinois encourages internal leadership rather than "outside experts." Great Rivers has a pool of funds to enable ruling and teaching elders to provide particular services to congregations such as ways to "go green" or assist with writing church information forms.

Several presbyteries, among them: *Giddings-Lovejoy*, *Genesee Valley*, *Eastminster*, *Western Reserve*, and *Philadelphia* have recruited and trained coaches to work with pastors seeking to improve their resilience and creativity for ministry or with congregational groups in the midst of transformation. *Detroit Presbytery* has trained leaders to serve as "healthy congregations" coaches.

Not all models are successful. *The Presbytery of Northern New York* experimented with dividing the presbytery into three geographic deaneries. The design called for each deanery to elect an elder or minister of Word and Sacrament from within the deanery to serve as dean for a term of three years. The purpose of the deanery and the mission of the dean was to help churches thrive by identifying resources to solve problems, celebrating individual congregations' identity and contribution, and further relationships. The deans were not to do the work but to help congregations and pastors to do the work to which God called them.

The deans were accountable to a council of deans including two members each appointed annually by the committee on ministry and presbytery council. An annual covenant agreement between the deans, the council of deans, and the presbytery set the year's responsibilities and compensation. Although this model has not continued in this particular presbytery, a variation of it might work in another setting and so it's worth applauding and sharing their effort to be creative.

*Financial Viability:*

How much money is enough? How much do you need "to run" a mid council? In the present economic climate and given declining membership in many congregations, mid councils are looking at what kind of financial assets they have, how to allocate them and expand their revenue streams. Financial challenges are creating a sense of urgency and openness to change, prompting mid councils to seek ways of being more effective with less, building a better stewardship environment and a theology of abundance. Some are discovering that limited resources can foster innovation and drive opportunities for partnering with other presbyteries or organizations. Size, context, functions, leadership needs, and realities are part of the process of determining priorities and looking for synchronicity and "the possible." While some presbyteries are reducing paid staff or experimenting with leadership models that address their context, others are deploying staff to work out of coffee shops, copy centers, and cars rather than maintaining office space. A number of presbyteries report dealing with significant financial challenges in supporting camp and conference ministry: a few presbyteries partner to support a camp and conference center, others have turned their camps into separate 501c3 entities responsible for their own management, and some have sold their camping facilities setting aside funds to use for outdoor ministry. Long-standing programs, camp maintenance, and aid to agencies and congregations are being reconsidered as presbyteries focus increasingly on equipping missional congregations and congregational mission partnerships. There are a number of experiments underway as mid councils clarify their focus, set priorities, and consider options.

*Mid Kentucky Presbytery* has focused on developing new faith communities, immigrant ministries, and deepening the presbytery's prayer life. To address financial realities the presbytery is reducing its office space to enough for one administrative assistant, with the expectation that continuing staff will work from home or coffee shops, to prioritize resources for outreach to new populations.

*The Monmouth and New Brunswick Presbyteries* in New Jersey are beginning a shared leadership model by calling a regional presbyter. The new partnership will reduce overhead to enable mission. They continue to be two presbyteries, each retaining its own stated clerk, distinct culture, functions, and structure. In the process of working together on the position description for the shared regional presbyter they recognized that they did not want an administrator but someone who could assist them with vision and equipping leaders.

Three presbyteries in New York—*Utica, Susquehanna, and Cayuga-Syracuse*—share bookkeeping and financial services; those three presbyteries and *Albany Presbytery* share some staff. In northeast Ohio, two associations of the United Church of Christ share one office for communications, financial, and other administrative services while Regional ministers (similar to executive and associate executive presbyters) work from home or a small shared satellite office.

*Charlotte Presbytery* seeks to be effective stewards of its resources. Numerous educational efforts have been attempted to raise awareness of the importance of the presbytery's mission and ministry. Appreciation of the presbytery's work has been regularly documented, yet income from local churches has continued to decline. By policy, revenue from closed churches has become immediately available for church development. This revenue source, carefully utilized and managed, has permitted the presbytery to avoid untenable financial crisis. At the same time the presbytery continues to make strategic decisions about expenditures and priorities, including plans to move to smaller office space when the current lease expires.

*Pacific Presbytery* has determined to lease property from closed congregations for ten years and then evaluate needs. Some other presbyteries specify that assets from closed congregations be dedicated to supporting urban churches or new church development.

*National Capital Presbytery* encouraged stewardship education in a presbytery meeting using a speed-dating format: people were divided into small groups and attended a dozen presentations of five to ten minutes as they rotated around the fellowship hall. Participants were energized by learning from one another, gathering ideas and handouts, and experiencing presbytery as equipping leaders.

Each of these "colors" of healthy, adaptive mid councils that exhibit emerging trends, are founded on basic foundational assumptions that

- Presbyteries have important fiduciary, governance responsibilities that need to be carried out well;
- Presbyteries recognize that their role is to "assist and support the witness of congregations"; while they
- "Nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ" within their region (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301, G- 3.0301c, G-3.0304, G-3.0304c).

In these changing times, each council will need to continually seek to discern God's call to them in their context, given their culture, size, gifts, and challenges. Each council will need to learn some new behaviors, to engage in being a community that is continually "learning to learn." As Gil Rendle notes in his book, *Journey in the Wilderness: New Life for Mainline Churches*, the task is to keep asking questions about who we are? What do we need to be doing in the next few years to be more faithful? What are we trying to make different? What difference are we making in the lives of others and the life of the world?

One presbytery focused its conversation around these questions, questions that we on the mid council commission believe need to be at the center of a larger, broader, deeper discussion:

1. What kind of people do we want to send into the world?
2. What kinds of congregations send those kinds of people?
3. What kind of leadership equips that kind of congregation?
4. What kind of presbytery structure and staff leadership will set free those kinds of leaders to equip those kinds of people to be sent into the world?

*The Outlines of Possibilities: Synods as Multi-Presbytery Missional Partnerships*

The action of the commission is to eliminate the synod as a council, or ecclesiastical entity. The intent of the commission is to take a step toward "flattening" the church's organization for the purpose of reducing redundancy in process and the bureaucratic layers between the local congregation and the national church. *It was not the commission's intent to eliminate those programs and processes that cross presbytery lines and either provide economies of scale or address identified missional goals. Indeed, we believe that the ingenuity and effort necessary to retain or reinvent these assets is crucial to the ongoing vitality of the church.* Some examples of highly valued ministries and assets that will need to be reformed and retained in a new ecclesiastical system:

- *The Synod of Living Waters* believes its mission is to give presbyteries a chance to thrive. The synod seeks to create community among presbytery leaders and draws its strategy from those leaders. They are clear that they do not do anything that does not support their presbyteries. The Synod of Living Waters is also the home to a nationally recognized ministry that provides clean water for impoverished areas around the world. This mission already stretches far beyond the geographical bounds of the synod.
- *The Synod of the Trinity's* mission statement declares that its role is "to provide support, resources, and nurture to its presbyteries." It provides major grants to presbyteries for consultants to work with clusters of missional congregations.
- *The Synod of Rocky Mountains* also has funding available to support members within the synod providing their expertise.
- *The Synod of Lincoln Trails* is known for its commitment to work in partnership with its presbyteries and congregations to develop and support leaders. It offers training and continuing education for commissioned ruling elders, hosts seminars for new pastors spanning a three-year timeframe, provides interim pastor and interim executive training, and has a fund for Ministerial Excellence to assist pastors and congregations with education for dealing with economic challenges.
- *The Synod of the Pacific* determined years ago to provide financial and administrative services and never became a programmatic body. It developed a unique revenue stream by creating a savings and loan program to benefit congregations, presbyteries, and Presbyterian entities within its bounds. Due to economies of scale, the program is able to generate revenues to cover synod expenses beyond per capita so that all mission funds from congregations support their presbyteries and General Assembly. The synod is able to take on several fiduciary functions, including personnel services and some health benefits, on behalf of its presbyteries. The synod staff places a high value on "customer service," listening and responding to the presbyteries.
- *The Synod of Lakes and Prairies* has a nationally respected "Synod School" for training church leaders, educators, and officers that draws from a large and diverse population offering churches the very highest caliber of resources.
- *The Synod of Mid America* virtual model grew out of recognition that the ways people in our culture communicate and relate to one another have changed. With people having limited time for meetings it was unrealistic to expect people to travel across state to make routine administrative decisions. They were also conscious that using newer technologies was better stewardship of financial and environmental resources. They are making decisions using conference calls, web-based platforms like *Skype* or *Go To Meeting*, and other evolving modes of communication. They will continue to have mission and training opportunities, but believe community will also be created by web-based discussion forums, blogs, and other virtual options.

- *The Synod of Alaska-Northwest* has started a new way of coming together that they name a “Call to Table.” Two or more presbyteries can call a gathering to look at a common challenge or mission opportunity
- *The Synod of Living Waters* values relationships and effectiveness. It gave up a physical office for a virtual one, not for financial reasons, but to allow staff to spend more time meeting with people in presbyteries. All documents are scanned and saved into “the cloud” for easy access. To encourage broader participation, particularly among younger Presbyterians many meetings are held by conference call, *Skype*, *Go To Meeting*, and other electronic formats. The synod also changed its approach to doing the Living Waters for the World project—after the first few years of asking people for money to do the mission and installing a handful of water systems, they stopped “doing the mission” and switched to training and equipping people, installing hundreds of water systems with teams from inside and outside synod bounds.

*Organization:* Presbyteries will be free to continue to collaborate for programs, mission, and all other needs where collaboration produces better outcomes. Under the new structure, it is also possible that any presbytery in the denomination could be part of this collaborative if the board of directors or those responsible for project chose to broaden its scope.

The difference is that presbyteries would no longer rely on synod as a council of the church to administer such a program; the presbyteries would collaborate on the structure for such a program as an administrative operation. Presbyteries could form a “joint powers authority” (JPA), a foundation, or simply agree to elect members of a committee or board to exercise administrative power over a program. This has the intended consequence of making the program more accountable to the end users.

*Programs:* It is the intent of the commission that ministry programs such as Synod of Lakes and Prairies “Synod School” and the Synod of the Pacific’s Loan Program would *not* be eliminated. While there will certainly be work and cost involved in transitioning these programs, we believe that they are validated by their missional relevance to churches and presbyteries, and not just vested in the synod structure, and therefore could continue to thrive in a new structure with creative leadership.

*Advocacy:* Another piece of significant data that was reviewed by the commission is the concern that racial ethnic ministries seem to work better across presbytery lines where there are more numbers and hence, more energy for their particular ministries. This issue requires serious attention of presbyteries.

Many members of the racial ethnic Presbyterian community have contributed greatly to the history and vibrancy of the PC(USA); initiating and modeling leadership, guiding the church to more socially and theologically responsible posture in its witness to the world, creatively enhancing the form and substance of worship, sensitizing and educating the church regarding manners of race, and providing a unique Presbyterian witness of the ministry of Jesus Christ. The call for the church to review and reorganize its commitment and approach to racial ethnic ministry is significant both within and beyond the notion of a Presbyterian reality that removes the ecclesiastical functions from synods. The need to discover a posture from which genuine ministry partnership can thrive is vital to the current health and future relevance of the church.

It is worthy of note that the plight of many established and emerging racial ethnic congregations directly mirrors the plight of small churches in the denomination. Exploring models that support and strengthen racial ethnic ministry has the added benefit of discovering new ways in which the entire church can be strengthened, both structurally and relationally. Beyond the notion of tolerance, God calls us to be imaginative and authentic in our interactions and in our witness. As a church, the degree to which we extend ourselves to and within racial ethnic communities will be directly reflected in the health and relevance of our brand of witness. A culturally proficient engagement will bear much fruit, not only in matters of church development and growth, but also in matters of spiritual health and wellness.

Using the regional administrative commissions authorized under the commission’s recommendation to give oversight and accountability to the committee of representation’s work, one of the most significant presbytery collaborations should be an active commitment to the particular needs and requirements of racial ethnic ministries. We are hopeful that this would end up being a priority in the creation of multi-presbytery partnerships to support the kinds of ministries that exist in regional areas. Hopefully, a good consequence could be more ownership of racial ethnic programs and ministries by the presbyteries.

In their cry to the PC(USA) for resource, relevant inclusion, nurture, and support, the racial ethnic Presbyterian community must be met with a posture that authentically values diversity, genuinely respects culture, and fully recognizes that what can be gained from honest engagement is not just the joy of giving, but the blessing of receiving. Within this frame, *partnership* emerges beyond *paternalism* as a fundamental engaging principle for racial ethnic ministry, and the denomination achieves an enhanced eligibility for the richness of blessing that compliance with God’s inclusive intention can bring.

*Mission Projects:* As described above, the commission is confident that when mission activities are valued by the presbyteries and churches, they will continue to exist under a new structure that actually gives them more accountability and control. By converting projects to 501 3c organizations, or foundations, or by creating joint powers authorities, collaborative groups of an unlimited number of presbyteries can continue the mission activities that capture the imagination and energy of their members. The solar project in the Synod of the Sun and the Living Waters of the World project of the Synod of Living



Waters are examples of possible mission activities. As the commission understands, the Living Waters project can “stand alone.” It now functions under of the purview of the synod, but could just as easily be a project on its own. That is an exemplar of what the commission hopes would happen with such mission projects.

*Shared Life:* This is where the rubber meets the road. In reviewing the survey data, it was apparent that while we talk the talk about connectionalism, there is a significant lack of walking the walk. Survey respondents listed connectionalism as a very high value, but they also listed lack of communication among middle councils and with congregations as a major problem. The commission believes that by not *mandating* cross presbytery connections in an ecclesiastical entity, the new structure will actually require presbyteries to define when and how they choose to collaborate with each other in a shared spiritual life, and in making the notion of “one body in Christ” a reality. With the possibility of provisional presbyteries and provisional membership of presbyteries beyond its original geographic bounds, we strongly urge the formation of covenants of agreements between churches and their membership and affiliated congregations.

It is the commission’s hope that in this season of reflective experimentation presbyteries will pay even closer attention to how churches connect to each other across presbytery boundaries, regional boundaries, and indeed throughout the denomination. What does it truly mean to be connectional? If we’re not required to do it, will we actually embrace the notion of “one body”?

*Assets:* Although this varies widely from synod to synod, it is true that many existing synods have significant assets in the form of endowments, property, and reserves. The relocation of the management of these assets will be a significant issue if the new structure is approved. It is also true that the state in which these assets reside is a significant variable and would have to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The commission recommends that each existing synod establish a committee made up of representatives from each presbytery within the existing structure and that these committees be charged with developing a plan for the management of what is now thought of as synod assets.

#### *Report of the General Assembly Mid Council Commission Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force.*

The General Assembly Mid Council Commission Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force proposed the following recommendations for the General Assembly Mid Council Commission to present to the 220th General Assembly (2012): [These recommendations have been incorporated into the report as [Recommendation 8](#) above.]

1. Establish a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force comprised of representatives from racial ethnic church leadership; racial ethnic caucus leadership; the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC); presbytery leadership; and the General Assembly Committee on Representation. This task force will exclusively review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for, racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA), reporting its findings for implementation to the 221st General Assembly (2014).
2. In light of what we have heard in our conversation with the church, identifying a critical condition concerning confidence in the substance and direction of racial ethnic ministry, we would also recommend that the National Racial Ethnic Task Force be
  - a. created separate and apart from the proposed OGA task force;
  - b. created whether or not the motion for the repurposing of synods is approved;
  - c. instructed to specifically address the issue of language access, sensitivity and resource (particularly as relates to the Spanish and Korean languages) within the existing frame of judicatory operation, as well as within the context of any regional administrative structure that emerges as a result of the approval of the repurposing of synods;
  - d. instructed to review the models of racial ethnic ministry that are operating successfully in the denomination with particular focus on, but not limited to, those noted in this commission’s report.
  - e. instructed to explore the viability of a nationally organized racial ethnic ministry advocacy model on the local and/or cluster congregation level.

#### *Charge*

To address the question: *“In the light of what we have heard from the church regarding the intrinsic value of racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA), how will that priority be preserved in the face of transition to a structure that does not include synods with ecclesiastical status?”*

#### *Process*

Representatives from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), representing the collective community of the racial ethnic Presbyterian family, presented the commission with a unified case for considering the historic role of synods in the vitality of racial ethnic Presbyterian ministry. Subsequently ACREC was invited to partner with this task force. Working together, we embarked on a process of exploration, assessment, and visioning regarding potential options and elements of a strategy for the PC(USA) to sustain the viability of *established* racial ethnic Presbyterian congregations and communities as well as those that are emerging, and those that have yet to. The focus of this exploration was founded in the overwhelming response in the commission’s polling of the church that consistently lifted up racial ethnic ministry as the number one element that needed to be accounted for in a post-synod Presbyterian universe.

*Rationale*

Even though the work of this task force was focused on identifying models for racial ethnic ministry in the face of potential transition to a structure that does not include synods with ecclesiastical power, we heard a wide spread outcry for relief from conditions as they currently exist. Established racial ethnic congregations continue to struggle in their relationships with their Presbyteries, resourcing and nurture are widely unavailable to them, and there is a feeling within this community that they are being abandoned in favor of other priorities within the denomination. The commitment to racial ethnic ministry that the PC(USA) has professed is seen as mere lip service, due to the general absence of evidence of that commitment on the local church level. The notion of life in the absence of Synod ecclesiastical authority is, for many racial ethnic congregations, the “last straw” in what has developed into a perceived tradition of tacit exclusion.

It is widely acknowledged, and factually irrefutable, that synods have been the traditional *Safe Haven* for matters regarding racial ethnic ministry. This truth emerges from two primary factors, *Critical Mass* and *Sociological Necessity*. Regarding *Critical Mass*, it is clear that in many areas of the country the numerical count of racial ethnic Presbyterians was insufficient to command the attention, sensitivity, and focus of many presbyteries. Synods provided the place where racial ethnic Presbyterians could gather in numbers that afforded them a voice that was not available on the presbytery level. Regarding *Sociological Necessity*, one need only refer to the historical truths that required federal government intervention in the local implementation of civil rights in many parts of the United States. Unfortunately the truths that called for such a solution were also actively impacting the life of the PC(USA), and the ecclesiastical power of synods served as the lone buffer for many racial ethnic Presbyterians and congregations.

The place of synods in this mix was both programmatic and resource oriented. Many synods had dedicated staff focused on the particular and peculiar place of racial ethnic ministry within the established Presbyterian domain. Local congregations were resourced with people, programs, and funding generated from the synod, which also evolved into a place of shelter and recourse for racial ethnic Presbyterians unable to access justice, recognition, and relief within their own presbyteries. The historic memory of this era looms somewhat larger than more recent renditions of that reality, but the spirit of the role that synods have played in the life of racial ethnic Presbyterian ministry continues to be the measure by which they are valued among the community of racial ethnic Presbyterians.

A historical fact that bears mention is that “racial ethnic” prior to the 1980s was primarily a “black and white” issue. That is to say, that the focus of most matters regarding ethnicity and race in America was conjugated in the context of the “Negro/Black/African American” struggle for equal rights. The Presbyterian church, in the southern and northern versions of itself, was challenged to respond to the social injustices of the time with ground breaking postures and statements that valued the parity, ministry, and witness of Black Presbyterians within the life and body of the church. In the northern church this was evidenced by, among other things, the hiring of Black Presbyterians into the established structure. In the southern church the social circumstance manifested the continuation of a structure that included the thriving presence of all-Black presbyteries and synods.

The fact that these all-Black judicatories (like the Synods of Atlantic, Blue Ridge, Canadian, and Catawba, and Presbyteries like Cape Fear, Yadkin, Southern Virginia, Tennessee, and others) were “structured” out of existence (along with much of the programming focused on their constituency) in a process advanced by the “redistricting” that followed the 1983 Reunion, is a fact that serves as a point of reference for the current concern that the fruits of the church’s current plan for restructuring will include *sour grapes* for those historically disenfranchised within the mainstream of American reality. The Native American concern had already been marginalized and because it was less visible in the “nightly news,” it less often received the recognition of having provided the original context (at least in principle) for the civil rights struggle. There were also Mexican presbyteries, which were more remote in connection, but no less relevant in the overall historic context of racial ethnic Presbyterian ministry.

Today when we use the term “racial ethnic” it refers to a multitude of cultures, including immigrants of all “non-white” races and ethnicities. The fact that most of them, like the Negro / Black/African and Native Americans became Presbyterian pursuant to global efforts of mission (albeit in somewhat of a different *storyline* of historic context), is one that is relevant to the universal nature of Presbyterian witness. It is this witness that moves “front and center” in forward looking discussions concerning the future of racial ethnic Presbyterian ministry, particularly in light of the demographic shifts occurring within the American mission field.

Also prominent in the commission’s polling of the church, were the expressions of deep and abiding mistrust—fueled by a general absence of meaningful connection to the national, regional, and even local judicatories. This is by no means a *racial ethnic phenomenon*, but it has peculiar ramifications within the racial ethnic Presbyterian community. Those feelings of distant disconnect are exacerbated by the day-to-day experiences of those within the communities of traditionally disenfranchised people; it is in fact a double-disconnect from society as a whole and from the church, so the distance seems greater—and the isolation more severe.

In a spirit that recognized “what Jesus would do,” the PC(USA) in the *Book of Order* creates a context for its place of responsibility to such communities:

## F-1.0403 Unity in Diversity

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

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## G-3.0101 Councils as an Expression of Unity of the Church

The mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. Congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while possessing all the gifts necessary to be the church, are nonetheless not sufficient in themselves to be the church. Rather, they are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. This call to bear witness is the work of all believers. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.

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## APPENDIX B—ARTICLE 8. RACIAL ETHNIC REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

8.1 *The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall provide for a Committee on Representation for each governing body above the Session. Its membership shall consist of equal numbers of men and women. A majority of the members shall be selected from the racial ethnic groups within the governing body and the total membership shall include persons from each of the following categories:*

- a. majority male membership
- b. majority female membership
- c. racial ethnic male membership
- d. racial ethnic female membership
- e. youth male and female membership

*Its main function shall be to guide the governing bodies with respect to their membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies and other units, in implementation of the principles of participation and inclusiveness, to ensure effective representation in the decision making of the church.*

8.2 *Governing bodies of the Church shall be responsible for implementing the Church’s commitment to inclusiveness and participation which provides for the full expression of the rich diversity within its membership. All governing bodies shall work to become more open and inclusive and to correct past patterns of discrimination on the basis of racial ethnic background.*

*Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses.*

*Participation and representation of racial ethnic membership shall be assured by the Committees on Representation (8.1).*

The challenges we are currently facing as a church regarding racial ethnic ministry relate to the concept of fundamental commitment to this ideal. Arguably, the church’s passion has not been invested in racial ethnic ministry, regardless of the number of “success stories” that can be celebrated. Diminishing resources pumped through a structure of systems that are decades old continues to serve fewer and fewer people. Emerging racial ethnic worshipping communities are receiving their due priority, but more and more often it is at the expense of established racial ethnic congregations, who are struggling (along with the entire denomination) with the realities of decline in vitality and relevance. All of this while voice after voice echoes the sentiment that the PC(USA) continues to speak “out of both sides of its mouth”—stating the priority nature of racial ethnic ministry while simultaneously withdrawing resources from the places that would enhance and support it.

In response to a demographic reality in which the racial ethnic tide continues to swell, the PC(USA) has embraced multiculturalism as “... the answer ...” divesting itself further and further from racial ethnic ministry support. Valuing multicultural contexts of worship could never be “wrong,” but to choose those contexts as *alternatives* to racial ethnic ministry would be a mistake that many already believe the denomination to be making. The identified trend of immigrant racial ethnic congregations seeking to call pastors from their homeland of origin speaks to the critical nature of a cultural context in ministry. This cultural context is critical not only to the Taiwanese, Hispanic/Latinos, and Nigerians, it is critical for the long-established racial ethnic Presbyterian worshipping communities as well. A “... both/and ...” strategy is called for, and the PC(USA), if it is to be true to its stated priority for racial ethnic ministry (in a way that is consistent with the *Book of Order*), must passionately invest in both streams of racial ethnic ministry.

A structural reality that does not include synods with ecclesiastical power presents a fundamental threat to racial ethnic ministry, because it removes a recognized place of shelter. As relates to the concepts of “injury” and “harm,” they are experienced in both *actual* and *perceived* ways by the racial ethnic Presbyterian communities who have traditionally found nurture, protection, and care in a place that may no longer exist. In the sequence that calls for the “repurposing” of synods then, there must be a simultaneous process of identifying new and effective ways to resource, support, and enhance racial ethnic Presbyterian ministry; only then can the angst of “*being restructured out of relevance in, and connection to the denomination*” be replaced by a “*purposeful discovery of a place from which to regroup and grow ... again.*”

A fundamental element in this entire process is cultural proficiency, an ideal that is more prominently finding its way into popular focus. Yet in spite of most of us “*beginning to be aware that we should be aware*” (in matters of cultural [and other categories of] diversity) there is a lack of organized consensus regarding the measurement of our progress in that direction. As we speak there are, emerging from a varied set of sources within the denomination, numerous calls for us to fundamentally value the fruits of diversity with a reverence and respect that will allow us to truly grow together as a unified community in the Body of Christ.

The fragrant flowers of this ideal must be cultivated and nurtured however, and we have heard the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians crying out (as in the wilderness) for an *authentic diversity* that has a shelf life beyond the boundaries of a photo opportunity. In the light of all those who are laboring to craft a church adaptive model, and in the face of a circumstance where the fantasy of “*One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism*” is accosted by the reality of “*Divided Mind, Divided Body, and Divided Spirit*,” we would represent the awareness of an overwhelming desire for cultural proficiency to become one of the “Marks of the Presbyterian Church”; setting a visible example for a world that is sorely in need of one.

### *Conclusion*

In our journey through the evident possibilities for a structure that would take all of these elements into account and provide a framework for the enhancement, nurture, and support of racial ethnic ministry in a post-synod Presbyterian context, there were a number of models that emerged. They ranged from the formation of new commissions and the creation of local advocates exclusively assigned to racial ethnic ministry concerns, to the adjustment of existing General Assembly constitutional provisions. At the end of the day the boundaries of our charge as a commission limited the degree to which we could prescriptively address these matters. Additionally, all of the primary stakeholders were not present at the table of our discussion.

In our unified effort, the members of ACREC and the members of this task force agree that the discussion we have been marinating needs to continue into a level of detail calls for significant, time, prayer, and study. Certainly there is much we can learn from those racial ethnic worshipping communities who are thriving and growing. Certainly there is wisdom to be gleaned from the Korean councils currently and the racial ethnic judicatories that appear in the history of our denomination. Certainly there are many structural options that have the capacity to transform our denominational ethos as relates to racial ethnic ministry. We find this to be a process that calls for all racial ethnic ministry stakeholders to engage in a constructive dialogue that can serve to heal past harms and forge a bold path forward into a vibrant and relevant vision for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As Jesus ministered to the Samaritan woman at the well, and the “Good” Samaritan man ministered to his Jewish “neighbor,” we are called—in Christ—into one another’s care. As a church we must not only embrace, but also live into the vision of an ethos that values the content of each character, regardless of the skin it’s in. Christ calls us to this as individuals and as a church for the very same reason—to provide a demonstrative witness to the world of the Kingdom of Heaven. The PC(USA) posture on racial ethnic ministry must be reflective of this context as it moves to address the question of how the disproportionate injury to the established racial ethnic Presbyterian community (caused by the removal of ecclesiastical status from synods) will be balanced in any new structure moving forward; but even if the synod structure is retained there is a cry for the PC(USA) to reassess, re-conjugate, reset, and refocus its approach to racial ethnic ministry.

With this aim in mind, we conclude that it would be most productive for all of the primary stakeholders in the PC(USA) frame of racial ethnic ministry to be convened and focused on an agenda of reflection, assessment, and imaginatively bold visioning—for the purpose of forging an effective and historically responsible model for moving forward in the effort to revitalize racial ethnic ministry on the national and congregational level.

*Final Report from the Special Committee on the Administrative Review of the Synod of Boriquén (Puerto Rico), the Reverend Mauricio Chacón, Moderator.*

### *Introduction*

This report serves as our final report to the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils, formerly the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies (the commission).

As you are aware, the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved Item 04-06 creating the commission and, among other foci, charging it with the supervision of “the Special Administrative Review Committee on Puerto Rico and act on any recommendations they may make within the powers given to the commission” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 275 of the electronic version, p. 212 of the print version).

In directing that the SCARB continue, the rationale of Item 04-06 noted that “it is important for them [SCARB] to continue to function as a committee in dialogue with the church in Puerto Rico ... [foreseeing] that the General Assembly may be asked to implement recommendations that the committee may make in the months ahead” (*Ibid.*, p. 276).

*Observations*

In response to this charge from the General Assembly, the entire membership of the SCARB met in 2011 from February 22nd thru 25th with the councils and assemblies of the mid councils of the Synod of Boriquén (the “synod”) and the synod’s Committee on the Future in an effort to continue the dialogue with and encourage dialogue among and between the leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “PC(USA)”) in Puerto Rico.

As a result of that visit and subsequent informal communications with leaders of the Synod of Boriquén and its constituent mid councils, we make the following observations:

1. Though there continue to be power struggles among and between the leaders of the individual presbyteries and the synod, we observed during our visit that considerable effort has been made by all the leaders to mitigate those struggles and find ways and areas in which the mid councils can work together, or, at least, not interfere with one another.

Thus, we the members of SCARB believe we have done all we can in this respect and that any further efforts on our part would not serve to further encourage or enhance that dialogue and spirit of cooperation and community.

2. The need to search for and identify a permanent synod executive remains unresolved. Though all parties engaged in the leadership of the synod acknowledged the need to engage in such a search, the synod has not yet moved forward in this important process. Now it has been brought to our attention that the interim synod executive is on medical leave and we are unaware of when he will return and resume his responsibilities to the synod.

However, given the release of the commission’s proposed recommendations to the General Assembly redefining the role of synods, including the elimination of their status as councils of the church, the matter of searching for and installing a permanent synod executive seems to be moot. As such, it would be our suggestion that the synod be encouraged to seek a new interim executive, with the principal role of assisting the synod to move forward on addressing the future of the synod in light of the commission’s recommendations, if it is determined that the current interim will not soon return to his duties.

3. As previously mentioned and assuming that the commission will follow through in its recommendations to the General Assembly to remove the status of synods as councils of the church, and that the General Assembly and then the presbyteries of the PC(USA) approve moving in this direction, we would encourage the synod, in consultation with its presbyteries, to begin the process of considering the future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico without a synod.

In that regard, we believe there are three options open to the PC(USA) in Puerto Rico:

- a. continue to be divided into three distinct presbyteries;
- b. realignment of the current presbytery boundaries, resulting in perhaps two or three distinct, but differently aligned presbyteries; or,
- c. creation of one, new presbytery.

While we recognize that any realignment, such as those suggested by options b and c, above, may lead to further power struggles within the synod, we believe that this is also an opportunity for our sisters and brothers in Puerto Rico to come together in common cause, setting aside their differences and working together to best serve the congregations and people of Puerto Rico.

We are also aware that at the biennial meeting of the Synod of Boriquén in November, 2011, its Committee on the Future offered three possible directions that could be taken by the synod; they included:

- a. the synod with its three constituent presbyteries and a revised structure;
- b. one presbytery to attach to a synod of PC(USA); or
- c. The Presbyterian Church in/of Puerto Rico with
  - (1) one presbytery with regional mission groups and program; or
  - (2) three presbyteries with one administrative unit/office; or
  - (3) four presbyteries with a synod or General Assembly; or
  - (4) a church organized in councils.

However, we have yet to receive any report from the synod regarding what action(s) they took in response to those recommendations. Should we receive word of what action they took, we will certainly take those into consideration and communicate that to the commission with any revisions to this final report that may be necessary.

In any event, we, the members of SCARB, stand ready, individually or as a group, in whatever way the leadership of the Synod of Boriquén might deem appropriate, to assist the synod to work through any of the processes that might be a change from its current structure.

4. There continue to be voices of discord within the church that would encourage separation from the PC(USA), but we believe those voices to be a very small minority. However, the principal manifestation of these voices of discord and separation appear to be lodged in the Puerto Rican Presbyterian Caucus (PRPC). Here, as with the issue of the search for a permanent synod executive, though most leaders within the synod acknowledge that the caucus does not speak for the majority of the churches or their members on the issues of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico and, further, do not represent the synod, no definitive actions have been taken by the synod to assert that position and belief.

As a result, even the Office of Hispanic/Latino Congregational Support of the PC(USA) (OHLCS) continues to fund, at least in part, the participation of the members of the PRPC at the triennial meetings of the Caucus Nacional Presbiteriano Hispano Latino (Hispanic/Latino Caucus of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)). We appreciate that this position is based upon the OHLCS's belief that, having not received official communications to the contrary, the PRPC-designated participants to the Caucus Nacional are the officially sanctioned representatives of the synod.

Here, again, as in our observations and suggestions noted in Item 3., above, we believe that the discussions and decisions about how to proceed into the future as the manifestation and presence of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico without a synod will necessarily provide the opportunity to address this particular issue head on.

#### *Irregularities or delinquencies*

Finally, we feel it is necessary that we reiterate to the commission and to the leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico, that SCARB was not constituted for the purpose of correcting known irregularities or delinquencies; but, rather, to investigate and make suggestions regarding, but not limited to:

- The effectiveness of the stated clerk of the synod and effectiveness of the synod council;
- The effectiveness of the leadership of the three presbyteries;
- The relationship among the presbyteries within the synod;
- The synod's financial practices and those financial practices of presbyteries;
- Whether there is significant desire in Puerto Rico for a national Puerto Rican Presbyterian denomination.

Thus, we were to *identify* irregularities and delinquencies that may have occurred in the administration and governance of the mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Puerto Rico and which irregularities and delinquencies may have or are contributing to the issues identified in the original charge to SCARB by the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Moderator of the 218th General Assembly (2008).

In fact, we did identify such irregularities during the original term of SCARB. Those included the intended actions of the synod, at the insistence of certain presbyteries, to dismiss the synod stated clerk without due process and the legal issues surrounding the building of a parking garage on synod property without the express permission of the synod assembly. These irregularities were identified, verified, and brought to the attention of the synod leadership and, as reported in the SCARB report to the 219th General Assembly (2010); those irregularities were appropriately and adequately addressed.

#### *Consultation and Review of Final Report with Leadership of the Synod of Boriquén*

We would note that we promised our sisters and brothers in Puerto Rico that we would give them an opportunity to review and comment on this final report before it is submitted to the commission. In that regard, the Moderator of SCARB, the Reverend Mauricio Chacón, and the commission's designee, the Reverend José Olagues, attended the biennial meeting of the Synod of Boriquén, held in el Campamento El Guacio en San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, from November 10–12, 2011, and this report reflects that consultation and conversation.

*Summary Response of the Synod of Boriquen to the Final Report of the Special Committee on Administrative Review (SCARB).*

The Synod of Boriquén welcomed representatives from the special committee at its stated meeting on November 11–12, 2011, and engaged in dialogue with them regarding their report.

They also viewed a PowerPoint report from the synod's "Committee of the Future," which included *three options* for the synod's consideration:

1. The synod with its three constituent presbyteries and a revised structure;

2. One presbytery to attach to a synod of PC(USA); or
3. The Presbyterian Church in/of Puerto Rico with
  - a. one presbytery with regional mission groups and program; or
  - b. three presbyteries with one administrative unit/office; or
  - c. four presbyteries with a synod or General Assembly; or
  - d. a church organized in councils. (from SCARB's final report to commission)

The synod assembly later combined options 1 & 2 above as *Model A*, for the Synod of Boriquén to continue belonging to the PC(USA) as it is currently and option 3, with its 4 variants as *Model B*, for the creation of a Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico with fraternal relationships with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The vote results were 33 for Model A (to remain in PC(USA) and 30 (to form a Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico). The synod instructed the moderator of the Synod of Boriquén to appoint a special committee to study, analyze, and negotiate between option 1 & option 2 above (originally proposed by Committee of the Future and combined into Model A—to remain in PC(USA) and to report at a special synod assembly sometime in the future.

The Committee of the Future was dismissed with thanks.

Note: The portion of the minutes of the Synod of Boriquén recording the above reported actions can be found in Appendix #5.

## Appendix #1

### Our Guiding Principles

- *We live in a post-Christendom context* that calls for continual reconsideration of our mission, our structures, and our practices in order to be faithful to Christ and fruitful participants in God's mission to the world.<sup>87</sup> This reality is now undeniable. We live in a new day, a new epoch. It is as significant as it was for the Reformed tradition to be transported from Europe to America, and it requires no less a reconsideration and reformulation of our way of being the church. And if we do not do so, they will eventually die.
- The *missional congregation* in a healthy, faithful covenant community is the center of the mission and faithful life of discipleship of Jesus Christ. Congregations *are* the "basic but insufficient" form of God's mission in the world (*Book of Order*, G-1.0101) The congregation is the basic form of mission, but for congregations to be faithful to their mission also requires them to be in covenant relationships with other congregations for shared authority, accountability, edification, and missional support.
- *Councils exist to serve the mission of the congregations in their local context.* In the words, of Louis Weeks, president emeritus of Union Theological Seminary, "The highest council in the church is really the Session. The rest of the governing bodies serve the Session." Presbyteries are "*covenant communities of missional congregations*"<sup>88</sup> and the center of our corporate life, governance, and mission together connecting congregations to each other and the larger witness of the church. It is a "collegial bishop" charged with preparing and ordering the ministry of teaching elders, it is a covenant community of missional congregations, it is the "balcony" that offers a broader perspective to congregational leaders so that they might serve wisely and well in their specific contexts.
- This report and our recommendations are committed to refocusing the mid council structure on one goal: *servicing fruitful and faithful missional congregations.* To that end, our structures, especially our mid council structures, *must engage and serve the mission of God in the world through missional congregations and partnerships*, not our institutional or denominational concerns.
- *There is no "one size fits all model."* Ecclesial structure follows missional function and is always marked by a commitment to being covenantal and contextual. The best ecclesiastical structures are discerned by those who live in it together. They will be contained within the frame of our shared constitutional life, but those structural changes should ordinarily come *from the local context*, not the "national office." The new Form of Government and the passage of Amendment 10A indicate a shift of authority to the local contexts for discerning the shape of a mission and we want to affirm and build upon that shift.
- Our structures must serve and support healthy, shared, spiritual and *collaborative leadership between ruling and teaching elders.*
- This report continues, builds upon, and lives into the decisions made by the church to accept a new Form of Government and place the discernment of fitness for ordination on local churches and presbyteries. *Our proposal is a next step in a trajectory that we believe will result in further collaborative creativity by the whole church in every context.*
- We envision a "*big canvas with a clear frame.*" While remaining securely within the "Foundations" of our theological and governance tradition, we call the church to create the conditions to energize collaborative creativity, missional innovation, and relational accountability with *permission for many different models of middle councils to emerge that will foster the vitality and fruitfulness of missional congregations.*

Appendix #2  
Glossary of Key Terms

**ADAPTIVE CHANGE:** In contrast to “technical solutions” that are built on best practices and known insights or techniques, adaptive change demands group learning and institutional transformation to address new realities, circumstances, and challenges. Adaptive challenges require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments across the organization. Technical problems may involve intentional effort and accountability or better communication. Adaptive challenges require the organization to change values, behaviors, and attitudes. Adaptive challenges require leaders to learn something new in order to address the situation. In the adaptive context, the leader’s role is not to “fix the problem” but to help the system understand the underlying issues and competing values at work in order to lead the system in a shift in habits, beliefs, values or behaviors that will open up new possibilities for facing the challenge.

**ADJACENT POSSIBLE:** Drawn from the work of Steven Johnson (*Where Good Ideas Come From*), this concept suggests that innovation comes by small steps through a process of trial and error and the insights of joining previously disparate ideas into a new understanding. Each small step opens up possibilities for new discoveries and innovations.

**BALCONY:** A concept of adaptive change, the “balcony” is a place for perspective and reflecting, for noticing patterns and seeing possibilities. To “get on the balcony” does not mean to run away from “the fray,” but rather, to pause and detach, in order to develop a broader, longer-range perspective on the issues. “Without the capacity to move back and forth between the field of action and the balcony, to reflect day to day, moment to moment, on the many ways in which an organization’s habits can sabotage adaptive work, a leader easily and unwittingly becomes a prisoner of the system” Heifetz and Laurie.

**BOUNDED SET:** An organizational model in which group membership is determined and maintained by establishing and enforcing boundaries. In churches, these boundaries can be doctrinal, practical, or cultural.

**CENTERED SET:** An organizational model in which group affiliation is more loosely determined and maintained, not by means of boundaries, but by means of shared commitments to a central idea or practice.

**CLASSIS:** In the Reformed Church in America, classis is the equivalent of our presbytery. In RCA polity, a classis can be a loose collection of churches who share a common mission, not just common geography.

**CLERICALISM:** A tendency to rely on professional clergy for the work of the church, at both congregational and mid council levels. Clericalism results in the loss of parity between ruling and teaching elders. John Calvin developed Presbyterian polity, in part, as a way to avoid clericalism in the church.

**CONNECTIONALISM:** A core principle of Presbyterian theology, ecclesiology, and polity, connectionalism is the insistence that congregations are more effective at mission and ministry when working together in covenantal relationships of support and mutual accountability.

**COVENANT COMMUNITIES OF MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS:** This concept, drawn from the missional ecclesiology of Darrell Guder, serves as our working definition of what a presbytery should be. This way of thinking about presbyteries de-emphasizes traditional focus on the governing, regulatory, and judicial functions of presbyteries, and instead highlights the relational and missional character of a council.

**CROWD SOURCING:** A decentralized form of creativity in which an open call is made to collaborate on a shared project.

**CULTURE:** Kikanza Nuri Robbins writes, “Culture is the shared beliefs, customs, values and behaviors that unite a group of people and distinguish them from others. People belong to several cultures that are usually associated with their race or ethnicity, language, occupation or organization.”

**CULTURAL PROFICIENCY:** A process of discernment and problem solving by learning to look at issues from the cultural perspectives of those involved.

**DISESTABLISHMENT:** Beginning with the withdrawal of state recognition and/or support from churches in Western societies, disestablishment in the contemporary United States also refers to the post-Christendom reality that church is no longer at the center of culture.

**ECCLESIAL INSTITUTIONS:** Church structures responsible for order, discipline, ordination of ministers, continuing education, mutual encouragement, and missionary work.

**ECCLESIOLOGY:** Theological reflection on the nature, purpose, and organizational structure of the church.

**EMERGING CHURCH MOVEMENT:** In various manifestations coming from both evangelical and mainline churches, the emerging church movement is an innovative and ever-developing attempt to reconsider Christian traditions in light of the changing contexts of our flat, networked, postmodern, post-Christendom world.

**EMERGING GENERATIONS:** Youth and young adults in Generation X (born between the mid 60s and early 80s), Millennials (also known as Generation Y; born between the early 80s and mid 90s), and the subsequent generation.

**FLAT:** Popularized in the title of Thomas Friedman’s seminal work on globalization, *The World Is Flat*, flattening refers to the “shrinking” and connecting of our world through travel and communication technologies, as well as a growing preference for non-hierarchical and non-bureaucratic organizational models.



GLOBALIZATION: The pervasive interconnectedness of global economies and culture.

THE GREAT EMERGENCE: In her influential book, *The Great Emergence*, Phyllis Tickle suggests that every 500 years the church engages in a cultural and ecclesiastical “rummage sale” that sifts through the dead and dying elements of the past en route to a new expression of life and faith. Tickle argues that we are in the midst of one of these periods, which she calls the Great Emergence, occurring about 500 years after the Protestant Reformation.

THE INVENTIVE AGE: In a series of recent books, Doug Pagitt labels our contemporary time the Inventive Age. Most pertinent to our discussion is the transition from the recent Information Age (which is more familiar to many us) to the Inventive Age, which Pagitt describes as a shift from being *consumers* of information to *producers and participants* in information and media. The Inventive Age is typified by Web 2.0, wiki culture, and social networking.

KAIROTIC TIME: *Kairos* is a Greek word used in the New Testament to indicate an appointed time for God’s action. In Christian theology, it has come to mean a crucial juncture, a moment of truth, a turning point in history.

LEARNING COMMUNITY: The ability to learn new ways of understanding, responding, and growing is a necessary aspect of adaptive change. Learning communities nurture flexibility and adaptability as key characteristics needed to meet the challenges of rapidly changing environments. In a learning community, adaptive change is an ongoing reality of life.

MAINLINE PROTESTANT: This term refers to the streams of Christianity that represented the majority of Americans up through the middle of the 20th century. Mainline denominations include the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church (U.S.A.), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the Disciples of Christ, and the Reformed Church in America.

MID COUNCILS: In the terminology of our new Form of Government, which went into effect in 2011, presbyteries and synods are now known as “mid councils” instead of “middle governing bodies.”

MID COUNCIL COMMISSION: In response to the 219th General Assembly (2010), Moderator Cynthia Bolbach and outgoing Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow created the Middle Governing Bodies Commission. After the 2011 ratification of the new Form of Government, this commission was renamed the Mid Councils Commission to reflect the terminology of the new Form of Government.

MISSIONAL: Whether describing theology, ecclesiology, mid councils, or congregations, “missional” indicates that the central purpose and organizing principle of a congregation is personal and communal participation in the *Missio Dei*—the mission of God in Jesus Christ to redeem and heal the world. In missional ecclesiology, there is a shift away from thinking of churches *having missions* to a realization that the church *is mission*.

MULTI-PRESBYTERY MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: According to our proposals, after the ecclesiastical functions of synods are replaced by regional administrative commissions, presbyteries will focus on the missional partnerships that have always characterized healthy synods. The repurposing of synods as multi-presbytery missional partnerships responds to our changing contexts by flattening denominational hierarchy and bureaucracy.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESBYTERY: A presbytery model defined by shared geography.

NETWORK PRESBYTERY: A presbytery model that spans geographical boundaries and is defined more by shared missional purposes or affinity to particular theologies or ideologies. Networks are often built around more fluid structural organization and are more focused on common concerns, objectives, and relationships.

NETWORK THEORY: Originating in computer science, the study of how networks function and affect systems. Contemporary social networks, facilitated by developing social media, are of particular concern for our reflection on the changing contexts of ministry in the 21st century.

PARITY: John Calvin’s basic concept of Presbyterian polity creates and sustains a relationship of equal and shared leadership, authority, and accountability between ruling and teaching elders.

PARTNERSHIPS: Two or more groups, organizations, or parties forging a relationship for mutual benefit and mission. Partnerships might be formal or informal, simple or complex, involve many people or just a few.

POLITY: The structural system of governance for a church. The three primary forms of polity are Congregational, Episcopal, and Presbyterian.

POST 10-A: A description of life in the PC(USA) after the 2010–11 approval and ratification of Amendment 10-A, which replaced the “fidelity and chastity” clause in the *Book of Order*.

POST-CHRISTENDOM: In today’s Western world, Christianity is no longer the definitive center and shaper of culture, as it had been since Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. “Christendom”—the triumphal reign of Christianity in Western culture—is over. No longer part of the “cultural establishment,” the church must envision new ways of bearing witness to God’s kingdom in a rapidly changing world. (See “[disestablishment](#).”)

POST-DENOMINATIONAL: The current reality in which appreciation of distinct denominational identities has become less critical to the average American Protestant. “Brand loyalty” is no longer a compelling factor in the growth or success of a congregation.

**POSTMODERNISM:** Philosophical challenges to the multifaceted ways in which Western culture was transformed by the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.

**PROVISIONAL PRESBYTERY:** A temporary presbytery that can be created and explored during the season of reflective experimentation recommended in this report.

**REGULATORY:** An understanding of mid councils that prioritizes the sense of appropriate control and accountability exercised by a mid council over its constituent councils and/or individuals. While this term often elicits a negative connotation, it describes the legitimate need for organizations to live and work together in mutual accountability under a set of shared values and commitments.

**SAFE HOLDING ENVIRONMENT:** In the process of adaptive change, a “safe holding environment” is a place or situation in which experimentation and risk taking can take place. In the context of our report and recommendations, we suggest that regional administrative commissions (taking the ecclesiastical place of synods) will function as the safe holding environment for experimentation, risk taking, and innovation at the presbytery level. Likewise, the kinds of presbyteries we envision will function as safe holding environments for experimentation, risk taking, and innovation in local congregations.

**SEASON OF REFLECTIVE EXPERIMENTATION:** A proposed time in which the church will allow experimentation and flexibility in the formation of connectional relationships at the presbytery level. Among the possibilities to be explored during this season of experimentation are the creation of provisional nongeographic presbyteries and provisional presbytery realignments for specific missional purposes. This season of experimentation will be evaluated by subsequent General Assemblies and will expire on December 31, 2021.

**STRATIGRAPHY:** The study of strata or layers, used here not in the geological sense, but to note the changing nature of the church through time.

**THEOLOGICAL FRIENDSHIP:** A concept suggested by Barry Ensign George which suggests that trust is built across ideological lines through the transformative work of shared theological reflection. In communities of theological friendship, diversity and compatibility are held together in creative tension.

**WEB 2.0:** Internet applications based on participation and collaboration. Blogging and social media like Facebook and Twitter are prime examples of Web 2.0.

**WIKI CULTURE:** A wiki is a website whose content can be created and modified by users. Wiki culture is the sense of participation, collaboration, and shared ownership that is generated by this technology. Wikipedia is a prime example of wiki culture.

**WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES:** A distinct community that gathers around the Word and Sacraments, is under the authority of a council, practices patterns of mutual accountability, is engaged in mission, and is self-sustaining or moving toward it.

### Appendix #3

#### Cultural Proficiency: What Is It?

Cultural proficiency is a way of being that allows individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people who differ from them. It is a developmental approach for addressing the issues that emerge in diverse environments. In 1989, Terry Cross, executive director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, in Portland, Oregon, published a monograph that changed many lives. *Toward a Culturally Competent System of Care* provides several tools for addressing the responses to diversity that we have encountered in our work. Although Dr. Cross addressed the issues of difference in mental health care, his seminal work has been the basis of a major shift in responding to difference in organizations across the country.

We like this approach for several reasons: it is proactive; it provides tools that can be used in any setting, rather than techniques that are applicable in only one environment; the focus is behavioral not emotional; and it can be applied to both organizational practices and individual behavior. Most diversity programs are used to explain the nature of diversity or the process of learning about or acquiring new cultures. This is an approach for responding to the environment shaped by its diversity. It is not an off-the-shelf program that an organization implements through training. It is not a series of mechanistic steps that everyone must follow. It is a model for shifting the culture of the organization—it is a model for individual transformation and organizational change. There are four tools for developing one’s cultural proficiency.

**THE CONTINUUM:** Language for describing behaviors and situations. Use the continuum to describe both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and individual behaviors.

**THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:** Five behavioral standards. Use the essential elements as standards for planning and evaluating growth toward cultural proficiency.

**THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:** Underlying values of the approach. Use the guiding principles to integrate with the core values of your organization.

**THE BARRIERS:** Caveats that assist in responding effectively to resistance to change. Use the barriers to determine appropriate interventions.

#### *The Continuum Explained*

There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum that indicate unique ways of seeing and responding to difference:

*Cultural destructiveness: See the difference, stomp it out.* The elimination of other people's cultures.

*Cultural incapacity: See the difference, make it wrong.* Belief in the superiority of one's culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture.

*Cultural blindness: See the difference, act like you don't.* Acting as if the cultural differences you see do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures.

*Cultural pre-competence: See the difference, respond inadequately.* Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups.

*Cultural competence: See the difference, understand the difference that difference makes.* Interacting with other cultural groups using the five essential elements of cultural proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and organizational practices.

*Cultural proficiency: See the differences and respond effectively in a variety of environments.* Esteeming culture; knowing how to learn about individual and organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments.

#### *The Essential Elements*

The essential elements of cultural proficiency provide the standards for individual behavior and organizational practices:

- Name the differences: Assess Culture
- Claim the differences: Value Diversity
- Reframe the differences: Manage the Dynamics of Difference
- Train about differences: Adapt to Diversity
- Change for differences: Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge

#### *The Guiding Principles*

These are the core values, the foundation upon which the approach is built. Culture is a predominant force; you cannot NOT be influenced by culture. People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture—People have group identities that they want to have acknowledged. Cultures are not homogeneous; there is diversity within groups. The unique needs of every culture must be respected.

#### *The Barriers*

*The Presumption of Entitlement:* Believing that all of the personal achievements and societal benefits that you have, were accrued solely on your merit and the quality of your character.

*Systems of Oppression:* Throughout most organizations are systems of institutionalized racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, and ableism. Moreover these systems are often supported and sustained without the permission of and at times without the knowledge of the people whom they benefit. These systems perpetuate domination and victimization of individuals and groups.

*Unawareness of the need to adapt:* Not recognizing the need to make personal and organizational changes in response to the diversity of the people with whom you and your organization interact. Believing instead, that only the others need to change and adapt to you. In our experience, the most effective and productive approach to addressing cultural diversity within an organization is cultural proficiency.

In an organization it is the *policies-and practices*, in an individual, it is the *values and behaviors* that enable that organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. In a culturally proficient company or organization, the culture promotes inclusiveness and institutionalizes processes for learning about differences and for responding appropriately to differences. Rather than lamenting, "Why can't *they* be like *us*?" managers and staff welcome and create opportunities to better understand who they are as individuals, while learning how to interact positively with people who differ from themselves.

Cultural proficiency is an inside-out approach, which focuses first on those who are insiders to the company or organization, encouraging them to reflect on their own individual understandings and values. It thereby relieves those identified as outsiders, the members of the excluded groups, from the responsibility of doing all the adapting. Cultural proficiency as approach to diversity surprises many people, who expect a diversity program to teach them about others. This inside-out approach acknowledges and validates the current values and feelings of people, encouraging change and challenging a sense of entitlement without threatening one's feelings of worth.

Cultural proficiency prizes individual culture while focusing on the organization's culture, which has a life force beyond the individuals within the company or organization. This focus removes the needs to place blame and to induce feelings of guilt. The approach involves all members of the community in determining how to align policies, practices, and procedures in order to achieve cultural proficiency. Because all of the stakeholders are deeply involved in the developmental process, there is broader based ownership, making it easier for them to commit to change. This responds to the issues that emerge when there is diversity among managers, staff and clients at a systemic level.

Building cultural proficiency requires informed and dedicated staff, committed and involved managers, and time. Employees cannot be sent to training for two days and be expected to return with solutions to all of the diversity issues in their company or organization. This approach does *not* involve the use of simple checklists for identifying culturally significant characteristics of individuals, which may be politically appropriate, but socially meaningless. The transformation to cultural proficiency requires time to think, reflect, decide, and change.

The culturally proficient organization closes the door on tokenism and stops the revolving door through which highly competent, motivated people enter briefly and exit quickly because they have not been adequately integrated into the organization’s culture. Culturally proficient managers can confidently deliver programs and services, knowing that their staff and clients genuinely want it and can readily receive it without having their cultural connections denied, offended, or threatened. Culturally proficient organizations can also be sure that their community perceives them as a positive, contributing force that substantively enhances the community and the organization’s position in it.

*Definitions*

*Read the definitions for these commonly used and misused terms. Reflect on the definition comparing it to how you use the term. Note whether the definition affirms, helps to clarify, or challenges your thinking.*

*Culture.* Everything you believe and everything you do that identifies you as a member of a group and distinguishes you from other groups. You may belong to more than one cultural group. Cultures reflect the belief systems and behaviors that are informed by ethnicity as well as other sociological factors like gender, age, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Both individuals and organizations are defined by their cultures.

*Diversity.* A general term for indicating that many people with many differences are present in an organization or group. Diversity refers to ethnicity, language, gender, age, ability, and sexual orientation and all other aspects of culture.

*Tolerance.* Putting up with differences with which one disagrees. Tolerance is first in a progression of steps that may lead to valuing diversity. Teaching tolerance is a good way to get beyond genocide or cultural destructiveness. It is the beginning of a process that moves toward cultural proficiency.

*Multiculturalism.* The preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a society or nation, holding each as equally valuable to and influential upon the members of society. The educational term, *multicultural* refers to teaching about different cultures. Multiculturalism differs from cultural proficiency in that it reflects a state of being, whereas cultural proficiency is a process or a way of being.

*Cultural Competence.* A term created by Terry Cross that means interacting with one’s clients, colleagues, and community using the essential elements of cultural competence: assessing culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of difference, adapting to diversity, and institutionalizing cultural knowledge.

*Cultural Proficiency.* The *policies and practices* of an organization, or the *values and behaviors* of an individual, which enable that organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency is a way of being reflected in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community.

*Affirmative Action.* A legally mandated approach to increasing the diversity of an organization. Focuses on having a proportional representation of all the people in the community in the organization. The intention is to have qualified people; the implementation often results in a focus on counting numbers rather than assessing qualifications.

*Politically Correct.* A term used to describe language that reflects sensitivity to the diversity of a group. People can *act as if* they are culturally proficient by using politically correct language. A culturally proficient person may be perceived as politically correct, but in reality that person is *culturally correct*.

Read more about the concept and its applications in *Cultural Proficiency* by Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell (Corwin Press, 1999, 2003), and *Culturally Proficient Instruction* by Kikanza Nuri Robins, Randall B. Lindsey, Delores B. Lindsey, and Raymond D. Terrell (Corwin Press, 2001) ©2003 THE CULTURAL PROFICIENCY GROUP 8306 Wilshire Blvd. #7019 Beverly Hills CA 90211 323.939.1034.

Appendix #4

(For the Full Data Reports from Presbyterian Research Services, see attachments, pages 350–564)

SUMMARY OF THE DATA FOR THE SYNOD CONSULTATIONS

Based on the summaries of the sixteen Synods

**Question Number One: What needs to be preserved in our current middle governing body system?**

Comment	Number of summaries
Our connectionalism, networking, shared resources and ministries	11
PJC, accountability	8
Leadership development by synods or presbyteries	7
Support for racial ethnic ministries	7

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Cross presbytery missions	6
Supporting pastors	3
Accountability	3
“gatekeeper” for the pulpit, COM, CPM	3
Balance between pastors and laity	2
Ecumenism and relationships with other institutions	2
Financial, personnel, administrative functions	2
Geographic presbyteries	2
Scholarships	2
NCD	2

Summary: The shaded areas are the most frequent responses to these questions. There is strong and clear support for maintaining a sense of connectionalism and collaboration among levels of the church. The focus of that collaboration is particularly strong in support of racial ethnic groups, leadership development, and common mission and ministry.

**Question Number Two: What needs to be changed in our current middle governing body system?**

Comment	Number of summaries
Better communication and interpretation with congregations	10
Less administrative structure in the Synod	6
Get back to mission and ministry; reduce “governance”	6
Less legalism and more flexibility	5
Either redefine or eliminate synods	5
Need smaller presbyteries	4
Need more racial diversity	4
Need more support from synod; use resources for mission	3
Less bureaucracy in the presbytery	3
The problem is General Assembly and the presbyteries	3
Emphasis needs to be on local congregations, not on MGBs	2
Get rid of things that do not meet today’s needs	2
Synods should be focused on the needs of the presbyteries	2
Use technology to lower costs	2
Need to be bottom up instead of top down	2

Summary: While connectionalism is highly valued, there is also a sense that the communication between the governing bodies is a major problem. Clearly, the governance structure is seen as a hindrance. Respondents want more focus on mission; less on rules.

**Question Number Three: What is working well in your experience with middle governing bodies?**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of summaries</b>
“Nothing” or blank	5
Racial ethnic ministries	4
Presbyteries that focus on church needs	3
Clergy colleague groups	3
Presbytery Executive Forums	3
COM/CPM	3
PJC	2
Presbytery partners groups (instead of synod)	2
PW	2
Camps/conferences	2
Leadership development	2
Collaboration, not competition	2
Support from synod for presbyteries	2
Communications	2

Summary: It is significant that respondents struggled for consensus on what is working well. As with question one, there is support for racial ethnic ministries and programs/processes that support pastors, both in the call process and in their ministry.

**Question Number Four: What is NOT working in your experience with middle governing bodies?**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of summaries</b>
Synod, as currently functioning	9
Communication between and within MGBs	8
The relationship between the synod and presbyteries	6
Too much staff, too much duplication of effort	5
Leadership	4
Too much governance/politics; not enough mission/relationships	4
Connections to congregations	3
Lack of racial ethnic representation	2
We’re better at closing churches than planting them	2
Blanks or “nothing”	2
The financial burden of PJCs	2

Summary: Nine of sixteen synod consultations identified that synods, as currently functioning, are not working, and it would seem that, as with question two, the big problem is relationships and communication. The comment, “We’re better at closing churches than at planting them,” seemed to sum up the frustration with rule-based processes vs. the messy work of evangelism and relationships. There is frustration with presbyteries that care more about their projects than they do their congregations.

Appendix 5

Selected Sections translated from:

BORIQÉN PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN PUERTO RICO  
ASSEMBLY #46  
STATED, BI-ANNUAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 10, 11 AND 12, 2011  
EL GUACIO CHRISTIAN SERVICES CAMP  
SAN SEBASTIÁN, PUERTO RICO

PARTICIPATION AND DIALOGUE WITH THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW FOR SYNOD BORIQÉN IN PUERTO RICO (SCARB) IN THE PC(USA) AND THE COMMISSION ON MIDDLE GOVERNING BODIES (Cm-MGB) IN THE PC(USA).

Rev. Mauricio Chacón, Member and President of SCARB under the General Assembly PC(USA), and Rev. José Olagues, Member of the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies, bring greetings to the Synod Assembly.

Rev. Mauricio Chacón presents a draft of SCARB's report, which will be presented and discussed at the next meeting of the General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies (see Attachment).

The Moderator opens the dialogue on this item. The Moderator concedes several speaking turns for commissioners to express themselves on the matters referred by the said committee.

Rev. Mauricio Chacón and Rev. José Olagues are thanked for their presence at this Assembly.

\* \* \* \* \*

AGREEMENTS ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE "FUTURE"

Rev. Rubén Ortiz Rodríguez, President of the said committee, presents the recommendations of the Report of the Committee on the "Future" (see Attachment).

The Synod Assembly considers the Report of the Committee on the "Future" and takes the following actions:

ACTION OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY ON RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING MISSION: the Synod approves the adoption of the Declaration of Mission and Vision, and the Goals and Objectives in accordance with the Great Ends of the Church as presented. It is also approved that the documents on the Declaration of Mission, Financial Principles and Mission Initiatives be received for study and possible adoption in the future.

ACTION OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY ON RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP OF BODIES IN PUERTO RICO AND WITHIN THE PC(USA): a line is modified so that it reads—to fulfill our ordination vow and/or membership commitments (reception and confirmation). The recommendations are approved.

ACTION OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY ON RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION: a line is modified so that it reads – more than half of its real members. The recommendations on the administration are approved.

ACTION OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY ON RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE MODELS STUDIED:

1. On the Recommendation that a ballot be used including all the models and that there be a vote on only one model

SYNOD AGREEMENT: it is unanimously approved that the debate rules be suspended to hold a question and answer period on the matter of the Ballot and the rules to vote on the models. There will be a committee of the whole for fifteen minutes (it is 3:10 p.m.).

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: There were questions and answers on the matter of the rules to vote on the models and the Ballot.

The work of the Synod continues at 3:35 p.m.

MOTION ON THE BALLOTS: that the Ballot be done in the following manner: Two options: Option A to contain models 1 and 2 related to the PC(USA) and Option B to contain models 3-a through 3-d related to the PC in Puerto Rico.

It is properly seconded.

Amendment to the Motion: that it contain Option C (an additional option) saying "None of the above."

It is properly seconded.

Action of the Synod: It is NOT approved.

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Amendment to the Motion: so that the Ballot reads: Model A (Option 1 with models 1 and 2) regarding the PC(USA) (current relationship) and Model B (Option 2 with models 3-a through 3-d) regarding the PC in PR with a sister relationship with the PC(USA).

It is properly seconded.

There is opposition. The Moderator gives speaking turns in favor and against. The vote is taken.

Action of the Synod: The Amendment is approved.

AGREEMENT OF THE SYNOD: the amended motion is approved.

RECESS AND CONTINUATION OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The Moderator declares a ten-minute recess (it is 4:10 p.m.) to prepare the ballot. The work is continued at 4:30 p.m.

Prior to the voting a prayer is offered by Rev. Jorge D. Zijlstra Arduin (PSJ).

Vote on the Alternatives (for the Ballot):

The Moderator appoints the following persons as the Tallying Committee: Elder Sandra Marcial Ramírez (PSO), Rev. Juan Marcial Feliciano (PNO) and Elder Raúl Santiago Rivera (PSJ). The Ballot will be as follows:

Model A: Regarding the Presbyterian Church (USA) as it is presently constituted

Model B: Regarding the Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico in a fraternal relationship with the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Voting by roll call begins.

Synod action: 33 votes for Model A and 30 votes for Model B. Model A is approved.

2. That provision be made so that the implementation of the selected model allows for the participation of all the bodies affected by the selected model.

Motion calling for the vote on Model 1 and Model 2. It is properly seconded.

There is opposition. The Moderator gives speaking turns in favor and against.

The Question is called for. It is approved.

Substitute motion: Refer to a special committee Options 1 and 2 (models) for study, analysis and negotiation; call a special synod assembly to present the report. It is properly seconded.

Synod action: In favor 30 and against 22. The Substitute Motion is approved.

SYNOD ACTION: The Substitute Motion is approved.

Motion: for the Moderator to appoint the special committee. It is properly seconded.

Amendment to the Motion: that the members be named by the presbyteries (two by each presbytery) and the Synod (appointed by the Moderator). It is properly seconded.

SYNOD ACTION: The amendment is NOT approved.

SYNOD ACTION: it is approved that the Moderator appoint the special committee.

SYNOD ACTION REGARDING THE COMMITTEE ON THE "FUTURE": The Committee is congratulated for its excellent work and the committee is dissolved.

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#### Endnotes

1. *Book of Order*, G-1.0101. “The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context. The triune God gives to the congregation all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the Church. The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, united in relationships of accountability and responsibility, contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole, and are called, collectively, the church.”
2. When Presbyterians were surveyed about the things that are valued and should be preserved in our structure, the synod-related responses were about programs and connections, not about ecclesiastical processes. It seemed to the commission that there was very little support for “oversight” and polity functions at the synod level and stronger support for those synods that collaborated with their presbyteries to find common mission, ministry, and support.
3. See Ronald L. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); ix, 104ff.
4. <http://www.cityclassis.org/>.
5. <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/> “A [fresh expression of church](#) is a new form of church for a fast-changing world that serves those outside the existing church, listens to people and enters their culture, makes discipleship a priority and intentionally forms Christian community.”
6. Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come from: The Natural History of Innovation* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2010), Kindle locator 494–496: “What kind of environment creates good ideas? The simplest way to answer it is this: innovative environments are better at helping their inhabitants explore the adjacent possible, because they expose a wide and diverse sample of spare parts—mechanical or conceptual—and they encourage novel ways of recombining those parts.”
7. See Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011) 129–30.
8. “Trends continue in church membership growth or decline, reports 2011 Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches,” *National Council of Churches USA*, February 14, 2011, <http://www.nccusa.org/news/110210yearbook2011.html>; David A. Roozen, “A Decade of Change in American Congregations: 2000–2010” (Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2011), <http://faithcommunitiestoday.org/decade-change>.
9. Jack Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2009: Information about the membership, ministers, and finances of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, 2010), 4.
10. Jack Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2008: Information about the membership, ministers, and finances of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, 2009); Jack Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2010: Information about the membership, ministers, and finances of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, 2011).
11. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2009,” 3.
12. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2008,” 3.
13. *Ibid.*, 4.
14. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2010,” 4.
15. Dean Hoge, Benton Johnson, and Donald A. Luidens, *Vanishing Boundaries: The Religion of Mainline Protestant Baby Boomers* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994).
16. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2009,” 4.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2010,” 3.
20. Marcum, “Comparative Statistics 2008,” 8.

21. Joseph D. Small, "The Travail of the Presbytery," 4. This work was given to the commission in essay form, and references refer to that essay. It is also available in *A Collegial Bishop? Classis and Presbytery at Issue*, ed. Alan J. Janssen and Leon van den Broeke (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010).
22. In addition to Small's essay, see Craig Dykstra and James Hudnut-Beumler, "The National Organizational Structures of Protestant Denominations: An Invitation to a Conversation," in *The Organizational Revolution: Presbyterians and American Denominationalism*, ed. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) for a discussion of the development of bureaucratic professionalism as a result of institutional isomorphism.
23. Small, "The Travail of the Presbytery," 6–7.
24. Daniel Burke, "Mainline moves to trim bureaucracy," *The Christian Century*, December 5, 2011, <http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2011-12/mainline-protestants-look-for-reforms-stir-anger>.
25. Small, "The Travail of the Presbytery," 2–3.
26. *Ibid.*, 5–6.
27. See Barry Johnson, *Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems* (Amherst: HRD Press, 1992).
28. For a recent discussion of this question by a Presbyterian theologian, see John R. Franke, *Manifold Witness: The Plurality of Truth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009).
29. Marcum, "Comparative Statistics 2008," 7.
30. Roozen, "Decade of Change," 5.
31. Robert Wuthnow, *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).
32. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
33. Leslie Scanlon, "Mexican Presbyterian Church votes to end 139-year-old relationship with PC(USA)," *The Presbyterian Outlook*, August 19, 2011, [http://www.pres-outlook.com/news-and-analysis/1-news-a-analysis/11753-mexican-presbyterian-church-votes-to-end-139-year-old-relationship-with-PC\(USA\).html](http://www.pres-outlook.com/news-and-analysis/1-news-a-analysis/11753-mexican-presbyterian-church-votes-to-end-139-year-old-relationship-with-PC(USA).html).
34. Douglas John Hall, *The End of Christendom and the Future of Christianity* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2002), 18.
35. Marcum, "Comparative Statistics 2010," 2.
36. Guder, "A Missiological Context" 7.
37. From a forthcoming essay by Barry Ensign George, "Denominations," with thanks from the commission for the author's generosity in sharing it with us.
38. Walter Brueggemann, *Cadences of Home: Preaching Among Exiles* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).
39. Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 39–57.
40. *Ibid.*, 39.
41. Jack Haberer, "Pastors call for denomination to be 'radically transformed,'" *The Presbyterian Outlook*, February 2, 2011, <http://www.pres-outlook.com/news-and-analysis/1-news-a-analysis/10946-pastors-call-for-denomination-to-be-radically-transformed.html>.
42. Marcum, "Comparative Statistics 2009," 4.
43. Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed. (New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).
44. Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Age of the Unthinkable: Why the New World Disorder Constantly Surprises Us and What We Can Do About It* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2010).
45. Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* (New York: Portfolio, 2006).
46. Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations* (New York: Portfolio, 2007).
47. See Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come from*; Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown, *A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change* (Lexington: Self Published, 2011).
48. Doug Pagitt, *Church in the Inventive Age* (Minneapolis: Sparkhouse, 2010).

49. Ibid., 30–31.

50. Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008). Tickle identifies the “Rummage Sales of History” as: 1st century: Jesus and the Early Church, 6th century: Gregory the Great, 11th century: The Great Schism, 16th century: The Great Reformation, 21st century: The Great Emergence.

51. An analogous development in literary studies called deconstruction suggested that truth is also relative and dependent on the act of interpretation. At the same time, historical critical approaches to the Bible were calling into question what we can and cannot know about the foundational texts of our faith. Philosophically and theologically, this led to a crisis of authority.

52. Ibid., 77–117.

53. Tickle, *The Great Emergence*, 136–39.

54. Ibid., 150–53. For an innovative treatment of how network theory, crowd sourcing, and wiki culture might impact the church, see Landon Whitsitt, *Open Source Church: Making Room for the Wisdom of All* (Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011). See Also Tony Jones, *The Church Is Flat: The Relational Ecclesiology of the Emergent Church Movement* (JoPa Productions: 2011)

55. Ibid., 158–59. See also Doug Pagitt, *Community in the Inventive Age* (Minneapolis: Sparkhouse, 2011).

56. Ibid., 159–61.

57. Tony Jones, *The New Christians: Dispatches from the Emergent Frontier* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 8.

58. Ibid., 20.

59. Ibid., 52.

60. Ibid., 75.

61. Ibid., 78.

62. Ibid., 81.

63. Ibid., 111.

64. Ibid., 115.

65. Ibid., 153.

66. Ibid., 163.

67. Ibid., 180.

68. Ibid., 204.

69. Van Gelder and Zscheile, *Missional Church in Perspective*, 129-130.

70. With thanks to Darrell Guder, for his generous contribution of an unpublished chapter from “The Presbytery as a Missional Context”. This chapter was the result of a funded research project addressing the ways in which the presbytery could serve the missional transformation of congregations. It was carried out in a cluster of presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) from 1998 to 2008. This essay served as the theological orientation for the various findings generated by the project. It was, however, not published and is distributed with the permission of the author.

71. See Darrell Guder, “The Presbytery as a Missional Context” where this quote and these key missional sources are provided: Newbigin’s thought is documented especially in *The Other Side of 1984: Questions for the Churches*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983; *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986; and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1987. The Missional Church discussion has been shaped by the publications of the *Gospel and Our Culture Network*: Darrell Guder, ed., et al., *Missional Church: A Theological Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans 1998; Darrell Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000; Lois Barrett, ed., et al., *Treasure in Clay Jars: Patterns in Missional Faithfulness*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002; Craig van Gelder, ed., *Confident Witness—Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America*, Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999; Craig van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2007; George Hunsberger, ed., *The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*, Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996; George Hunsberger, *Bearing the Witness of the Spirit: Lesslie Newbigin’s Theology of Cultural Plurality* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998; James Brownson, *Speaking the Truth in Love: New Testament Resources for a Missional Hermeneutic*, Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998; James Brownson, ed., et al., *StormFront: The Good News of God*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003.

72. See Craig Dykstra and James Hudnut-Beumler, “The National Organizational Structures of Protestant Denominations: An Invitation to a Conversation,” in *The Organizational Revolution: Presbyterians and American Denominationalism*, ed. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992). The Commission also thanks Steven Toshio Yamaguchi for

sharing with us an essay, “How Did We Get This Bureaucratic Model? or What Kind of Presbytery Do We Really Want?” <http://www.losranchos.org/wp-content/uploads/Odyssey-WhitePaper-v7.pdf>.

73. See Ronald L. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); Gil Rendle, *Journey in the Wilderness: New Life for Mainline Churches* (Abingdon Press, 2010), Kevin Ford, *Transforming Church* (David C. Cook, 2008) Jim Osterhaus, Joseph Jurkowski and Todd Hahn, *Thriving Through Ministry Conflict* (Zondervan, 2005) Osterhaus, et. al. offers this definition specifically for pastors, “Adaptive leadership for the pastor involves creating an environment in which the congregation can wrestle with the competing values and implications associated with this problem.”

74. Emil Brunner, *The Misunderstanding of the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953).

75. [http://gamc.PC\(USA\).org/ministries/1001/vision/](http://gamc.PC(USA).org/ministries/1001/vision/).

76. For one example, see The City Classis of the Reformed Church of America, a non-geographical classis (akin to our presbytery) that is formed of all urban, church-planting churches with a focused mission. <http://www.cityclassis.org/>.

77. *Book of Order*, F-1.0404 “As it participates in God’s mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks: ... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity.”

78. Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come From: the Natural History of Innovation* (Kindle Edition: Penguin Publishing, 2008) “The history of life and human culture, then, can be told as the story of a gradual but relentless probing of the adjacent possible, each new innovation opening up new paths to explore.” Kindle loc. 393–394.

79. For an insightful look at enormous value of trial-and-error approaches to innovation, see Tim Hartford, *Adapt: Why success always starts with failure* (Kindle Edition: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).

80. Ibid, Kindle locator 494–496, “What kind of environment creates good ideas? The simplest way to answer it is this: innovative environments are better at helping their inhabitants explore the adjacent possible, because they expose a wide and diverse sample of spare parts—mechanical or conceptual—and they encourage novel ways of recombining those parts.”

81. For more information on Cultural Proficiency see: “Working for Justice,” *Horizons*, Jan./Feb. 2004, pp. 4–7; Lindsey, Randall B., Kikanza Nuri Robins and Raymond D. Terrell. *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, Inc., 2003; Nuri Robins, Lindsey, Lindsey, Terrell. *Culturally Proficient Instruction: A Guide for People Who Teach*, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, Inc., 2003; Cultural proficiency initiatives have been implemented at GAMC and OGA staffs, as well as the other entities comprising PC(USA)’s General Assembly. (See report from Climate for Change to the 220th General Assembly (2012), Item 03-13. See appendix for more resources.

82. Barry Ensign George, “Cultivating Communities of Theological Friendship,” 12 (author’s emphasis). “Theological friendship is friendship in which the triune God is both the object of *and* an expected participant in our conversation and relationship. Theological friendship with one another is a way of naming what we are called to in Jesus Christ. Theological friendship: ministers and elders and deacons and teachers together engaged in conversation about and with the living God, is one element of the best wisdom and lifeblood of our Reformed, Presbyterian tradition.” Available at [http://www.PC\(USA\).org/resource/theological-friendship-paper/](http://www.PC(USA).org/resource/theological-friendship-paper/).

83. Ensign-George, “Cultivating Communities of Theological Friendship.” “Communities of theological friendship flourish through *diversity and a wise attention to compatibility*. Pastoral ministry is carried out in the midst of multiple spectra of diversity. Friendship happens in the space-between created by differences. Communities of theological friendship flourish when there is plenty of space-between. ... At the same time, a community of theological friendship can only be built among people who are willing to participate in this particular community of theological friendship, with this particular group of people. This is an extension of the practice of friendliness. There are those who, for whatever reasons, are unable or unwilling to befriend or to be befriended. There are pairs of people who, again, for whatever reasons, are unable to serve as friends to one another. Communities of theological friendship will both be open to investigating such situations, asking whether friendship might be built together; and at the same time communities of theological friendship will have a collective wisdom in discerning when the community must move forward with those who are willing to make this journey together.

Mention of “compatibility” will be a complete non-starter for some, fearing that it is no less than a covert rejection of diversity. This anxiety can become something a bit odd. After all, the PC(USA) itself is a community that insists on a significant level of compatibility from its pastoral leaders in particular. Those leaders are asked to commit to a particular way of living out the Christian faith (a specific form of the presbyterian way) that separates us from the vast majority of Christians. Those not open to such commitment are welcome to seek pastoral leadership elsewhere. Communities of theological friendship recognize the need for diversity that genuinely stretches *and* the importance of willingness to join in a shared journey with a particular group of people.”

84. *The Book of Confessions*, 9.37.

85. With thanks to Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, Moderator Cynthia Bolbach, Eileen Lindner, Joe Small, Paige McRight, general presbyter of Central Florida Presbytery; Dan Saperstein, executive presbyter, Presbytery of Peaks and Plains; Paul Hooker, executive presbyter, St. Augustine Presbytery; Graham Hart, executive presbyter, Peace River Presbytery; Scott Lumsden, executive presbyter, Seattle Presbytery; Peter Nord, executive presbyter, Baltimore Presbytery; Steve Yamaguchi, presbytery pastor, Presbytery of Los Ranchos; Alan Thames, executive presbyter, Whitewater Valley Presbytery; Nancy Kahaian, interim synod executive, Synod of Mid America; Rick Melin, stated clerk, Synod of Alaska-Northwest.

86. Because all these data were collected between March and June of 2011, prior to the passage of 10a and nFOG, the conversations that have ensued since the summer of 2011 are not reflected in our data. It is an interesting example of how quickly our context is changing and how important it is to find structures and a church “culture” that can respond to these changes.

87. Guder, “The Presbytery as Missional Context,” p. 3 “Perhaps the most pervasive and powerful reduction made in the course of the western church’s gradual establishment, as it became more dominant in its social and political context, and as the assumption took hold that everyone born and reared in this territories was Christian, was the fact that the essential character of mission in the biblical sense gradually faded away. Mission is not needed if everyone is already a Christian! ... The contemporary exploration of the church’s essentially missional vocation challenges unquestioned attitudes formed over centuries that the church is to be defined more in terms of its maintenance than its mission. What is meant is, of course, the concern for the maintenance of the church as an institution. That concern turns the church inward, centers its attention upon itself and its members, upon its survival and their religious needs. The institutional inwardness of western church contradicts the clearly missional calling of the church in the New Testament defined by Jesus on the Mount of the Ascension: ‘You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8). Thus, Newbigin’s question can be paraphrased: *How does the church truly regain its understanding of itself as called and sent, remembering that the term mission means, in fact, ‘sending’ (see John 20:21)? How does the church move beyond the idea that Christian identity is basically a geographical or cultural or organizational concept?*” [emphasis ours].

88. This definition is from Darrell Guder, “The Presbytery as Missional Context.”

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-12

#### *Advice on Item 05-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The report of the General Assembly Mid Council Commission contains eight numbered recommendations for assembly action, each containing one or more specific action items. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution will address each enumerated recommendation separately, noting connections between particular recommendations.

#### 1. *General Notes on Recommendations 1–4:*

These first four recommendations relate to the future of synods. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that they address complementary aspects of the same question, so that to approve any of them without approving the other three would create the potential for significant constitutional confusion. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) therefore advises that if the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Recommendation 1 to eliminate synods as councils of the church, that it consider the first four recommendations as a single motion with multiple parts.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) notes that the recommendations presume a number of constitutional amendments that are not yet before this assembly (cf. Recommendations 3 and 4). There is considerable risk in committing to a course of action on the assumption that the proposed action can be accomplished constitutionally without having the opportunity to evaluate the merits of the proposed mechanisms for implementation.

In addition, the ACC advises the assembly to review carefully the time frame for implementation of the recommendations so as to avoid the possibility of a lapse in constitutional authority to fulfill essential functions currently provided by synods prior to the full implementation of the recommendations.

The Advisory Committee on the Committee therefore advises the assembly that it would pose fewer constitutional risks to delay approval of Recommendation 1 until the assembly has also had full opportunity to review the amendments envisioned in Recommendations 3 and 4 for its implementation. If the assembly nevertheless wishes to fulfill the intent of Recommendation 1 it could answer the recommendation by instructing the Moderator to appoint a task force to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the necessary constitutional amendments and a timeframe to accomplish Recommendations 1, 3, and 4 together. The Advisory Committee on the Committee also advises the assembly to consider carefully the merits of alternative strategies to accomplish similar ends, such as that proposed by Item 05-02 from the Presbytery of St. Andrew.

2. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 1:

Recommendation 1 contains two action items: The first action item would strike section G-3.04 in its entirety. This section of the Form of Government addresses matters relating to the synod, and would have the effect of eliminating synods as a council of the church. The second action item would amend language in G-3.03 (dealing with presbyteries) to reframe the function of presbyteries and to eliminate references to synods.

The history of the synod as a council pre-dates that of the assembly itself, the first synod having been established in 1717. The modern synod dates to 1972, when large regional synods supplanted the previous statewide synod model. Synods perform important functions in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): they facilitate the work of the church on a regional level; they have been the primary denominational contact with particular ministries in higher education; they have played an important role in advocacy and oversight of the denomination’s commitment to racial ethnic diversity and inclusiveness. While the particular mission functions of synods vary, many perform significant mission support both

financially and in direct mission endeavors. In regards to governance, synods perform an important role as an intermediate level of administrative review and judicial process between the 173 presbyteries and the General Assembly. Synods are also uniquely empowered to form non-geographic presbyteries to support the mission of racial ethnic and immigrant communities (*Book of Order*, G-3.0403c).

However, there is nothing in the history or foundational principles of Reformed polity that requires the existence of synods. From a polity perspective, the benefits of a four-tiered system of governance versus a three-tiered system are pragmatic and logistical rather than theological.

While Recommendation 1 would strike section G-3.04 describing the purpose, mission, functions, responsibilities, and composition of synods, and amend G-3.03, regarding the presbytery, it does not identify substitute language to identify which purposes, functions, and responsibilities of the synod should be preserved, or how they would be preserved. The process for identification of these purposes, functions, and responsibilities is addressed in Recommendation 3. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is unable to provide definitive advice regarding the elimination of a whole section of the *Book of Order* in the absence of language to replace current structures.

These two items, if approved, are intended to take effect at the end of the 222nd General Assembly (2016). Section G-6.04e specifies the date on which an amendment becomes effective and mandates that an amendment receiving the necessary affirmative votes “shall become effective one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment.” This provision supersedes and controls the proposals of the Mid Council Commission, and would accelerate the date on which synods would cease to be councils of the church ahead of a complete plan for how the ecclesiastical responsibilities of synods would be handled.

The intention to postpone the effective date of the proposed amendments is in conflict with the clear procedures for amending the *Book of Order* in G-6.04, which begins “Amendments to the *Book of Order* shall be made only if all the following steps are completed :...” In other words, the amendment is to become effective either on the date specified in G-6.04e or not at all. If the assembly wishes to make the amendment to G-3.04 effective on a different date, it would be necessary to approve as an amendment to the Form of Government itself a provision establishing the date on which the provisions establishing the synods as a council of the church would cease to have effect (i.e., a “sunset clause”).

3. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 2:

Recommendation 2 would require existing synods to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) plans for the transfer of assets, funds, projects, and programs of the synod. The language of the recommendation suggests that these plans would be presented to the assembly, but would not necessarily require approval by the assembly. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the Form of Government would require assembly approval of such plans. Section G-3.0502 states,

The General Assembly has responsibility to maintain relationships with presbyteries and synods by:

- a. consulting with and providing resources for presbyteries and synods as they execute their constitutional responsibilities;
- b. overseeing the work of synods;
- c. reviewing the records of synods, taking care to ensure that they conform to this Constitution;
- d. organizing new synods, or dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining previously existing synods or portions of synods; ...

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the constitutional responsibility of the General Assembly for “dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining previously existing synods,” extends to the approval of plans for the distribution of assets and continuation of programs of dissolved synods. A particular assembly may advise a future assembly of its design for how that future assembly should regard such plans, that is, with greater or lesser latitude for synod autonomy, but it may not bind the future assembly from exercising its responsibility of oversight and approval.

In addition to the above constitutional issues, there may be constitutional implications raised by the plans of particular synods when they are brought to the assembly for approval. It should be noted that the process of reallocating church property (both real and personal) is governed by G-4.02. There are tensions within this section between the missional and fiduciary functions of councils as they relate to property. Whatever processes may be proposed under Recommendation 3 for the review and approval of such plans should seek to resolve such tensions equitably and consistently.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the time frame proposed in Recommendation 2 relies upon the delegation of assembly authority to approve synod plans to the commission envisioned in Recommendation 5, and/or to the regional administrative commissions envisioned in Recommendation 3, should a synod present an insufficient, unsatisfactory, or disputed plan to the 221st General Assembly (2014). Even so, it is possible that such a synod might be delayed in the approval or implementation of its plan beyond the 2016 deadline, requiring the synod to continue to function after the provision establishing synods has been removed from the Constitution.

4. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 3:

Recommendation 3 seeks to address the absence of specific constitutional language in Recommendation 1 by instructing the Moderator to appoint a committee to work with the Stated Clerk to present necessary amendments to the Constitution and *The Manual of the General Assembly*, to create five regional administrative commissions of the General Assembly for specified purposes of mission facilitation, boundary alignment, and preservation of historic racial ethnic ministries. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the charge for these commissions may be too limited in prospect. Essential functions currently exercised by synods, such as administrative review, and the power to enforce the church's commitment to racial ethnic diversity and inclusion, are not identified in the charge for these commissions. While all constitutional functions pertaining to oversight of councils would devolve to the General Assembly following the elimination of synods, it would seem prudent to allow for the assembly to delegate to regional commissions additional powers that may be necessary for the timely and effective review and remediation of issues at the presbytery level. Failure to do so may have the effect of increasing the need to resort to judicial process as a means of remediation of issues.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that it seems unwise to adopt an action in Recommendation 1 that would mandate the elimination of an entire level of governance without having had the opportunity to evaluate proposed amendments and structures to ensure the continuation of essential functions of governance.

5. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 4:

Recommendation 4 seeks to address how judicial process would function in the absence of synod permanent judicial commissions. It proposes empowering the Moderator to appoint a committee (evidently distinct from that in Recommendation 3) to propose amendments to the Constitution and *The Manual of the General Assembly* to create "the necessary number" of judicial commissions "rooted in the various regions" to perform the functions currently performed by synod PJs. As with Recommendation 3, this recommendation is sparse in detail, and leaves several important questions unanswered, among them:

a. *The relationship of regional GAPJCs to the national GAPJC.* How will the regional judicial commissions function as commissions of the General Assembly distinctly from the General Assembly's own PJC? Section F-3.0202 provides as a foundation of our polity that "... presbyters shall come together in councils in regular gradation." By assigning two levels of judicial review to a single council (the General Assembly, through regional and national judicial commissions), the principle of regular gradation is challenged. Will there be provision that regional commissions be comprised of persons drawn from the region under jurisdiction of each commission? It is implicit in the principle of regular gradation that those exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction over a particular part of the church be drawn from that part of the church, except where conflict of interest or rotation of service may exclude a lower council from representation.

b. *The power of authoritative interpretation.* Section G-6.02 provides for authoritative interpretation of the Constitution "through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case." If regional commissions are permanent judicial commissions of the General Assembly, will they be empowered to establish authoritative interpretations of the Constitution? Would provision be made for decisions in one region to be binding on that region and not on others, pending a decision by the national GAPJC, as with U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal?

c. *The adjudication of cases in process.* At some point, synod PJs would cease to function and their responsibility for cases in process transferred to regional judicial commissions. How would issues arising out of this transition be addressed concerning obtaining stays of enforcement, determinations on preliminary questions, and agreements or settlements at pretrial conference?

As with Recommendation 3, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that this recommendation requires the assembly to act on the elimination of structures without a clear understanding of what will replace them.

6. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 5:

Recommendation 5 would instruct the Moderator to appoint a commission to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk to act as the General Assembly for purposes of organizing, dividing, uniting, or combining synods, and approving the organization, division, union or combination of presbyteries (per G-3.0502) between the meetings of the General Assembly, until regional administrative commissions have been constituted. This would effectively continue some of the existing powers of the Mid Council Commission under a newly formed commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that these powers constitutionally belong to the assembly, and that the assembly may delegate them to one or more commissions if it chooses. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the assembly that the approval of various non-geographic presbyteries as envisioned in Recommendation 5 would give considerable latitude to this commission to authorize significant departures from the historic practice of the church. These will be discussed more fully in



the advice regarding Recommendation 6. Since a commission is empowered to act as the assembly, a liaison from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution should be appointed to advise the commission, consistent with Standing Rule E.3.f in *The Manual of the General Assembly*.

7. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 6:

Recommendation 6 consists of two action items that propose amendments to the Constitution to provide for two experiments in Presbyterian polity on a time-limited basis. The first action item would allow for synods to form non-geographic presbyteries within their bounds for “particular missional purposes” in addition to the existing power to create them to support racial ethnic and immigrant congregations, with certain specific presbytery powers shared jointly with a congregation’s presbytery of origin. The second would allow the transfer of individual congregations to presbyteries (either geographic or non-geographic) in the same or adjoining synods, while retaining an “affiliate” relationship with the presbytery of origin, which would also share with the receiving presbytery certain rights regarding church property and congregational division or dismissal. Section G-3.0106 states clearly that “mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work.” The proposals are consistent with this constitutional affirmation. In addition, the proposals include enabling constitutional amendments that are adequately specific so as to preserve the unity of constitutional authority. The advice on each of these proposals will be addressed separately.

a. The first proposal, regarding non-geographic presbyteries, concerns a topic on which the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has advised the assembly on several occasions. Our advice on related proposals is attached to Items 05-01, 05-05, 05-08, and 05-10). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has consistently expressed its concern over the creation of non-geographic presbyteries. They challenge the foundational principle of the unity of the church expressed in F-1.0302a, may intentionally or unintentionally compromise the church’s commitment to racial and ethnic inclusivity, and risk the division of the church into communities of the like-minded, with the effect of excluding the voice of God as God may speak through those with whom we are in disagreement. This particular proposal, in distinction from others, mitigates some of these concerns through the time-limited nature of the amendment, the requirement of the consent of the affected presbyteries, the sharing of certain powers with the presbyteries of origin during the period of experimentation, and the requirement of a valid mission rationale.

Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that there are no constitutional restrictions on the ability of congregations with similar mission purposes to unite in common mission without the requirement of establishing a common structure of governance. It also advises the assembly that establishing temporary and fluid structures of governance creates issues related to their dissolution, such as the disposition of common assets and the membership of newly ordained members which are not addressed in the recommendation.

If the assembly chooses to approve this recommendation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution raises the concern that churches seeking permission to sell property or be dismissed to another Reformed body would require the permission of their presbyteries of origin, but those churches would not be guaranteed voice or vote in that decision. Fundamental fairness would dictate that some accommodation be made to grant voice, if not vote, in these decisions.

b. The second proposal concerns transfer of individual congregations to other presbyteries (either geographic or non-geographic) in the same or an adjoining synod. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution raises the same concerns regarding the unity of the church and the value of diversity as with the first proposal. In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds this proposal erodes the essential unity of the church as expressed in F-3.0201 and F-3.0202 by regarding congregational mission as somehow disconnected from that of other churches in its geographic vicinity, or of the shared mission of the geographical presbytery. This proposal has the added protection, however, that either presbytery could rescind the new relationship and restore the church to its original presbytery after consultation with the congregation. It should be noted that such “affiliate congregations” would have voice (and, in some cases, vote) in the presbytery of origin, whereas those dismissed (potentially) to the same (non-geographic) presbytery under the first proposal would lack that voice.

8. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 7:

Recommendation 7 would establish a task force to review the nature and function of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly with respect to their relationship and support of mid councils. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that such a task force is within the power of the assembly to create.

9. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution submits the following advice to the assembly regarding Recommendation 8:

Recommendation 8 recommends that the Moderator be empowered to appoint a national Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force to address various concerns expressed to the commission during its research. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that it is within the power of the assembly to create such a task force.

## ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

This report proposes major changes in the newly adopted Form of Government and related manuals to replace synods with five regional commissions (in the short-term), and to allow non-geographical presbyteries defined by their own mission emphases, with the use of at least five Moderator-appointed commissions, committees, and task forces, the last of which to be a national task force to address racial-ethnic concerns.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 05-12 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

Sometimes the cure is worse than the disease. In this case, a massive set of changes is being proposed that affect not only the structure of the church but its ethos of mutual accountability within a Presbyterian system. Under the goal of “flattening” the denomination’s structure, the Mid Council report would invest enormous authority in five commissions and committees to be appointed by the General Assembly Moderator. Synods, in consultation with their constituent presbyteries but not the General Assembly, would develop plans to disburse their assets. Under the banner of experimentation in governance, a basically congregational emphasis seems invited with limits placed on both the role of the General Assembly and the presbyteries. And while it is good to encourage missional combinations of congregations, the recommendation of non-geographic presbyteries threatens to balkanize the church into covenants of the like-minded. In the current climate, while claiming to want more “trust” and even “mutual submission” (p. 23), this proposal seems likely to weaken connectionalism and exacerbate division further.

Little analysis is presented as to the size and costs of these commissions and committees, how their decisions might be reviewed or appealed, and how their funding is to be drawn from a church-wide structure that is to be partially dissolved. Item 05-02 from the Presbytery of St. Andrew would wisely refocus the original intent of the assignment given to this Commission on Mid Councils and proposes the formation a new committee. There is a big difference between a focused plan to redesign regional coordination in a cost-effective way by restructuring or eliminating synods and a theologically narrow but administratively expansive desire to restructure the denomination at unknown cost.

In historic Presbyterian polity, there is a representative structure of mutual accountability running from the congregation to the General Assembly with policy set by the most church-wide deliberative process. Just as individual congregations are accountable to presbyteries and hold their properties in trust for the whole church, so presbyteries have been accountable through synods, which are in turn reviewed by the General Assembly. The functions of synods are not solely review and judicial process; they have performed a range of regional mission functions not treated fully in the report that are not specified in the general assignments given to the regional administrative commissions. The non-geographic presbytery recommendations would dramatically change the balance between local autonomy and national unity, and would replace our organic connectionalism with a voluntary-association model.

The report makes much of the “disestablishment” of mainline Protestantism, yet does not address the original Reformed theological purposes for the church’s unity—independence from the state and other forces. The strength of Presbyterian polity was to help it resist cultural trends as well as expand its witness to God’s sovereignty over all of life. Historian Lefferts Loetscher, in analyzing the explicit property trust provision put into the *Book of Order* in 1980, summarized the theological purposes of our form of conciliar governance: “Calvin did not seek disestablishment of the church, but he did seek to build up the church’s internal self-government to the point where it could resist corrupting pressures from civil government or from other sources. [this is to see] ... the church’s ecclesiastical government as a protection of its spiritual ideals and as a means of fulfilling them” (Lefferts Loetscher, “Presbyterian Church Property,” *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Feb. 11, 1980, p. 5).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is particularly concerned with the nature of the “missional” church that is to be recreated in the absence of significant attention to economic constraints and any corporate social witness or education. In the past, in fact, one of the functions of synods not mentioned in the report was their support for campus ministries to educational institutions. But the “Financial Realities” of what some have called our “lesser depression” are not mentioned until page 31, and only receive significant attention when the work of particular presbyteries is described near the end. There is much organizational and corporate consultant language, but the basic assignment to the church of caring for others and supporting our weaker members goes unmentioned. A generally idealized picture of the economy, globalization, and the “emergent frontier” is presented on pages 18–19, for example, while the major employment challenges for young people go unmentioned. As for the “flatter” world, it is one of enormously centralized corporate, medical, and research university bureaucracies that concentrate large amounts of wealth and political power.

The attitude of the report toward administrative structures and the social-ethical commitments of the church seems broadly dismissive whenever “bureaucracy,” “regulation,” and “social proclamations” are mentioned. One would not know that the church had a public role in civil rights, caring for the earth, resisting wars, advancing women, and addressing a host of human needs, while producing liturgies, resources, and programs to present the Gospel to people at all stages of the life

cycle. Those denominational efforts to present a comprehensive set of programs are not fairly termed “top down enforced alignment,” nor was it primarily “regulatory.” Yet for this report, the post-WWII denomination seems to have been primarily about “complex and cumbersome bureaucracies” (13).

True, in a “less resourced” church, it is harder to sustain programs of any kind, but congregations (and presbyteries) sometimes also shift resources away from the “bureaucratic mid councils” because they prefer to disengage from some activities of the larger church. The majority of congregations that provide some level of support to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) clearly share a vision of *what* constitutes a fuller definition of the church and of *how* the councils, including the General Assembly mission agencies, complement each other in being a whole church. The impression conveyed—without representative data of any kind—is of a disdain for any structure beyond the congregation. Ecumenical cooperation and organization is not mentioned at all. How one frames the problem and how one uses the words says a lot about the basic assumptions behind the report’s “discipleship in a post-Christendom context.”

Only when we get to the unavoidable matter of the racial ethnic ministries sustained by synods does the report ever use the word “injustice” (the word, “justice,” is never used). Then we have a proposed “task force” that would cover all racial matters, but without the status or power of the “commissions” recommended elsewhere. Yet it is here that demographic realities intrude more on the report’s management consultant language, and this is not only about the need to reach out to a growing racial ethnic population (though how well do those communities trust our “transformative leadership?”).

The demographic data and analysis in Robert Putnam and Dennis Campbell’s thorough new book, *American Grace* (2011), raises questions about the repeated and formulaic language about “missional” that only generalizes negatively about social issues. Putnam and Campbell show that young people in increasing numbers are leaving the mainline denominations and the Roman Catholic Church because they take religion to be intolerant, a viewpoint influenced disproportionately by messages from the Religious Right. Social issues—which the report admits do not cause loss of members generally—create what the report calls “divisive debates and polarizing votes.” Its implicit answer: don’t have them. Yet of all the issues the church has struggled with, it is ironically acceptance of homosexuality that most marks young people in our culture. For them to hear, “God loves everyone—except them,” accelerates the weakness of mainline Protestantism even when we [as PC(USA)] are no longer the ones officially saying those words.

Putnam and Campbell also look at the danger of some congregations to become “echo-chambers” of the views of their leaders. A similar danger could lie in the strengthening of “echo-chamber” presbyteries, further from church-wide values and closer to gated communities.

Thus the report, while condemning the “political, regulatory, and institutional approaches to problem solving,” is a very political document. One does not need to agree with all General Assembly positions, or celebrate the operation of all agency offices, to know that “to get back to mission and ministry” will still require the church to honor the relationships, memories, and hopes that are part of our current organizational life. It is also pretty clear from the 2008 credit crash that “de-regulation” in itself is not a solution; nor is the Reformed tradition in general terribly libertarian.

Finally, the report’s attack on “bureaucratic mentality” is questionable when the report states, “As a commission, our deep desire is to see the whole church engaged in a wholesale process of reinvigorating congregations through reinventing presbyteries” (p. 34). Some of the report’s review of management consultant theories is probably helpful, but it is not theologically solid enough a vision and its multiplicity of commissions sound like an uncertain trumpet to dubious and repeated restructure, rather than a means to reinvigorate congregations.

#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012), in response to Item 05-12, to approve an alternate resolution to read as follows:

“1. Instruct the Moderators of the 218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012) to appoint a Racial Ethnic Ministry Commission.

“2. Empower the appointed commission to develop strategies to address the questions raised in the reports noted above, and to be granted adequate budget for this work.

“3. Direct the commission, in consultation with representative groups, to develop strategies toward the path forward for the PC(USA)

“a. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow established and emerging racial ethnic congregations;

“b. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow multicultural congregations;

“c. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support new immigrant congregations;

“d. for the growth of understanding of the issues race, culture, and ethnicity raise within the Christian community, including development of churchwide strategies to raise consciousness of white privilege.

“4. Provide commission staffing from both the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council.

“5. Give representation on the commission to the following groups:

“a. racial ethnic caucuses

“b. new immigrant congregations and ministries

“c. racial ethnic congregations

“d. multicultural congregations

“e. Women of Color Joint Working Group

“f. mid council staff

“g. ACREC

“h. GACOR;

“and that all decisions would be made by consensus in order to ensure voice for all commission members.

“6. Direct the commission to consult with other groups as needed, both within and outside the PC(USA), to develop workable and sustainable strategies.

“7. Bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

*Rationale*

Due diligence has not been brought to bear in discerning the way forward in restructuring the church for mission and ministry. In particular, the elimination of synods creates difficulty for racial ethnic Presbyterians, who have often turned to synods for assistance and support for racial ethnic ministry, resourcing, and, when needed, judicial cases.

Additionally, the recommendation supporting the formation of nongeographic presbyteries based on agreement has no historical precedent and cannot be supported by Scripture, our theological tradition, or our confessions.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns hears echoes of voices from across the church in the report’s Recommendation 8, which calls for the formation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force. Specifically in reports to this General Assembly, calls have been made for:

- a national consultation to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA) (Item 16-03, African American Church Growth Strategy Report, Recommendation 1);
- the development of a national strategy for Hispanic/Latino Church Growth, and infrastructure built to support this new strategy (Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report, Recommendation e.);
- a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA) (Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, Recommendations 1–6);
- recommendations to develop effective strategies for the development of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities; train seminary students in emerging cultural realities, and develop strategies within our seminaries to work toward curricular and faculty reform and change, that we might train racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders more effectively; develop multilingual resources and translation capacities to better witness within our increasingly diverse society; explore disparities in compensation between those of more and less represented groups in our church; develop resources to support the growth of new immigrant ministries and congregations, and increase the understanding among Presbyterians of white privilege that we might repent and be renewed and empowered for more faithful service (Item 16-07, Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, Recommendations 1.c., 3.a., d., e., 4., 5., 6.b., c., f., and 8, respectively, page 1462).

These, in addition to the recommendation from the Mid Council Commission to develop a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force, make it clear that while Presbyterians have been thinking about racial ethnic and new immigrant ministries for over a century—and while many faithful ministries have been launched in many contexts that have borne much fruit—we know and are voicing in many arenas our awareness that there is still much work to do. Race, culture, and language still divide us, marring the image of Christ we share with a world in need and blunting our witness to the good news. The current excitement about developing “1001 New Worshipping Communities” will not be realized without the engagement and investment of racial ethnic Presbyterians. To date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not addressed issues of race and culture sufficiently to ensure either that the needed engagement would happen, or that the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians would be heard in the conversation.

Therefore, to faithfully steward the resources entrusted to us by taking a proactive approach to a number of overlapping initiatives and recommendations, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to answer all the recommendations noted above with the approval of this recommendation.

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### COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-12

*Comment on Item 05-12—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly respectfully urges the 220th General Assembly (2012) to refer Recommendations 1.b., and 6.a.–b. in Item 05-12 (Mid Council Commission Report).

#### *Rationale*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) expresses its deep gratitude to the members of the Mid Council Commission for the faithfulness and imagination with which they engaged their important work. The Mid Council Commission Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) offers a bold and welcome call to “reinvigorating presbyteries as locus of support for missional congregations.” Such a call holds bright promise in strengthening the witness of the church in the world and the commission has brought forward an important contribution in placing these issues before the General Assembly. The very boldness of the report’s recommendations regarding non-geographic presbyteries, however, requires a careful and deliberate consideration of our collective understanding of both the function and the ecclesial character of presbyteries.

With such important matters at stake, and because the report does not fully include adequate recommendations for guidelines, processes, and practices for addressing the administrative and ecclesial issues raised by a decision to undertake such extensive structural and institutional change, COGA believes that a more measured approach is required.

Moreover, COGA has raised questions about the long-term consequences (or implications) of the report’s recommendations regarding non-geographic presbyteries that would impact the essence of the church’s life together, including

- the prospect of like-minded presbyteries that sacrifice a vital witness to the reconciling grace of God in Jesus Christ, which is made possible by unity within a context of diversity;
- the potential of realigned presbyteries configured in ways that result in stark disparity between those with access to substantial human and financial resources and those lacking such access;
- the unintended consequence of the erosion of existing patterns of missional activity across presbytery boundaries;
- a disruption of the very fellowship that prompts the church in its obligation to discern together God’s will for our lives; and
- the potential compromising of the church’s witness to issues of justice and unity within the church and society, contributing to the further polarization of both.

Therefore, COGA urges the assembly to refer the above listed recommendations to a task force to further discuss, refine, and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations that consider the composition and organization of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church. The Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) will name the task force. It will be composed of an equal number of persons from the Mid Council Commission, COGA, and commissioners to the 220th General Assembly (2012). The optimal size of such a task force is twelve-to-fifteen persons. The Office of the General Assembly, including the coordinator of Mid Council Relations, will provide staff support to the task force.

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 05-12**

*Comment on Item 05-12—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Recommendation 8 of Item 05-12 and offers the following comments:

*Background*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) has been a keen observer of this item of business before the members of the commission were appointed to service. The GACOR designated a member to attend and observe all of the Mid Council Commission meetings because the scope given to them by the 219th General Assembly (2010) was so critical to the ways they anticipated the PC(USA) would organize itself for ministry and mission going forward. That decision was confirmed at several points along the way and continues. The GACOR commends the members of the commission for their diligent work, their loving care, and their faithful engagement with one another and the larger church for the entire two years they met. Gaining an appreciation for their work and perspective we respectfully offer these comments in hopes that they will provide context and uncover unanticipated consequences of the directions pointed to in their recommendations.

The church has met in councils long before there were bishops and diocese—in fact, Presbyterians trace councils to the account in Acts 15 of the Council of Jerusalem. Councils provide “the mutual interconnection of the church” and that interconnection is “a sign of the unity of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0101). The Body of Christ, the church is held together in our Reformed understanding by the sinews of councils. In the Bible, 1 Corinthians 12 is a powerful Scripture in the ministry and life of committees on representation and reminds us of the essential metaphor of church as embodied (connecting all human diversity, in all its myriad parts for the glory of the One God to create a singular Church). Councils are an essential part of our witness, not merely a way we decide and govern. Synods are not merely a place where marginalized communities yearning for justice find some remedy and support, they also “nurture a covenant community of disciples of Christ” and “help congregations and the church ... to be faithful participants in the mission of Christ” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0101). Councils are found at every level of the church—congregation (session), presbytery, synod, and general assembly.

It is in setting the context and content (flesh and bone) of what it is to be councils of the church that the functions of committees on representation are given in G-3.0103, the section titled Participation and Representation.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) has written an extensive comment on Item 05-12 (as well as responding to Items 16-07, 10-17, and 16-03 as they share similar shared disaffection and disappointment with the current state of affairs, as well as shared diagnoses of the church from the perspectives of particular communities of color within the larger church). The GACOR supports their innovative recommendation that may more efficiently address the shared concerns while strengthening the impact of their gifts of new sight for the larger church. All of these actions came independent of one another and each strikes a note that harmonizes when seen together. We are at time of great convergence and schism within the life of the PC(USA). It is all around us. The GACOR commends for your consideration the comment written by ACREC and should the assembly approve of its recommended action, GACOR commits itself to supporting that body.

The changes to the *Book of Order* recommended in this report, if approved by the assembly and sent to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes, will take effect at the close of the 222nd General Assembly (2016). They will have profound effect on the ways the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) organizes its life and ministry in councils. The GACOR respectfully offers the following comments and recommendations:

*Comment 1—Recommendations 1 and 2*

The very first recommendation makes two radical changes to the councils of the church. Each impacts committees on representation in mid councils and at the assembly.

- Removing council status from synods, in Recommendation 1.a., has severe ramification for committees on representation. The GACOR receives reports from the sixteen synods (the next lower council) as its way of reviewing their work and maintaining relationships of mutual support. The removal of synods means that the next lower council becomes the 173 presbytery committees on representation. With an annual report from each council, the review and relational work of the GACOR has expanded just shy of 1,100 percent. This will necessarily require adjustments to the way these elected leaders spend their time and demands a more traditional role of reviewing reports at the exact time that the GACOR is exploring less regulatory means to fulfill its functions and seeking ways to be encouraging the assembly level and the church’s lower councils to be equipped and equipping for giving “full expression,” and providing “full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103). The work has to be re-imagined and reconfigured if sixteen elected members who meet twice a year are going to be able to stay in relationship (providing accountability and encouragement) with 173 other councils.

Synods are constituted from the selection of commissioners from their presbyteries. The membership is selected by its lower councils and its leadership is nominated from that same community. Synods connect their neighboring councils. Perhaps the number of synods is no longer serving the needs of today's church, but we respectfully question the removal of them all together as having deep consequences upon the connection and relations among the councils themselves. The changes to G-3.03 to connect presbyteries with the assembly in a post-synod reality are profound. Included at Recommendation 1.b. is the insertion of a new section at G-3.0302, which creates a new function for presbyteries to connect with other presbyteries (but not necessarily through the next higher council, the assembly) and the assembly. While the commission reported hearing strong value placed on synod by communities of color, GACOR reminds the assembly that persons of color are not the only persons who experience systemic discriminatory practice, suffer disparities, and have outcomes and options for ministry circumscribed simply because they are part of that community. There are other groups who share experiences of being "othered" and excised from community. The specificity of the inserted responsibility of "a. consulting with other presbyteries in their region about creating regional mission partnerships for racial ethnic advocacy and support, mission, and ministry projects, and other programs of shared life, diversity, and connection to the larger church" (proposed insertion at G-3.0302 in recommendation 1.b.) does not expressly cover persons with disabilities, women, youth, or the other categories of persons mentioned in F-1.0403. The constituencies extended promises by synods as councils who attend to this work are not included with this new responsibility.

- Recommendation 2 concerns itself with the stewardship of "assets, funds, projects, and programs" and gives a deadline for that work.

#### *Comment 2*

- Recommendations 3 and 4 concern themselves with the creation of interim bodies (committees) to plan and recommend the creation and composition of five regional administrative commissions (Recommendation 3) and five regional judicial commissions (Recommendation 4) respectively. The committees will guide the transition from synods to those regional commissions. Recommendation 5 empowers the moderator to create a commission and outlines its powers given by the assembly to work with the Stated Clerk to realign boundaries of presbyteries and synods and organize new synods and presbyteries until such time as the regional commissions are comprised. No less than three bodies are created to make this transition. Appointed by only one person, power and privilege are dangerously concentrated in this interim period. What is being dismantled? It is the connective tissues of the sixteen synod councils in the Body of Christ, and in their place five regional administrative commissions "empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council. The designating council shall state specifically the scope of the commission's powers and any restrictions on those powers" (G-3.0109). Once created, they act within their scope in place of the council that created them (in this case the assembly). These recommendations (3-5) do not specify the powers or limits of the final ten regional commissions, but instead create further committees appointed by the moderator to recommend to a subsequent assembly (the council creating them) what powers the commissions will have. There's a lot of opportunity to create very small groups who will have tremendous power and influence. One strength of councils is how they function as corporate bishop (remaining constituted by election of its lower councils), discerning in that community derived from below, the will of God for the Church. Commissions are created from above (a higher council) and empowered so as to not require returning to their creator council except as specifically limited by that body to do so at their creation.

- What is troubling is that this commission has been given a council function without the accountability of a council to its higher and lower council. How does a commission administer for a region and also provide for the functions of G-3.0103? The GACOR is skeptical and the commission has not attempted to answer. Commissions are empowered to act and not require check, how then does it monitor itself and provide accountability for the councils above (assembly) and below (presbytery)?

- How shall these commissions have their leadership selected? That is yet to be determined but the bodies that will suggest their details are moderator-appointed and as a commission of General Assembly the higher council with authority, it seems reasonable that regular aspects of leadership selection might be retained with either moderator(s) appointments or by trusting the nominating process of the council, or another solution not yet imagined but whose likely source is the assembly. Instead of the bottom up model of councils in subsequent levels of authority, the commissions disrupt this structure and usurp it. Instead of connection, relying on mutual support, the councils of presbyteries (are tasked with connecting as it pleases with other presbyteries) and is held separate from assembly by the imposition of the assembly empowered but independent commissions (two for each region—one administrative and one judicial). This new structure will surely shift power. Any shift away from shared power should raise a concern in the Body of Christ disrupting the connections regional commission of General Assembly will likely select regional persons from some persons or bodies of the assembly (national council) level.

#### *Comment 3*

- Enabling the creation of non-geographic presbyteries, in Recommendation 6, holds the possibility for the contraction of those 173 or more likely the expansion from that number. The minimum being only ten congregations fractures the current communion into smaller, separate components, now allowed to organize around affinity for ministry and mission. Fewer

sinews and more bones and muscles, how is this body to stay intact? Shall ten teaching elders be enough to hold the faithful into a community of mutual accountability, ministry and shared mission?

*Comment 4*

- Recommendation 7 intends to create a task force in order to review the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly “with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context.” They have now redefined the purpose of the council to be valued “as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations.” This is a radical reversal of how councils related in Body of Christ with many parts. Now it seems that indeed the neck serves the foot.

*Comment 5*

- Where the commission has responded to racial ethnic constituencies who highly value synods as councils and mourn their loss and their value for supporting the ministries, holding presbyteries accountable to the shared principles and administering justice when persons are harmed, is with Recommendation 8 and the establishment of a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force. The GACOR is happy to be able to designate a leader to serve in this body. The task force will support concern for loss of justice work at synod for racial ethnic communities.

- The GACOR is troubled that the expression in this recommendation is in disappointment in the substance and direction of racial ethnic ministries rather than the councils and their ministries that fail to secure necessary resources and support.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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**GAMC/OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-12**

*Comment on Item 05-12—From the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly.*

The General Assembly Mission Council recognizes the important role that many synods have played in the lives of racial ethnic persons in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At the synod level, racial ethnic leaders received training in evangelism and church growth; institutes were offered to train and equip racial ethnic youth and young adults, and Women of Color events were held. In synods, racial ethnic people were able to find allies to help them with issues in presbyteries and communities that were too large for a few to address, and they engaged in leadership development designed to empower them to witness in communities that were socio-politically and economically disenfranchised. Finally, it was at the synod level where racial ethnic people could gather and address policies of councils that significantly impacted them. In other words, synods represented the platform from which the disciples were nurtured, equipped, and empowered.

Historically, African American Presbyterians, for example, who have the greatest number of racial ethnic congregations and worshiping communities in the PC(USA), received nurturing, mentoring, training, leadership development, networking, assistance with vocational placements, and shared community through synods. At one time in the history of the church, all-Black governing bodies existed. It was through these governing bodies that congregations and individuals received education, nurturance, enlivened spirituality, acceptance, and recognition of what it meant to be “Black and Presbyterian.”

When the Presbyterian church reunited and became the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), “all-Black” governing bodies were dissolved, and the Articles of Agreement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Article 8.2 of Appendix B, PC(USA) Constitution, Book II, *Book of Order*) read:

... Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses. ...

The historic caucuses in the PC(U.S.A.) include the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), the Native American Consulting Committee (NACC), the National Hispanic-Latino Presbyterian Caucus (NHLPC) and the National Asian Presbyterian Council (NAPC). When the Racial Ethnic Caucuses & Councils (formerly The Cross Caucus) met at the Big Tent in 2011, the gathering also included representatives from the National Council of Korean Presbyterian Churches (NCKPC), the National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus (NMEPC), and representatives from networks of new immigrant groups from Africa, South Asia, and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils recognizes that synods have played a unique and particular role for racial ethnic Presbyterians. In the commission’s report there is a desire to maintain, protect, and even expand a platform for racial ethnic and immigrant Presbyterians should synods no longer exist as ecclesiastical councils. “The Outlines of Possibilities: Synods as Multi-Presbytery Missional Partnerships,” section of the report reads as follows:



Many members of the racial ethnic Presbyterian community have contributed greatly to the history and vibrancy of the PC(USA); initiating and modeling leadership, guiding the church to more socially and theologically responsible posture in its witness to the world, creatively enhancing the form and substance of worship, sensitizing and educating the church regarding manners of race, and providing a unique Presbyterian witness of the ministry of Jesus Christ. The call for the church to review and reorganize its commitment and approach to racial ethnic ministry is significant both within and beyond the notion of a Presbyterian reality that removes the ecclesiastical functions from synods. The need to discover a posture from which genuine ministry partnership can thrive is vital to the current health and future relevance of the church.

Recommendation 8 of the G.A. Commission on Mid Councils Report calls for the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to appoint a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force to review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for, racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA). In the recommendation, this task force is charged specifically to address the issue of language access, sensitivity, and resourcing (particularly as relates to the Spanish and Korean languages) within the existing frame of council operation, as well as within the context of any regional administrative structure that might emerge as a result of the repurposing of synods. Furthermore, the recommendations reads that this task force will develop a new mechanism to review the models in mid councils and congregations of racial ethnic ministries that are operating successfully in the denomination and explore the viability of a nationally organized racial ethnic ministry advocacy model on the local and/or cluster congregation level.

The GAMC supports the exploration of determining models for language access, sensitivity, resourcing, and advocacy of racial ethnic persons in new structures, should synods no longer exist as ecclesiastical councils. While attending to “language access, sensitivity, and resourcing” are important concerns in cross-cultural contexts, hearing directly from racial ethnic Presbyterians, who would be most affected should synods no longer exist as ecclesiastical councils, about the role that the synod holds in the lives of racial ethnic Presbyterians and what future support might likely be, is equally important.

The conclusion of the Report of the General Assembly Mid Council Commission Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force reads as follows:

At the end of the day the boundaries of our charge as a commission limited the degree to which we could prescriptively address these matters. Additionally, all of the primary stakeholders were not present at the table of our discussion. ...With this aim in mind, we conclude that it would be most productive for all of the primary stakeholders in the PC(USA) frame of racial ethnic ministry to be convened and focused on an agenda of reflection, assessment, and imaginatively bold visioning—for the purpose of forging an effective and historically responsible model for moving forward in the effort to revitalize racial ethnic ministry on the national and congregational level.

The GAMC is eager to play an even stronger role in resourcing this important area in our denomination’s life. Thus, this input might better be received by a consultation held across the denomination within the first year following this decision, jointly sponsored by the existing synods and the GAMC, specifically the Office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, including representation from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. The purpose of this consultation would be to talk directly with racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders about what they believe would be most needed and helpful. As each synod may individually begin to respond to its new status, if the synod is eliminated as a council, it will be vitally important that the needs of racial ethnic leaders and members not get lost. A consultation would also present an arena for discussions to occur with young racial ethnic and immigrant Presbyterians about their needs, which may differ from those of other generations.

The GAMC is eager to work actively and intentionally with the church to share ideas on how to provide future service and ministry that equips and supports racial ethnic Presbyterians in regions throughout the church. We see this as an opportunity to partner even more closely with the racial ethnic communities and individuals whom we serve.

## Item 05-13

[The assembly approved Item 05-13 with amendment. See pp. 20, 23]

The Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall G-3.0109a be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. **Judicial Commissions**

“**Judicial commissions shall consider and decide cases of process for the council *or councils* according to the Rules of Discipline. Sessions shall perform the function of a judicial commission for the congregation; each council higher than the session shall elect a permanent judicial commission (see D-5.0000). *Cooperating synods may elect a joint permanent judicial commission pursuant to G-3.0404 and D-5.0101.***

2. Shall G-3.0109b(6) be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(6)(by all councils) making pastoral inquiry into persons accused of sexual abuse of another person (D-10.0401c) when jurisdiction in a judicial proceeding against such persons has ended due to death or renunciation of

the accused; such inquiries shall not be understood as judicial proceedings but shall seek to reach a determination of truth related to the accusation and to make appropriate recommendations to the designating council.

“A commission of presbytery, synod, or General Assembly shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work. A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designating council *or councils* but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members (except as limited by D-5.0204).

“A commission of a session shall be composed of at least two ruling elders, and a teaching elder in an installed or temporary relationship with the congregation governed by that session or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service.

“A commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings and shall submit that record to the council *or councils* for incorporation into its records. Actions of a commission shall be regarded as actions of the council *or councils* that created it. A commission may be assigned additional duties as a committee, which duties shall be reported and handled as the report of a committee. [The last two paragraphs remain unchanged.]”

3. Shall G-3.0404 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A synod may decide, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of its presbyteries, to reduce its function. In no case shall synod function be less than the provision of judicial process and administrative review of the work of the presbyteries (G-3.0401c). Such a synod shall meet at least every two years for the purposes of setting budget, electing members to its permanent judicial commission, and admitting to record the actions of its permanent judicial and administrative commissions. Presbyteries of such a synod shall assume for themselves, by mutual agreement, such other synod functions as may be deemed necessary by the presbyteries and the synod.

“Two or more synods sharing common boundaries, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of the presbyteries in each of the synods, may share administrative services *and form a shared permanent judicial commission, with the membership of the commission being proportional, insofar as possible, to the number of presbyteries within each participating synod. Each synod shall pay the costs for processing a judicial case arising within its bounds.*”

4. Shall D-5.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic]

“The General Assembly, each synod *or cooperating synods*, and each presbytery shall elect a permanent judicial commission from the teaching elders and ruling elders subject to its jurisdiction. Each commission shall be composed of teaching elders and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. When the commission consists of an odd number of members, the additional member may be either a teaching elder or a ruling elder. The General Assembly commission shall be composed of one member from each of its constituent synods. The synod commission shall be composed of no fewer than eleven members distributed equally, insofar as possible, among the constituent presbyteries. In those synods with fewer than eleven presbyteries, each presbytery shall have at least one member. *When two or more synods form a shared permanent judicial commission, the commission shall be composed of no fewer than twelve members, with each synod electing members proportional to the number of the presbyteries in each synod, insofar as possible. The cooperating synods shall designate between them one stated clerk to process the cases filed with the shared permanent judicial commission.* The presbytery commission shall be composed of no fewer than seven members, with no more than one of its ruling elder members from any one of its constituent churches. Two of the members of the presbytery commission shall be designated to review any petition for review of the procedures of the investigating committee while the investigation in a disciplinary case is in process (D-10.0204) and to review any petition for review of the decision not to file charges (D-10.0303). These two members shall not take part in any subsequent trial. A session shall refer either form of petition to the presbytery commission.”

5. Shall D-5.0106 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“All necessary expenses of a permanent judicial commission shall be paid by the electing council *or councils*. *Cooperating synods shall pay the necessary expenses of a shared permanent judicial commission equally; however, each synod shall pay the necessary expenses for processing a particular judicial case arising within its bounds.*”

6. Shall D-5.0203 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The meetings of the permanent judicial commission shall be held at such times and places as the electing council *or councils* shall direct, or, if no directions are given, at such times and places as the commission shall determine.”

7. Shall D-5.0206 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“If, through absence, disqualification, or disability, a sufficient number of the members of a permanent judicial commission are not present to constitute a quorum, the permanent judicial commission shall recess until a quorum can be obtained.

“a. The permanent judicial commission shall report its inability to reach a quorum to the stated clerk ~~of the council that elected it~~ *designated for processing the cases.*

“b. The *designated* stated clerk ~~of the council~~ shall keep a current roster of those members of the permanent judicial commission whose terms have expired within the past six years. The names shall be arranged alphabetically within classes beginning with the most recent class. Whenever the permanent judicial commission reports its inability to obtain a quorum, the stated clerk shall immediately select, by rotation from that roster, a sufficient number of former members of the permanent judicial commission to constitute a quorum. The stated clerk shall report the roster annually to the council *or councils.*

“c. If a permanent judicial commission is unable to try a case for lack of a quorum, the council *in whose geographic boundary the case arose* shall reimburse the expenses reasonably incurred by those persons required to be present.”

8. Shall D-6.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic]

“A remedial case is initiated by the filing of a complaint with the stated clerk of the council ~~[or shared council]~~ having jurisdiction. [If a different clerk has been designated to process judicial cases for a shared judicial commission, the stated clerk having jurisdiction shall immediately transmit the complaint to the clerk.]”

9. Shall D-6.0202a(1)–(6) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(1) a teaching elder or a ruling elder enrolled as a member of a presbytery concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that period of enrollment, against the presbytery, with the synod ~~[or cooperating synod]~~;

“(2) a commissioner to a synod, concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that commissioner’s period of enrollment, against the synod ~~[or cooperating synod]~~, with the General Assembly;

“(3) a session against the presbytery, with the synod ~~[or cooperating synod]~~;

“(4) a presbytery against the synod ~~[or cooperating synod]~~, with the General Assembly;

“(5) any council against any other council of the same level, with the council immediately higher than the council complained against and to which the latter council is subject;

“(6) a person who is an employee of a presbytery, a synod *or cooperating synod*, or an entity of a presbytery or synod, claiming to have sustained injury or damage to person or property by the council or entity, against the presbytery, with the synod, or against the synod *or cooperating synod*, with the General Assembly.”

#### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 04-01, Recommendations 3 and 4. On Amending G-12.0100 and D-5.0101 Regarding Synod Function (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 28, 29, 207).*

#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 05-13**

*Advice on Item 05-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC).*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) regarding Item 05-13 as follows:

Item 05-13 arose as a referral from the 219th General Assembly (2010) to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to develop and report constitutional amendments to provide for two or more synods sharing common boundaries to form a shared permanent judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommended that the original overture, which also provided for shared administrative services, be divided and the portion relating to shared judicial services be referred to develop appropriate constitutional language. At the time, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution did not make a recommendation either to approve or to disapprove the originating overture. The committee advises that the adoption of the current Form of Government in 2011 has not substantively altered the relevancy of the referral.

The recommendation upon referral proposes changes to nine different sections of the current Form of Government.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 05-13 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the recommendation identifies the necessary passages in the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline to amend in order to accomplish the intent of the referral.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 05-13 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the language of Recommendations 1 through 7 is clear and consistent, and proposes the necessary amendments to accomplish the intent in those sections of the *Book of Order*.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the language of Recommendations 8 and 9 is unclear and recommends the following amendments to the recommendation, which shall be addressed separately.

The ACC advises that Recommendation 8 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“8. Shall D-6.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic]

“A remedial case is initiated by the filing of a complaint with the stated clerk of the council [~~or shared council~~]-having jurisdiction. [If a different clerk has been designated to process judicial cases for a shared judicial commission, the stated clerk having jurisdiction shall immediately transmit the complaint to that clerk.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the designation of a single clerk to process judicial cases may be expedient, but it does not supersede the role of the elected stated clerk as the recipient of initial complaints in remedial cases. This is warranted by the role of the stated clerk as an elected officer of the council, and the unnecessary and possibly confusing complication presented a complainant by having multiple clerks with jurisdiction.

The ACC advises that Recommendation 9 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

9. Shall D-6.0202a(1)–(6) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(1) a teaching elder or a ruling elder enrolled as a member of a presbytery concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that period of enrollment, against the presbytery, with the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~];

“(2) a commissioner to a synod, concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that commissioner’s period of enrollment, against the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~], with the General Assembly;

“(3) a session against the presbytery, with the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~];

“(4) a presbytery against the synod [~~or cooperating synod~~], with the General Assembly;

“(5) any council against any other council of the same level, with the council immediately higher than the council complained against and to which the latter council is subject;

“(6) a person who is an employee of a presbytery, a synod *or cooperating synod*, or an entity of a presbytery or synod, claiming to have sustained injury or damage to person or property by the council or entity, against the presbytery, with the synod, or against the synod *or cooperating synod*, with the General Assembly.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the amendments proposed in the recommendation on referral are unnecessary and potentially confusing. When cooperating synods share administrative and/or judicial functions, the exercise of jurisdiction remains in the province of the synod of membership. It should not expose the cooperating synod to complaints arising in presbyteries not under its jurisdiction. However, if a person is employed jointly by cooperating synods, then the right to complain against any or all of the cooperating synods should be preserved.

## Item 05-14

[The assembly approved Item 05-14. See pp. 20, 23.]

*Interpretation of G-3.0403c—From the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request by approving the following authoritative interpretation of G-3.0403c:**

**In G-3.0403c the charge to synods regarding the creation of non-geographic presbyteries, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries and subject to the approval of the General Assembly, is only for the purposes of meeting the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations and does not permit the creation of non-geographic presbyteries for reasons other than to meet those mission needs within the bounds of a synod.**

### *Findings*

Pursuant to G-6.02, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this request presents a question for which interpretation of G-3.0403c is advisable.

### *Rationale*

Constitutionally expressed permission for synods to create non-geographic presbyteries is relatively recent. Although included as continuing entities by the Articles of Agreement at the 1983 reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Dakota Presbytery (organized 1844) and Hanmi Presbytery (organized 1983), non-geographical presbyteries created to accommodate Native American and Korean culture and language differences, were not explicitly provided for in the Form of Government at that time.

In 2001–2002, in response to attention focused by the report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church and the Practice of Governance (1993) and following church-wide consideration of whether to make explicit and support an existing geographic exception intended to respond to significant cultural diversity, the church amended G-12.0102k by inserting the first provision for non-geographic presbyteries, reading:

k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create nongeographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G-11.0103a; G-12.0102a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. (*Book of Order 2002/2003*, Form of Government, G-12.0102k)

The 218th General Assembly (2008) sent down a proposed amendment for ratification by the presbyteries and in 2009 the church further amended G-12.0102k, providing for non-geographic presbytery membership in another synod, restricting the creation of non-geographic presbyteries to those based on language, and adding the new requirement of an end date:

k. to organize new presbyteries, to divide, unite, or otherwise combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, to create nongeographic presbyteries in order to meet the mission needs (G-11.0103a; G-12.0102a) of identified racial ethnic or immigrant congregations; subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-7.0201 and G-11.0102 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. When such mission needs arise inside a congregation that lies within a synod lacking such a nongeographic presbytery, that synod may permit, with the approval of the General Assembly and unless some legal or ecclesiastical issue would prohibit, that congregation to join a nongeographic presbytery inside the bounds of another synod with the consent of that other synod, the geographic presbytery, and the nongeographic presbytery; such presbyteries should be formed only on the basis of language, and there should be a sunset clause (end date) added at the formation of each nongeographic presbytery. (*Book of Order 2009/2011*, Form of Government, G-12.0102k)

Now, G-3.0403c in the current Form of Government charges synods with

c. organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created. (*Book of Order 2011/2013*, G-3.0403c)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the current language of the Form of Government in G-3.0403c does not permit the creation of non-geographic presbyteries for purposes other than to meet the needs of racial ethnic or immigrant communities. We do so for the following reasons:

1. While the syntax of the present language is admittedly unclear, the phrase “subject to the approval of the General Assembly” is set off as an appositive clause so that “creating non-geographic presbyteries” is to be governed by the continuation “or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations.” This is required because:

a. If it were to be read as a broad power to create non-geographic presbyteries, the remainder of the sentence would not make sense. Either it would require reading the entirety of what precedes as subject to the condition “meeting the needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations” or it would append the condition as a non sequitur clause; and

b. To read it otherwise would contradict the definition of a presbytery in G-3.0301: “The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district.” This is clearly not intended to define a non-geographic presbytery, which is not composed of “all the congregations and teaching elders” within the geographic limits of its membership. The provision of G-3.0403c was therefore designed as an exception to this rule, not as a general power.

2. There was no consideration of such a reading of G-3.0403c anticipated in the analysis or debate at the time of its adoption. To adopt a broader reading of G-3.0403c would have the effect of amending the Constitution through authoritative interpretation.

3. To interpret G-3.0403c to grant broad permission to form non-geographic presbyteries could significantly compromise the foundational principles of unity and catholicity found in F-1.0302a and F-1.0302c, and unity in diversity found in F-1.0304. The potential division of the church into factions of the like-minded would hinder the ability of the church to discern the will of Christ by excluding or marginalizing the voices of those with different experiences or perspectives at the presbytery level of governance. The exception granted for the mission needs of racial ethnic and immigrant communities was designed as a temporary measure for the purpose of strengthening their voice and enhancing the diversity of the larger church, in order to express those principles more fully.

4. The request for interpretation appears to exclude the role of the General Assembly in approving changes to synod and presbytery boundaries as required in G-3.0502e. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that in providing constitutionally for non-geographic presbyteries, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has expressed its theological understanding of the wholeness of the Body of Christ in organic connectionalism by requiring that synods may organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries and create non-geographic presbyteries only with the concurrence of existing presbyteries and with the approval of the General Assembly. The phrase “subject to the approval of the General Assembly” refers to the necessary, final, and broad church approval for the creation of any presbytery; other forms of mission support may not require the attention and approval of the whole church through action of the General Assembly, but as exceptional councils created to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations, non-geographic presbyteries must.

#### *Question Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

This request from the Office of the Stated Clerk presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Does G-3.0403c permit a synod to create a non-geographic presbytery for reasons other than to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations?

## Item 05-15

[The assembly approved Item 05-15 with amendment. See pp. 20, 23–24.]

*On Transferring the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina from the Presbytery of Charlotte to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina —From the Presbytery of Charlotte.*

**The Presbytery of Charlotte overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the dismissal of the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, from the Presbytery of Charlotte and the transfer of the church membership to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the synod.**

#### *Rationale*

The Session of the Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, unanimously approved the requested transfer of membership from the Presbytery of Charlotte to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. The Presbytery of Charlotte approved the transfer of the church to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina at its stated meeting of February 11, 2012. The Presbytery of Coastal Carolina approved the admission of Biscoe Presbyterian Church of Biscoe, North Carolina, at its stated meeting on March 3, 2012.

**Concurrence to Item 05-15 from the Presbytery of Mid-Atlantic.**

**Concurrence to Item 05-15 from the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina (with Additional Rationale).**

Biscoe Presbyterian Church was organized in 1908 in Fayetteville Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and has been a member of the Presbytery of Charlotte following reunion from 1989 to the present. Prior to 1989, Biscoe Church was a member of Fayetteville Presbytery. Today it is located just three miles from the western boundary of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. The church has maintained contacts and close ties with nearby Coastal Carolina churches with whom it shares a Scottish Highlander heritage from the days of the earliest settlers of the region in the 1700s.

Access to the Presbytery camp is one concern for the church. The camp for the Presbytery of Charlotte is approximately four hours away from Biscoe and it has been difficult to get young people and families to use that facility. However, the Monroe Camp and Retreat Center located in the western end of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina is only one hour away from Biscoe, and is a familiar, beloved place for youth and adults from the Biscoe church.

It is also believed that the participation of the Presbyterian Women from the Biscoe church at the presbytery level would be enhanced significantly if they were part of the Presbyterian Women of Coastal Carolina Presbytery because driving distances would be greatly reduced and there would be none of the challenges of having to drive in a large metropolitan area.

The church also believes that relationships with congregations of similar history, size, and circumstance, similar challenges and opportunities, and similar geographic, social, and economic orientations, would be stronger and would enhance the ministry of the Biscoe congregation.

This overture does not propose any change in the existing boundaries of either presbytery. It simply asks for the transfer of this one congregation to a community of faith that will be more compatible with its history, its needs, and its vision.

The original overture was approved by the Presbytery of Charlotte on February 11, 2012. This concurrence was approved by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina on March 3, 2012. It was forwarded to the Synod of Mid Atlantic for action at their March 19–20, 2012, meeting.

## Item 05-16

[The assembly approved Item 05-16. See pp. 20, 24.]

*On Transferring Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, California from the Presbytery of Sacramento to the Presbytery of Stockton—From the Synod of the Pacific.*

**“The Synod of the Pacific overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to concur with the request that the Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, California, (PIN 11401) be transferred to Stockton Presbytery from Sacramento Presbytery and to instruct and authorize the OGA to make the appropriate boundary adjustments in consultation with the synod.”**

[Note: It is understood the effective date will be upon favorable action of the General Assembly.]

### *Rationale*

Covenant is seeking to transfer to the Stockton Presbytery in order to preserve the peace, unity, and purity of the congregation. Due to recent actions by the General Assembly and a majority of presbyteries, some in Covenant Community Church wanted to leave the denomination while others, who were still displeased by the denomination’s actions, wanted to stay in the denomination. Even though there was disagreement on whether to stay or go, there was agreement that Covenant Community Church wanted to stay together as a congregation.

After hearing of a church in Hawaii that was transferring presbyteries, Covenant Community Church began to explore this possibility as a compromise and a way forward in the PC(USA). Covenant discovered that the Stockton Presbytery, which is contiguous to the Sacramento Presbytery, had approved a clear set of essential tenets of belief and had a very clear mission statement that called the presbytery to assist local congregations in making disciples for Jesus Christ. These tenets and mission closely mirror those of Covenant Community Church. Thus, Covenant Community Church concluded that Stockton Presbytery would be a presbytery in which Covenant Community Church could most effectively maintain the peace, unity, and purity of the local congregation and fulfill its ministry and mission. Thus, Covenant Community Church seeks permission to be released from the Sacramento Presbytery and transferred to the Stockton Presbytery.

Stockton Presbytery is now ready to welcome Covenant Community Church of Vacaville, California, and able to assume loan guarantees previously assumed by Sacramento Presbytery.

Covenant Community Church of Vacaville, California, has requested a transfer from Sacramento Presbytery to Stockton Presbytery.

On April 23, 2012, Sacramento Presbytery voted to transfer Covenant Community Church of Vacaville, California, to Stockton Presbytery.

On May 5, 2012, Stockton Presbytery voted to welcome Covenant Community Church of Vacaville, California.

The Synod of the Pacific voted at its May 9–11, 2012, stated meeting to approve the transfer, and to overture the General Assembly to concur.

## Item 05-17

[The assembly approved Item 05-17. See pp. 20, 24.]

*On Transferring Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Elizabeth to the Presbytery of Eastern Korean—From the Synod of Northeast.*

**The Synod of Northeast overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to concur with the request that the Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Elizabeth (PIN10411) be transferred to the Presbytery of Eastern Korean.**

[*Note: It is understood the effective date will be upon favorable action of the General Assembly.*]

### *Rationale*

Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church is a predominantly Korean-speaking congregation. They have recognized that they will be more able to engage in relevant mission comfortably if they are part of a Korean-language presbytery.

Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth Presbytery has requested a transfer to Eastern Korean Presbytery.

On January 19, 2012, Elizabeth Presbytery voted to transfer the Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church to Eastern Korean Presbytery.

On May 20, 2009, Eastern Korean Presbytery voted to welcome the Elizabeth Korean Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth Presbytery.

The Synod of the Northeast voted at its December 9–10, 2011, Synod Council Meeting to approve the transfer, and to overture the General Assembly to concur.

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## Item 05-18

[The assembly approved Item 05-18. See pp. 20, 24.]

*On Transferring Four Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.*

**The Synod of South Atlantic overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the following**

- **dismissal of Bethany Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Cherokee, Synod of South Atlantic, to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery, Synod of Mid Atlantic;**
- **dismissal of First Korean Church of Valdosta from the Presbytery of Flint River, Synod of South Atlantic, to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery, Synod of Mid Atlantic;**
- **dismissal of Jesus Hope Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Synod of South Atlantic, to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery, Synod of Mid Atlantic;**
- **dismissal of Savannah Korean Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Savannah, Synod of South Atlantic, to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery, Synod of Mid Atlantic.**

### *Rationale*

For rationale pertaining to this overture, see [114-transfer-4-churches-from-south-atlantic-to-mid-atlantic.pdf](#) or pages 565–70.

**Concurrence to Item 05-18 from the Synod of Mid-Atlantic.**

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## Item 05-19

[The assembly approved Item 05-19. See pp. 20, 24.]

*On Transferring Two Churches from the Synod of South Atlantic to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic—From the Synod of South Atlantic.*

**The Synod of South Atlantic overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the dismissal of the following churches from the Synod of South Atlantic, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, to the Synod of Mid-Atlantic, Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery:**



- **Korean Presbyterian Church of Georgia (PIN 10698)**
- **Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville (PIN 11846).**

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**Concurrence to Item 05-19 from the Synod of Mid-Atlantic.**

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**GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSION ON MID COUNCILS COMMENT ON ITEM 05-19**

*Comment on Item 05-19—From the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils.*

The General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils strongly affirms the transfer of the Korean Presbyterian Church of Georgia and the Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville as requested by all parties. Although the commission found the requests in order, there were questions raised about whether such transfers could occur between two different geographic synods when one church does and one church does not have a language-specific presbytery within its bounds. There is precedent for such under the former *Book of Order*, which was evidenced by a Korean-language speaking congregation in Houston (Synod of the Sun) being granted membership in Midwest Hanmi Presbytery (Synod of Lincoln Trails). The current Form of Government does not provide clear guidance on whether such a transfer would, in fact, constitute a “nongeographic” presbytery that is not currently allowed or whether such a transfer would be acceptable given the precedent earlier mentioned. Rather than risk being out of compliance with the current Constitution, the General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils voted to refer this requested action directly to the General Assembly with strong encouragement to grant the request.



## Summary of Survey Results for the Middle Governing Body Commission 2011



### Overview

Research Services developed three questionnaires in cooperation with and at the request of the Middle Governing Body Commission:

- A session survey.
- A presbytery and synod leader survey.
- An individual survey.

All three were placed on the PC(USA) website on March 24, and their availability was publicized widely throughout the denomination by the Commission. Responses were accepted through July 8, 2011. Individual Presbyterians were invited to go to either the leader or individual survey, as appropriate. Sessions were invited to download a copy of the survey, come up with one set of responses for the entire group, and then have one representative complete the survey online. The number of respondents for each is:

- Session survey: 754.
- Presbytery and synod leader survey: 978 started the survey, of whom 272 were determined by initial questions not to be presbytery or synod leaders and were referred to the individual survey; of the rest, 643 were solely or primarily presbytery leaders and 63, solely or primarily synod leaders.
- Individual survey: 783 started the survey, of whom 173 were determined by initial questions to be presbytery or synod leaders and were referred to that survey, leaving 610 individual respondents.

Because respondents self-selected, results may not be representative of the larger constituencies of which respondents are a part.

The four survey groups (counting presbytery and synod leaders separately) were asked a variety of questions, but not every question was asked of every group. When particular results are reported for only some of the groups, it is because the other groups were not asked that question.

*The analyses that follow show only those responses that express an opinion on an issue, unless otherwise indicated. That is, “no opinion,” “don’t know,” “not sure,” and similar responses have been excluded, and the percentages recalculated using the remaining responses. For example, for a question on which 33% “agree,” 33% “disagree,” and 33% are “not sure,” this report would show 50% “agree” and 50% “disagree.” The purpose is to emphasize evaluative responses. Readers interested in the full range of responses, including “no opinion,” “don’t know,” “not sure,” etc., will find those in three appendices that report percentage responses to each question for each survey: Appendix A, session survey; Appendix B, leader survey; and Appendix C, individual survey.*

Verbatim comments to open-ended questions are found in separate appendices: Appendix D, session survey; Appendix E, leader survey; and Appendix F, individual survey.

### Who Responded

#### Sessions

Responding sessions represent a wide range of congregational sizes, though they somewhat underrepresent the smallest congregations and somewhat overrepresent those of intermediate size, especially those with 301 to 800 members. (See Table I.)

Number of Members	Session Survey	Annual Congregational Reports
1-100	40%	52%
101-300	38%	35%
301-800	17%	10%
801-1,500	3%	3%
1,501 or larger	1%	1%

Of responding sessions, 17% indicate that their congregation has increased in membership size over the past five years; 43%, that it has decreased in size; and 40%, that it has stayed the same. Two-thirds of sessions report that their congregation has an installed pastor (67%), while one in four have an interim or supply pastor (23%) and 10%, a commissioned lay pastor. Another 10% have no pastoral leader. (Responses total more than 100% because some congregations have more than one pastoral leader.)

### **Leaders**

Almost five times as many presbytery (n = 682) as synod (n = 124) leaders responded to the survey, including 82 who reported leadership in both. Of the latter, three-fourths indicated their primary leadership role is in the presbytery (74%), one-fourth in the synod (26%). Leaders with roles in both types of middle governing bodies were asked questions about the governing body in which their primary role is found.

Leaders with a sole or primary responsibility in the presbytery (n = 643) represent a variety of leadership roles there. The largest numbers are members of a presbytery council (33%). Only 5% indicate that they are an executive or general presbyter, and only 7%, a stated clerk. Similar shares report being chair of a committee on ministry (5%) or committee on preparation for ministry (3%), while 28% report being the chair of some other presbytery committee. (Note that the same person can and often does wear more than one hat; on average, respondents list 1.4 presbytery roles.)

Nine in ten presbytery leaders report that they were “very involved” (60%) or “involved” (29%) with their presbytery in the past two years. Only two respond “not at all involved.”

Of leaders with a sole or primary synod leadership role (n = 63), the largest percentages are committee chairs (32%), members of synod council (18%), or other staff (12%). Only 5% are synod executives, and 2% are synod stated clerks. A total of 10% are either synod moderators (5%) or vice moderators (5%).

More than eight in ten synod leaders report they have been “very involved” (55%) or “involved” (26%) in their synod during the past year. Only 5% (n = 3) respond, “not at all involved.”

### **Individuals**

Almost all individual respondents are white (96%). A majority are male (55%). The median age is 60 years. They occupy a variety of church roles (2.2 per respondent, on average), including:

- More than one-third are ministers of the Word and Sacrament, either in active service (28%) or retired (8%). Of the former, 13% are installed pastors and 4%, interim or supply pastors.
- Another 2% of respondents are commissioned lay pastors.
- A majority are ordained elders (53%), about half of whom are currently on session (25%). An overlapping 12% are clerks of session.
- One in six are ordained deacons, with 2% in active service and 16%, not.

## Mission Strategy

A quarter of sessions indicate that they are “very knowledgeable” (4%) or “knowledgeable” (20%) concerning their presbytery’s “strategy for mission.” Another quarter are “not knowledgeable” (24%). The rest are “somewhat knowledgeable” (53%). Individuals are a bit more aware: 13% are “very knowledgeable” and 29%, “knowledgeable.” One in six are “not knowledgeable” (18%), with 40%, “somewhat knowledgeable.” (See Table 2.)

	Presbytery Mission Strategy		Synod Mission Strategy	
	Sessions	Individuals	Sessions	Individuals
Very knowledgeable	4%	13%	1%	3%
Knowledgeable	20%	29%	3%	12%
Somewhat knowledgeable	53%	40%	14%	23%
Not knowledgeable	24%	18%	82%	62%
Total	101%	100%	100%	100%

\*Responses may not total 100% because of rounding.

Both sessions and individuals report much less awareness of their synod’s as compared to their presbytery’s mission strategy. Majorities in both survey groups are “not knowledgeable” (sessions, 82%; individuals, 62%), and only 4% and 15%, respectively, are either “very knowledgeable” or “knowledgeable.”

Presbytery leaders were asked a slightly different question—about their familiarity with presbytery mission. Eight in ten are either “very familiar” (45%) or “familiar” (37%). Only 2% respond “not familiar.” Synod leaders were not asked about their familiarity with synod mission.

Presbytery leaders were also asked about the clarity of their presbytery’s strategy for mission. Six in ten respond either “very clear” (14%) or “clear” (46%). Only 11% respond “not clear.”

## Presbytery and Synod Connections

### Sessions

Sessions report a variety of contacts between their congregation and their presbytery in the past two years. From a list of 13 types of contact, sessions report an average of 4.5, including:

- Review of session minutes and records by the presbytery, 92%.
- Request for/completion of annual reports, changes in terms of call, etc., 73%.
- Congregational participation in a presbytery program or ministry, 45%.
- Support in calling a pastor or other change in pastoral leadership, 43%.
- A triennial review or other routine visit with session by presbytery representatives, 43%.
- Use of the presbytery’s camp or conference center, 38%.
- Assistance with the vision and future of the congregation, 32%.
- Contact related to the congregation’s property or facilities, 24%.
- An inquirer or candidate for ministry from the congregation is under care of presbytery, 21%.
- A grant from the presbytery, 20%.
- Help in dealing with conflict in the congregation, 12%.
- Congregational involvement in a Presbyterian judicial process, 3%.
- Congregational involvement in civil litigation, 1%.

In addition, 86% of sessions report that in the past two years at least one congregational representative has served on a “committee, board, commission, task force, ministry team, or other entity” of their presbytery, and 97% report that at least one elder commissioner from the congregation has attended a presbytery meeting. Most of these sessions further report that an elder commissioner has attended “every meeting” of the presbytery (46%) or “most meetings” (39%) over the same period.

Only one in three sessions report any form of contact between their congregation and their synod in the past two years. The most frequent types of contact indicated are:

- Participated in a training or education program of the synod (14%).
- Attended a synod event or visited the synod offices (14%).
- One or more elders or pastors were commissioners to a synod meeting (11%).

In presbyteries with a mission partnership in another country (61% of sessions report such a partnership), six in ten sessions (62%) indicate that their congregation participates in this partnership.

Four in ten sessions report that their congregation “has a strong connection” with their presbytery (40%). Of the rest, most respond “has neither a strong nor a weak connection” (47% overall). Only 12% of sessions report a “weak connection.” Similarly, few sessions (8%) report that their congregation’s connection with their presbytery has “grown weaker” over the past two years, while 31% respond “grown stronger” and 60%, “stayed about the same.”

## **Leaders**

For leaders’ involvement in presbyteries and synods, see the previous section, “Who Responded.”

## **Individuals**

In the past two years, majorities or large minorities of individual respondents have been actively involved with their presbytery in various ways:

- 73% have received a presbytery newsletter.
- 72% have visited the presbytery’s website.
- 52% have attended a presbytery meeting as a commissioner.
- 46% have attended an event sponsored by the presbytery (other than a presbytery meeting).
- 42% have served on a presbytery committee or task force.
- 31% have visited the presbytery resource center.

Only 13% of individuals report no contact over the two-year period.

In contrast to sessions (see above), more than six in ten individuals describe the connection between their congregation and their presbytery as “strong” (63%). All the rest respond “neither strong nor weak.” A majority of individuals indicate that the connection between their congregation and their presbytery has “stayed about the same” over the past two years (58%), with twice as many reporting that it has “grown stronger” (29%) than “grown weaker” (14%).

## **Presbytery Effectiveness**

Asked to evaluate how effectively their presbytery has been carrying out 32 aspects of its mission, majorities of sessions and leaders respond “very effectively” or “effectively” regarding 21 and 22 of these, respectively. Majorities of individuals so respond to only 12 aspects. However, the pattern of response is very similar in all three groups, with the same eight aspects seen as being carried out “very effectively” or “effectively” by the most respondents in each of the three surveys. (See Table 3.)

**Table 3. Responsibilities That Presbyteries Are Rated as Carrying Out Most Effectively**

	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Individuals
Presbytery Responsibility	% responding "very effectively" or "effectively"*		
Review session minutes and records at least once a year	90%	90%	78%
Ordain, install, and receive ministers	88%	88%	78%
Establish minimum compensation & benefit requirements for pastors	87%	85%	77%
Elect commissioners to the synod and the General Assembly	86%	87%	76%
Establish a nominating committee	82%	77%	72%
Establish and oversee the presbytery council	81%	81%	65%
Work with inquirers and candidates for ministry	80%	83%	68%
Consider & act on requests from congregations about real property	77%	80%	63%
Assist congregations with the search process for pastoral leadership	74%	74%	57%
Provide grants to congregations	72%	59%	55%
Implement principles of participation, inclusiveness, & affirmative action	69%	67%	59%
Train, examine, and commission lay pastors	70%	63%	57%

\*Shading indicates the ten highest rated for each group.

At the other extreme, the ten responsibilities with the lowest total "very effectively" and "effectively" responses are also similar across the three groups, and of similar magnitude, with a few exceptions (see Table 4):

- Around a third of sessions (35%) and individuals (32%) believe presbyteries are "very effectively" or "effectively" carrying out their responsibility to "visit with sessions on a regular basis," but half of presbytery leaders so respond (51%).
- Four in ten presbytery leaders (40%) and individuals (41%) believe presbyteries are "very effectively" or "effectively" carrying out their responsibility to "provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as personnel policies, equitable compensation, and fair employment practices," but a clear majority of sessions so respond (56%).
- Around a quarter of presbytery leaders (26%) and individuals (27%) believe presbyteries are "very effectively" or "effectively" carrying out their responsibility to "organize or receive new congregations," while almost four in ten sessions do so (38%).

**Table 4. Responsibilities That Presbyteries Are Rated as Carrying Out Least Effectively**

	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Individuals
Presbytery Responsibility	% responding "very effectively" or "effectively"*		
Serve as a catalyst for interdenominational/interfaith activity in your area	29%	31%	26%
Initiate new mission in keeping with synod and GA strategy	29%	24%	34%
Provide a strong vision for area Presbyterians	29%	37%	32%
Initiate new programs for congregations to participate in	33%	36%	33%
Visit with sessions on a regular basis	35%	51%	32%
Counsel congregations where specific groups are not represented on session	38%	30%	32%
Organize or receive new congregations	38%	26%	27%
Arrange mission partnership opportunities	41%	46%	44%
Provide encouragement, guidance, & resources on worship, nurture, etc.	44%	42%	39%
Help congregations learn about/receive resources from GA offices	47%	42%	37%
Provide encouragement, guidance, & resources on personnel issues	56%	40%	41%

\*Shading indicates the ten lowest rated for each group.

## Support from Presbyteries and Synods

### For Congregations

Only a minority of sessions and individuals rate their presbyteries as “very supportive” or “supportive” of their congregation in five of seven areas, with responses lowest for “helping congregations with evangelism” (sessions, 31%; individuals, 33%). Majorities of both groups, however, respond “very supportive” or “supportive” for “helping congregations with conflict” (60%; 54%), and a majority of sessions (54%), but not individuals (46%), for “helping congregations with church redevelopment or transformation.” (See Table 5.)

	Sessions	Individuals
	% responding “very supportive” or “supportive”	
Helping congregations with evangelism	31%	33%
Helping congregations establish relationships with ethnic and immigrant fellowships	35%	43%
Implementing new models of new church development	41%	38%
Helping congregations understand the changing demographics of their communities	41%	40%
Helping congregations with financial matters	44%	41%
Helping congregations with church redevelopment or transformation	54%	46%
Helping congregations with conflict	60%	54%

Sessions were further asked a general question on presbytery support: “How supportive of your congregation has your presbytery been” in the past two years? Two-thirds respond “very supportive” (25%) or “supportive” (41%). Only 6% respond “not supportive.”<sup>1</sup>

Only around one-third of sessions provide an opinion on the question, “which term best summarizes your congregation’s relationship with the synod” over the past two years? Indeed, more than half respond “not enough contact on which to base an opinion” (52%; another 12% are “not sure”). Of those with an opinion—36% of the total—less than three in ten respond either “excellent” (8%) or “very good” (13%), though 37% respond “good” (34%). Another 27% respond “fair,” and 15%, “poor.”

Asked whether they think their synod could have “provided more services to your congregation than it did” over the past two years, almost eight in ten sessions respond either “not sure” (24%) or “our congregation did not have any contacts with or receive any services from the synod” (54%). Of the rest, 55% respond “no, it is doing all that it can,” leaving 45% who indicate that the synod could have done more.

### For Presbyteries

Three in four presbytery leaders report that their presbytery received one or more services (from a list of 12, including “other”) from their synod in the past two years (75%). These leaders were asked whether their synod could have “provided more services to your presbytery than it did” over the past two years, and a third responded “not sure” (32%). Only 153, or around a quarter of all presbytery leaders (24%) have an opinion. Of these, six in ten respond “no, it is doing all that it can” (60%).

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that ratings of overall support are greater than ratings of support for any specific activity. It should be noted that the general support question appeared early in the questionnaire, while the questions about support in specific areas were located much later.

An identical share of synod leaders with an opinion (60%) also respond “no, it is doing all it can” to a parallel question, regarding whether they think their synod could have “provided more services to its presbyteries than it did” over the same time period.

## Finances

### **Presbytery and Synod Budgets**

Fewer than half of presbytery leaders are familiar with their presbytery’s budget (48%). Those who are reveal that there is considerable variety in the shares of presbytery funds that come from each of several sources (see Appendix B). In general, however, in most presbyteries the bulk of funds come from either per capita apportionment or general mission giving. (See Table 6.)

	Presbytery Budgets		Synod Budgets	
	Median Percentage from Each Source	Percent of Presbyteries Reporting Any Income of This Type	Median Percentage from Each Source	Percent of Synods Reporting Any Income of This Type
Per capita	40%	94%	42%	100%
General mission giving	35%	97%	13%	85%
Unified giving	14%	76%	10%	82%
Investments and endowments	5%	91%	10%	100%
Bequests	0%	38%	0%	40%
Rents or fees	1%	50%	0%	40%
Sale of property	0%	26%	0%	0%
Other	4%	10%	26%	20%

Half of synod leaders are familiar with their synod’s budget (49%). Those who are report that the largest single source of income for synods is per capita apportionment which, with a median of 42%, is very close to the budget share from per capita for presbyteries. Synods, however, rely less on general mission giving (median of 13%) and unified giving (median of 10%) than do presbyteries, and more on investments and endowments (10%).

### **Per Capita Apportionment**

Eight in ten presbytery leaders believe that “the current split of per capita funds among your presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly” is either “very appropriate” (30%) or “appropriate” (52%). The 19% responding “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate” were further asked to indicate how they “would change the relative distribution of per capita funds.” Almost all think more funds should go to their presbytery (95%), and an overlapping 26% think more should go to the General Assembly. Almost no one (7%) thinks more per capita funds should go to their synod. Consistently, most of these same respondents think a lesser share should go their synod (77%) or to the General Assembly (46%), while only 5% think less should go to their presbytery.

An even greater share of synod leaders believe that the per capita split among governing bodies is “very appropriate” (9%) or “appropriate” (84%). Only three respondents choose “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate”—too few for an analysis of their opinions on how to shift funds.

Presbytery leaders have mixed opinions on “moving away from a per-capita funding model to a different type.” While a small majority (51%) are “very interested” or “interested” in moving away from per-capita funding for synods, fewer so respond concerning the General Assembly (43%) and presbyteries (35%). And 28%, 34%, and 39%, respectively, are “not interested” in such a shift. (See Table 7.)



**Table 7. Interest in Moving Away from a Per Capita Model**

Degree of interest in shifting away from a per-capita model for funding each type of governing body	Presbytery Leaders' Responses			Synod Leaders' Responses		
	Presbyteries	Synods	General Assembly	Presbyteries	Synods	General Assembly
Very interested	16%	33%	24%	12%	11%	12%
Interested	19%	18%	19%	21%	24%	23%
Somewhat interested	26%	22%	22%	14%	16%	16%
Not interested	39%	28%	34%	54%	49%	49%

Only around a third of synod leaders are “very interested” or “interested” in moving away from a per capita model for funding either presbyteries (33%), synods (35%), or the General Assembly (35%). More are “not interested,” including a majority regarding funding for presbyteries: 54%, 49%, and 49%, respectively.

(For more on finances, see the “Trends” section, which follows.)

## Trends

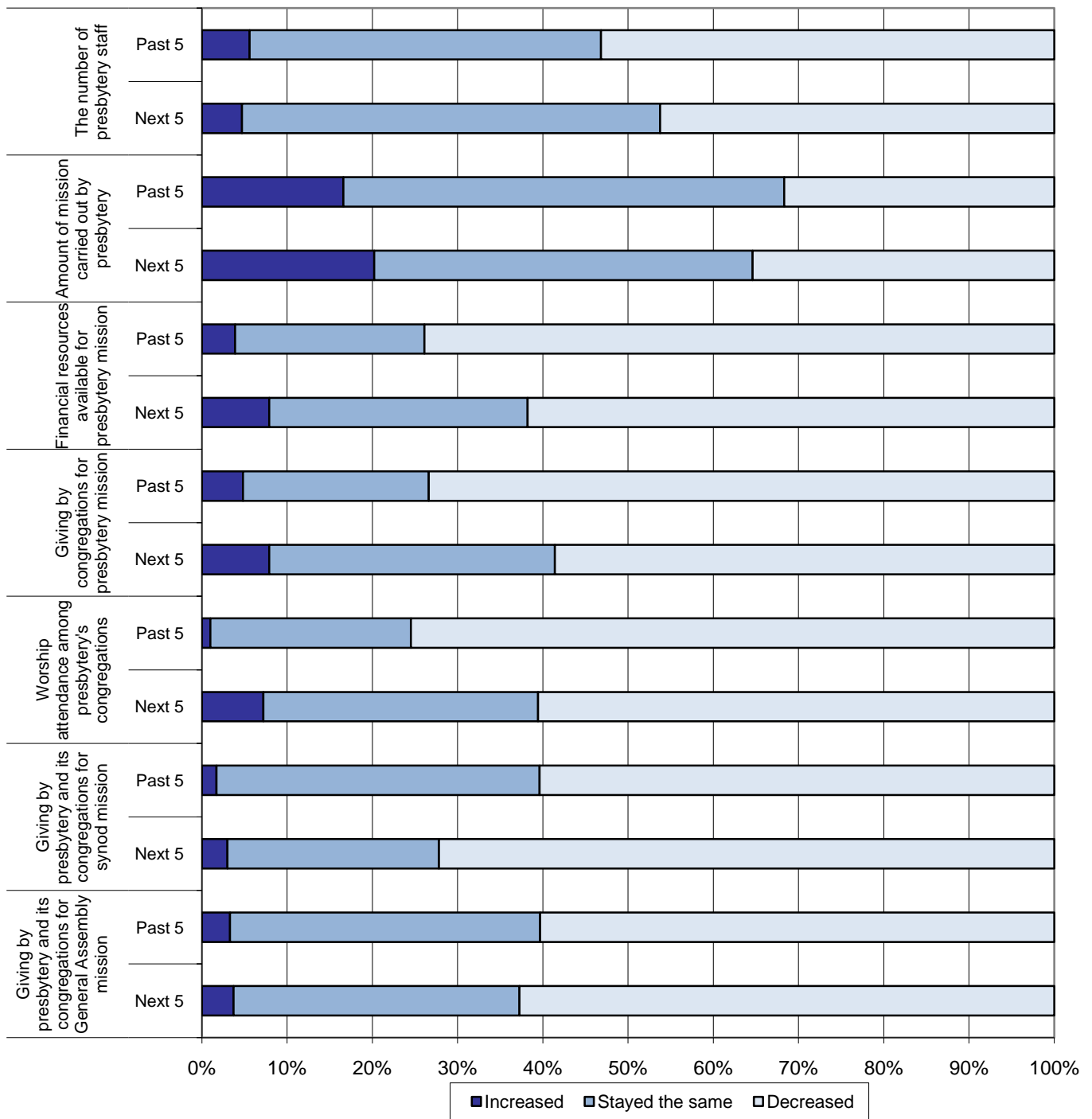
### ***In the Presbytery***

When presbytery leaders were asked about changes in seven aspects of mission and finances in the presbytery over the past five years, the highest “increase” response is 17%, for mission. All of the other “increased” totals are less than 10%. Asked about expected changes in the same seven aspects over the next five years, the highest “increase” response is 20%, also for mission. Again, no other aspect has an “increase” response as high as 10%. (See Figure 1 on the next page.)

By contrast, majorities of 59% or more believe there has been and will be a decrease in five of the factors: “financial resources available for the presbytery’s mission, in general”; “giving by congregations for the mission of your presbytery, in particular”; “total worship attendance among all congregations in the presbytery”; “giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of your synod”; and “giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of the General Assembly.” For the other two aspects, the “decreased” percentages for “the number of staff” are 53% over the past five years and 46% over the next five years, and for the “amount of mission carried out by the presbytery, in general,” 32% over the past five years and 35% over the next five.

Judging by the percentages who respond “increased,” presbytery leaders are slightly more hopeful about the next five years than the past five regarding six of the seven factors: “total worship attendance among all congregations in the presbytery” (“increased” responses up 6%); “financial resources available for presbytery mission, in general” (up 4%); “giving by congregations for presbytery mission” (up 3%); “the amount of mission the presbytery will carry out” (up 3%); “giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of your synod” (up 1%); and “giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of the General Assembly” (up 1%). For the seventh aspect, “the number of presbytery staff,” the “increased” percentages drop 1%.

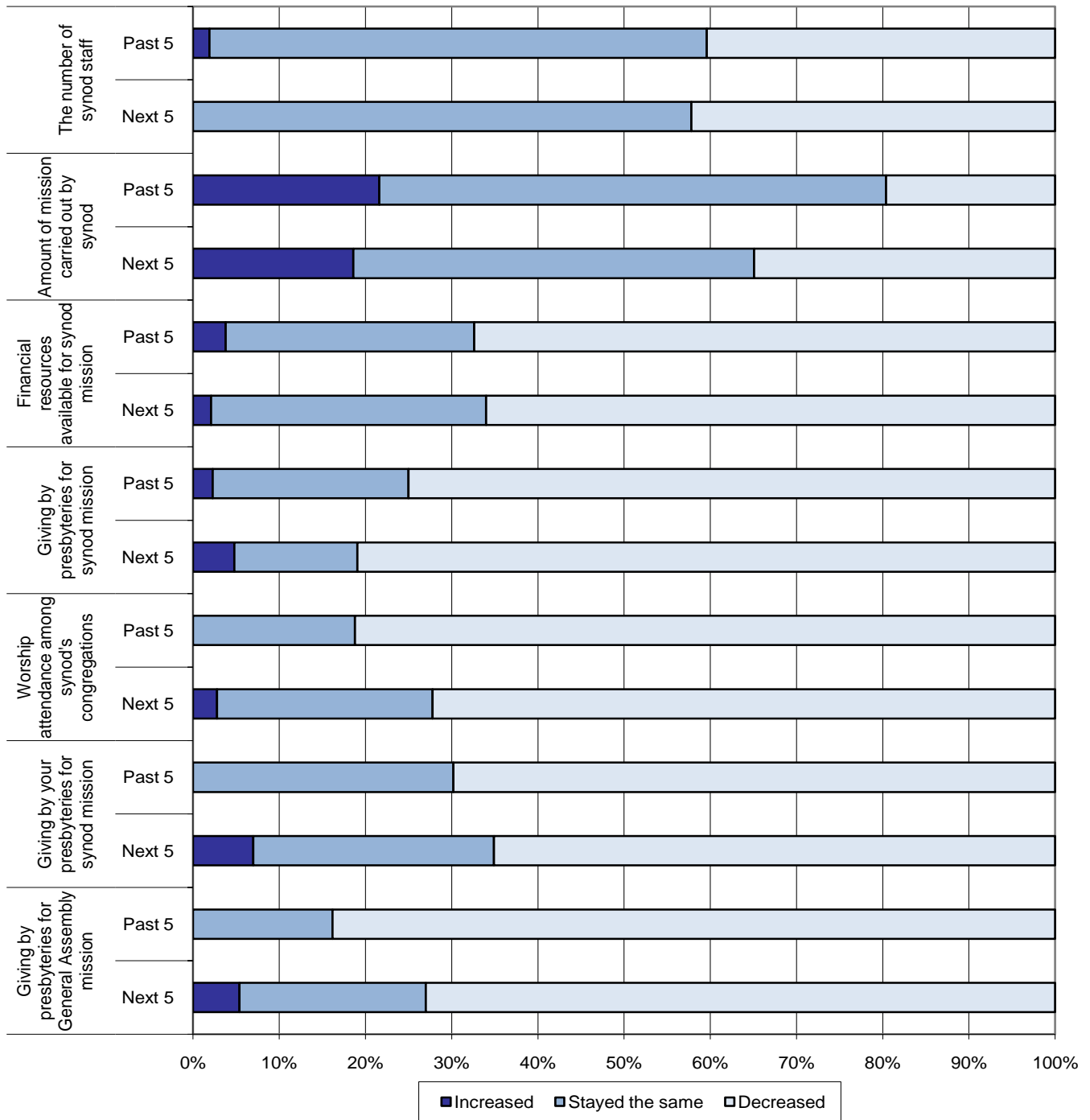
**Figure I. Presbytery Leaders' Views on Their Presbytery's Trends in Mission and Finances: Past Five Years and Next Five Years**



**In the Synod**

Fewer than 10% of synod leaders report an increase in six of seven aspects of their synod over the past five years (including three for which no one responded “increased”). The exception is “the amount of mission carried out by the synod,” which 22% describe as “increased,” 59% as “stayed the same,” and 20% “decreased.” In contrast, majorities of two-thirds or greater respond “decreased” for five of the other six aspects. The exception here is “the number of synod staff,” which 40% indicate has “decreased” and 58% “stayed the same.” (See Figure 2.)

**Figure 2. Synod Leaders' Views on Their Synod's Trends in Mission and Finances: Past Five Years and Next Five Years**



A few more synod leaders believe that several of these aspects will “increase” in the next five years than believe they have increased in the past five, but they are very small in number. For example, 5% believe giving by presbyteries to General Assembly mission will have increased in the next five years, compared to 0% who believe it has increased over the past five. Similarly, for four aspects, fewer synod leaders expect a drop in the next five years than believe there has been one over the past five: “financial resources available for the synod’s mission, in general (down 1%); “total worship attendance among the all congregations in all presbyteries in your synod” (down 9%); “giving by your presbyteries for the mission of your synod, in general” (down 5%); and “giving by presbyteries for the mission of the General Assembly” (down 11%).

## Obstacles Facing Presbyteries

Majorities of presbytery leaders believe three (from a list of seven) factors are a “very great obstacle” or “great obstacle” to their presbytery “accomplishing its mission”:

- Lack of funding (67%).
- Insufficient support from congregations (57%).
- Differing congregational demographics (54%).

Less than one-third, however, respond “very great obstacle” or “great obstacle” to the other four factors:

- Mismatch between staff and needs (18%).
- Inability to manage conflict effectively (30%).
- Lack of staff (30%).
- Lack of vision (30%).

A “mismatch between staff and needs” is the only one of the seven factors for which a majority respond “not an obstacle” (56%). The next largest “not an obstacle” responses are for “lack of vision” (40%) and “lack of staff” (37%).

## Size and Demographics

### **Representation of Demographic Groups**

Majorities of sessions believe that the leaders in their presbytery “very effectively” or “effectively” represent the diversity of the presbytery on a variety of factors. Responses range from 66% for “racial-ethnic diversity” to 57% for both “age diversity” and “rural-urban diversity.” Responses are very similar when it comes to how effectively participants in presbytery meetings represent the same set of six factors. (See Table 8.)

<b>Table 8. Representation of Demographic Groups in Presbyteries</b>				
	Presbytery Leaders		Participants in Presbytery Meetings	
	Sessions	Individuals	Sessions	Individuals
	% responding “very effectively” or “effectively”			
Racial-ethnic diversity	66%	52%	68%	54%
Age diversity	57%	45%	52%	42%
Economic/social class diversity	56%	46%	59%	47%
Rural-urban diversity	57%	51%	65%	54%
Size variation of congregations	62%	54%	66%	56%
Theological diversity	61%	46%	65%	49%

The opinions of individuals are around 10% lower on every item, with combined “very effectively” and “effectively” totals ranging from 52% for “racial-ethnic diversity” to 45% for “age diversity” regarding the representation of presbytery leaders, and from 56% for “size variation of congregations” to 42% for “age diversity” regarding “participants in presbytery meetings.”

### **Size of Presbytery**

Majorities of all three groups asked the question believe that the geographical area of their presbytery is “about right” (sessions, 55%; presbytery leaders, 64%; individuals, 69%). Almost all of the rest believe it is “too large” (43%; 33%; 29%), but almost no one believes it is “too small” (2%; 3%; 2%). (See Table 9.)

	Geographical Area			Number of Congregations		
	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Individuals	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Individuals
Too large	43%	33%	29%	19%	16%	16%
About right	55%	64%	69%	70%	68%	75%
Too small	2%	3%	2%	11%	16%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A similar pattern is found regarding the number of congregations in the presbytery. Two-thirds or more of sessions (70%), presbytery leaders (68%), and individuals (75%) indicate that the current number is “about right.” However, compared to responses on geographical size, fewer respondents believe the number of congregations is “too large” (19%; 16%; 16%) and more believe it is “too small” (11%; 16%; 9%).

### **Staff Size**

Presbytery leaders report a median of three full-time and three part-time staff members (these numbers include the executive presbyter and stated clerk).

### **Size of Synod**

Synod leaders and individuals respond identically when asked about the size of their synod: two-thirds indicate it is “about right”; one-third, “too large”; and 2%, “too small.” Even more in both groups believe the number of presbyteries in their synod is “about right,” with almost all of the rest responding “too large.” Only 6% in each group believe the number of presbyteries is “too small.” (See Table 10.)

	Geographical Area		Number of Presbyteries	
	Synod Leaders	Individuals	Synod Leaders	Individuals
Too large	31%	32%	13%	22%
About right	67%	67%	82%	72%
Too small	2%	2%	6%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### **Staff Size**

Synod leaders were not asked about staff size.

## **Relationships with General Assembly Agencies**

### **Sessions and Leaders**

Majorities of sessions and leaders report that their entity—congregation, presbytery, or synod—had related in some way with three of the six General Assembly agencies in the past two years: the General Assembly Mission Council; the Board of Pensions; and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Almost all leaders (96%) also report relating with the Office of the General Assembly, though only 35% of sessions do so. Fewer than half of sessions and presbytery leaders report relating to either the Presbyterian Foundation or the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, though a slim majority of synod leaders do so. (See Table 11.)

	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Synod Leaders
	% reporting that their entity related in one or more ways with each agency in the past two years		
Board of Pensions	82%	78%	73%
General Assembly Mission Council	92%	92%	84%
Office of the General Assembly	35%	96%	96%
Presbyterian Foundation	38%	44%	69%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	14%	30%	51%
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	75%	100%	51%

Sessions and leaders who report that their entity had related to a particular General Assembly agency were also asked to indicate the quality of that relationship. A majority of sessions report an “excellent” or “very good” relationship with only one agency, the Board of Pensions (60%). The next highest “excellent”/“very good” total is 44%, for the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. At the low end, with 26%, is the Office of the General Assembly. (See Table 12.)

	Sessions	Presbytery Leaders	Synod Leaders
	% reporting that their entity’s relationship with each agency is “excellent” or “very good”		
Board of Pensions	60%	80%	82%
General Assembly Mission Council	33%	51%	65%
Office of the General Assembly	26%	61%	70%
Presbyterian Foundation	39%	53%	60%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	40%	56%	79%
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	44%	50%	59%

Many more presbytery and synod leaders than sessions use “excellent” or “very good” to describe the relationship between their entity and each General Assembly agency. In fact, half or more of both groups of leaders use one of these terms to describe their relationship with each of the agencies. For both leader groups, as with sessions, the highest total of “excellent” and “very good” responses is for the Board of Pensions (presbytery leaders, 80%; synod leaders, 82%). The lowest, however, in both cases is the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (50%; 59%). (Note that the lowest shares of “excellent” or “very good” responses among presbytery and synod leaders are still much higher than the lowest shares of the same responses among sessions.)

### **Individuals**

Individuals were asked about their familiarity with each of the six PC(USA) agencies and how helpful had been the services each one had provided to the presbytery in the past two years. Majorities report some level of familiarity with each agency, though the only agency with which a majority are “very familiar” or “familiar” is the Board of Pensions (60%). Of those with some degree of familiarity with an agency, the percentage describing it as “very helpful” or “helpful” to their presbytery ranges from 79% (Board of Pensions) to 45% (General Assembly Mission Council). With the exception of the Board of Pensions, combined “very helpful” and “helpful” responses are fairly similar for each of the other agencies, every one of them falling in the 55%-to-48% range. (See Table 13.)

<b>Table 13. Individuals' Familiarity with GA Agencies and Ratings of Their Helpfulness to Their Own Presbytery</b>					
	Familiarity				Helpfulness
	Very Familiar	Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar	% responding "very helpful" or "helpful"*
Board of Pensions	28%	32%	24%	16%	79%
General Assembly Mission Council	11%	28%	29%	32%	45%
Office of the General Assembly	11%	28%	34%	27%	48%
Presbyterian Foundation	13%	24%	33%	30%	54%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	10%	16%	35%	39%	50%
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	14%	27%	27%	31%	55%

\*Of those indicating some degree of familiarity.

### **Acknowledgment**

Research Services thanks the many sessions, individuals, and middle governing body leaders who took the time to respond to these lengthy and detailed surveys.

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**Appendix A**  
**Survey Questions and Responses**  
**Session Survey for the MGB Commission**  
**Spring 2011**

This survey is for sessions, *not* for individuals. Only one survey should be completed for each session. The deadline for submitting session responses is June 30, 2011.

If you would like to provide your individual opinions to the Middle Governing Body Commission, go to [www.pcusa.org/mgbchurchwidesurvey](http://www.pcusa.org/mgbchurchwidesurvey).

Sessions should meet and develop a collective response to each question. Once elders have reached agreement on the session's responses to each question, *one* session representative should return to this site and enter those responses into the web survey that follows.

To assist sessions in getting to this point, a PDF copy of the questionnaire may be downloaded here [www.pcusa.org/pdfmgbsessionsurvey](http://www.pcusa.org/pdfmgbsessionsurvey). Make copies for session members to use during discussions to determine your session's responses. Record your final responses on one copy of the questionnaire to use as you respond here.

n=754 unless otherwise indicated.

**Section 1. The Demographics of Your Congregation**

Q1. How many members does your congregation have?

1-100 .....	40%
101-300 .....	38%
301-800 .....	17%
801-1,500 .....	3%
1,501 or more .....	1%

Q2. Over the last five years, has the membership size of your congregation:

Increased? .....	17%
Stayed about the same? .....	40%
Decreased? .....	43%
Not sure .....	*

Q3. What type(s) of pastoral leaders does your congregation have? (Check *all* that apply.)

Installed pastor (solo pastor, co-pastor, head of staff, associate pastor) or designated pastor .....	67%
Interim pastor, stated supply pastor, temporary supply pastor, interim associate pastor, interim co-pastor .....	23%
Commissioned lay pastor .....	10%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
No pastoral leader at this time .....	10%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



## Section 2. Your Congregation's Relationship with Your Presbytery

Q4. In the past two years, which of these types of contact has your session or congregation had with your presbytery? (Check *all* that apply.)

	◆
Support in calling a pastor or other change in pastoral leadership.....	43%
Assistance with the vision and future of your congregation.....	32%
Contact related to your congregation's property or facilities.....	24%
A grant from the presbytery.....	20%
An inquirer or candidate for ministry from the congregation is under care of the presbytery.....	21%
A triennial review or other routine visit with session by presbytery representatives.....	43%
Help dealing with conflict in the congregation.....	12%
Congregational participation in a presbytery program or ministry.....	45%
Congregational involvement in a Presbyterian judicial process.....	3%
Congregational involvement in civil litigation.....	1%
Use of the presbytery's camp or conference center.....	38%
Review of session minutes and records by the presbytery.....	92%
Request for/completion of annual reports, such as an elder necrology report, change in terms of call, etc. ....	73%
No, none of these.....	2%
Other (specify): _____.....	8%

Q5. In the past two years, has an elder, other member, pastor, or other staff person from your congregation served on a committee, board, commission, task force, ministry team, or other entity of your presbytery? (Check *all* that apply.)

	◆
Yes, one or more elders.....	67%
Yes, one or more other members.....	20%
Yes, one or more pastors.....	67%
Yes, one or more staff persons.....	9%
No, none of these.....	14%

Q6. How knowledgeable is your session regarding your presbytery's strategy for mission?

Very knowledgeable.....	4%
Knowledgeable.....	20%
Somewhat knowledgeable.....	53%
Not knowledgeable.....	24%

Q7. How often in the past two years has at least one elder commissioner from your congregation attended a presbytery meeting?

Every meeting.....	46%
Most meetings.....	39%
Less than half of the meetings.....	12%
None.....	3%

Q8. Is your presbytery involved in a mission partnership in another country?

Yes.....	61%
No.....	24%
Don't know.....	15%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

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Q8. Is your presbytery involved in a mission partnership in another country?

[cont.]

Q8a. [If yes,] Does your congregation participate in this mission partnership?

n=438

Yes .....	62%
No.....	38%

Q9. Which statement below best describes the connection between your congregation and your presbytery?

Our congregation has a strong connection with our presbytery.....	40%
Our congregation has neither a strong nor a weak connection with our presbytery .....	47%
Our congregation has a weak connection with our presbytery .....	12%
Not sure.....	1%

Q10. Over the past two years, has the connection between your congregation and your presbytery:

Grown stronger?.....	31%
Stayed about the same? .....	60%
Grown weaker? .....	8%
Not sure.....	1%

Q11. In the past two years, how supportive of your congregation has your presbytery been?

Very supportive.....	24%
Supportive .....	40%
Somewhat supportive.....	27%
Not supportive.....	6%
Not sure.....	3%

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

a. Provide a strong vision for area Presbyterians?

Very effectively.....	4%
Effectively .....	20%
Somewhat effectively .....	36%
Not effectively .....	23%
Don't know or not applicable .....	17%

b. Provide support and guidance for congregations?

Very effectively.....	7%
Effectively .....	37%
Somewhat effectively .....	35%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don't know or not applicable .....	9%

c. Support and maintain existing presbytery programs?

Very effectively.....	6%
Effectively .....	41%
Somewhat effectively .....	30%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	16%

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

d. Initiate new programs for congregations to participate in?

Very effectively .....	5%
Effectively .....	21%
Somewhat effectively .....	32%
Not effectively .....	21%
Don't know or not applicable .....	22%

e. Initiate new mission in keeping with the larger strategy of the synod and the General Assembly?

Very effectively .....	2%
Effectively .....	14%
Somewhat effectively .....	22%
Not effectively .....	19%
Don't know or not applicable .....	43%

f. Arrange mission partnership opportunities?

Very effectively .....	5%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	16%
Don't know or not applicable .....	25%

g. Implement principles of participation, inclusiveness, and affirmative action when it hires personnel, appoints people to boards and committees, and chooses commissioners to synod and General Assembly?

Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	33%
Somewhat effectively .....	15%
Not effectively .....	6%
Don't know or not applicable .....	34%

h. Counsel congregations where specific constituencies are not represented on the session?

Very effectively .....	2%
Effectively .....	10%
Somewhat effectively .....	10%
Not effectively .....	9%
Don't know or not applicable .....	69%

i. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as leader development and church officer training?

Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	37%
Somewhat effectively .....	32%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don't know or not applicable .....	9%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

j. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as worship, nurture, witness, service, and stewardship?

Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	31%
Somewhat effectively .....	33%
Not effectively .....	16%
Don't know or not applicable .....	14%

k. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as personnel policies, equitable compensation, and fair employment practices?

Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	38%
Somewhat effectively .....	25%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don't know or not applicable .....	17%

l. Provide support, guidance, and pastoral care for congregations?

Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	26%
Not effectively .....	14%
Don't know or not applicable .....	15%

m. Provide pastoral care for ministers in the presbytery?

Very effectively .....	16%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	13%
Don't know or not applicable .....	20%

n. Visit with sessions on a regular basis?

Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	25%
Somewhat effectively .....	26%
Not effectively .....	33%
Don't know or not applicable .....	9%

o. Organize or receive new congregations?

Very effectively .....	5%
Effectively .....	15%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	19%
Don't know or not applicable .....	47%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

p. Close, merge, divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members?

Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	17%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know or not applicable .....	33%

q. Exercise special oversight of congregations without pastors?

Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	19%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	30%

r. Assist congregations with the search process for pastoral leadership?

Very effectively .....	20%
Effectively .....	39%
Somewhat effectively .....	15%
Not effectively .....	6%
Don't know or not applicable .....	21%

s. Assist congregations dealing with conflict?

Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	38%

t. Train, examine, and commission lay pastors?

Very effectively .....	18%
Effectively .....	31%
Somewhat effectively .....	15%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	30%

u. Work with inquirers and candidates for ministry?

Very effectively .....	22%
Effectively .....	39%
Somewhat effectively .....	12%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	25%

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

v. Ordain, install, and receive ministers?

Very effectively .....	31%
Effectively .....	45%
Somewhat effectively .....	8%
Not effectively .....	2%
Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

w. Dismiss, remove, or discipline ministers, including dissolving pastoral relationships when necessary?

Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	29%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	5%
Don't know or not applicable .....	41%

x. Establish minimum compensation and benefit requirements for all pastoral calls?

Very effectively .....	31%
Effectively .....	45%
Somewhat effectively .....	9%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

y. Elect commissioners to the synod and the General Assembly?

Very effectively .....	28%
Effectively .....	44%
Somewhat effectively .....	9%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	17%

z. Serve as a catalyst for interdenominational and interfaith activity in your area?

Very effectively .....	4%
Effectively .....	14%
Somewhat effectively .....	16%
Not effectively .....	28%
Don't know or not applicable .....	38%

aa. Establish and oversee the presbytery council?

Very effectively .....	18%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	10%
Not effectively .....	2%
Don't know or not applicable .....	36%

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q12. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

bb. Establish a nominating committee that consists of equal numbers of ministers, laymen, and laywomen?

Very effectively .....	20%
Effectively .....	40%
Somewhat effectively .....	10%
Not effectively .....	2%
Don't know or not applicable .....	28%

cc. Consider and act upon requests from congregations regarding real property?

Very effectively .....	17%
Effectively .....	31%
Somewhat effectively .....	10%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don't know or not applicable .....	38%

dd. Review session minutes and records at least once a year?

Very effectively .....	51%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	7%
Not effectively .....	2%
Don't know or not applicable .....	5%

ee. Provide grants to congregations?

Very effectively .....	15%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	12%
Not effectively .....	6%
Don't know or not applicable .....	34%

ff. Help congregations learn about and receive resources and services from General Assembly-related offices?

Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	24%
Not effectively .....	14%
Don't know or not applicable .....	28%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

### Section 3. Demographics and Financial Realities in Presbyteries and Synods

Q13. What is the racial-ethnic composition of the membership of your congregation? Write in the percent for each group below. If none, enter "0" (zero). Do not enter the percent sign.

**The total for all racial-ethnic composition groups must add to 100%.**

#### African-American/Black

None.....	58%
1-10%.....	38%
11-20%.....	1%
21-40%.....	1%
41-60%.....	*
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	1%
100%.....	1%
Mean.....	3.6%
Median.....	0.0%

#### Asian-American

None.....	64%
1-10%.....	34%
11-20%.....	*
21-40%.....	*
41-60%.....	—
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	1%
100%.....	—
Mean.....	1.2%
Median.....	0.0%

#### Hispanic

None.....	67%
1-10%.....	30%
11-20%.....	1%
21-40%.....	*
41-60%.....	*
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	*
100%.....	—
Mean.....	1.1%
Median.....	0.0%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



Q13. What is the racial-ethnic composition of the membership of your congregation? Write in the percent for each group below. If none, enter "0" (zero). Do not enter the percent sign.

**The total for all racial-ethnic composition groups must add to 100%.**

Indian (American)/Alaska Native

None.....	90%
1-10%.....	10%
11-20%.....	*
21-40%.....	—
41-60%.....	*
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	—
100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.2%
Median.....	0.0%

Middle Eastern/Arab/Iranian

None.....	95%
1-10%.....	5%
11-20%.....	—
21-40%.....	—
41-60%.....	—
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	*
100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.3%
Median.....	0.0%

White

None.....	2%
1-10%.....	2%
11-20%.....	—
21-40%.....	*
41-60%.....	1%
61-80%.....	3%
81-99%.....	56%
100%.....	37%
Mean.....	93.0%
Median.....	98.5%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q13. What is the racial-ethnic composition of the membership of your congregation? Write in the percent for each group below. If none, enter "0" (zero). Do not enter the percent sign.

**The total for all racial-ethnic composition groups must add to 100%.**

More than one race-ethnicity

None.....	90%
1-10%.....	10%
11-20%.....	*
21-40%.....	—
41-60%.....	—
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	—
100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.2%
Median.....	0.0%

Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

None.....	95%
1-10%.....	4%
11-20%.....	*
21-40%.....	—
41-60%.....	*
61-80%.....	—
81-99%.....	*
100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.3%
Median.....	0.0%

Q14. How supportive with resources and other assistance has your presbytery been in each of these areas:

a. Helping congregations understand the changing demographics of their communities

Very supportive.....	5%
Supportive.....	23%
A little supportive.....	18%
Not supportive.....	22%
Don't know.....	31%

b. Helping congregations establish relationships with ethnic and immigrant fellowships

Very supportive.....	5%
Supportive.....	16%
A little supportive.....	17%
Not supportive.....	21%
Don't know.....	41%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q14. How supportive with resources and other assistance has your presbytery been in each of these areas:  
[cont.]

c. Implementing new models for new church development

Very supportive .....	5%
Supportive .....	18%
A little supportive.....	15%
Not supportive .....	18%
Don't know.....	44%

d. Helping congregations with church redevelopment or transformation

Very supportive .....	6%
Supportive .....	31%
A little supportive.....	20%
Not supportive .....	13%
Don't know.....	30%

e. Helping congregations with evangelism

Very supportive .....	2%
Supportive .....	19%
A little supportive.....	22%
Not supportive .....	25%
Don't know.....	32%

f. Helping congregations with financial matters

Very supportive .....	5%
Supportive .....	26%
A little supportive.....	21%
Not supportive .....	18%
Don't know.....	31%

g. Helping congregations with conflict

Very supportive .....	8%
Supportive .....	31%
A little supportive.....	18%
Not supportive .....	8%
Don't know.....	35%

Q15. Does your session understand the per-capita apportionment system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whereby the General Assembly and many synods and presbyteries ask congregations to contribute a certain amount annually per member to support the ecclesial functions of these governing bodies?

Yes, very well .....	56%
Yes, somewhat .....	38%
No.....	4%
Not sure.....	1%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q16. Does your congregation contribute to the general mission fund of:

a. Your presbytery?

Yes.....	91%
No.....	7%
Don't know.....	3%

b. Your synod?

Yes.....	64%
No.....	23%
Don't know.....	14%

c. The General Assembly?

Yes.....	67%
No.....	20%
Don't know.....	13%

If “yes” to the first of these three questions (about “your presbytery”):

d. Over the past five years, has the amount your congregation donates to mission in your presbytery:

	n=633
Increased? .....	26%
Stayed about the same? .....	48%
Decreased? .....	23%
Not sure.....	3%

e. How do you anticipate that the amount your congregation donates to mission in your presbytery will change over the next five years?

	n=633
Increase .....	20%
Stay about the same .....	54%
Decrease.....	10%
Not sure.....	15%

Q17. Please indicate the phrase that best completes each sentence below.

a. The geographical area of our presbytery is:

Too large.....	35%
About right .....	46%
Too small.....	1%
No opinion.....	17%
Not applicable—we are a non-geographical presbytery.....	*

b. The number of congregations in our presbytery is:

Too large.....	15%
About right .....	56%
Too small.....	9%
No opinion.....	20%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

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**Section 4. Diversity in the Role and Function of Middle Governing Bodies**

Q18. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *racial-ethnic diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery’s leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively .....	13%
Effectively .....	35%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don’t know .....	27%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively .....	14%
Effectively .....	38%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don’t know .....	23%

Q19. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *age and generational diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery’s leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	38%
Somewhat effectively .....	25%
Not effectively .....	9%
Don’t know .....	20%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	35%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don’t know .....	18%

Q20. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *economic/social class diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery’s leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	29%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	5%
Don’t know .....	38%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q20. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *economic/social class diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	31%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don't know .....	37%

Q21. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *rural-urban diversity* of its congregations when it comes to:

a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	31%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	9%
Don't know/not applicable .....	31%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	37%
Somewhat effectively .....	20%
Not effectively .....	5%
Don't know/not applicable .....	30%

Q22. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *size variation* of its congregations when it comes to:

a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	35%
Somewhat effectively .....	22%
Not effectively .....	6%
Don't know .....	28%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	40%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don't know .....	24%

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+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

- Q23. How effectively does your presbytery represent *the theological diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:
- a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?
 

Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	19%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know .....	33%
  
  - b. Participants in presbytery meetings?
 

Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	35%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know .....	30%

**Section 5. Information about Your Synod**

- Q24. In the past two years, has your congregation had any of the following contacts with your synod? (Check *all* that apply.)
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| One or more elders or pastors were commissioners to a synod meeting .....           | 11% |
| Received a loan from the synod .....  | 2%  |
| Received other financial assistance from the synod .....                            | 3%  |
| Participated in a training or educational program of the synod .....                | 14% |
| Participated in a higher education ministry of the synod .....                      | 3%  |
| Had a visit from the synod executive or other synod employee or representative..... | 5%  |
| Attended a synod event or visited the synod offices.....                            | 14% |
| Other (specify): _____ .....  | 6%  |
| No, none of these .....   | 66% |
- ◆
- Q25. How knowledgeable is your session regarding your synod's strategy for mission?
- |                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Very knowledgeable .....     | 1%  |
| Knowledgeable .....          | 3%  |
| Somewhat knowledgeable ..... | 14% |
| Not knowledgeable .....      | 82% |
- Q26. Given its current resources, do you think your synod could have provided more services to your congregation than it did over the past two years?
- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Yes, much more .....   | 5%  |
| Yes, a little more .....   | 5%  |
| No, it's doing all that it can.....  | 12% |
| Not sure.....  | 24% |
| Our congregation did not have any contacts with or receive any services from the synod → Skip to Q28 ..... | 54% |

---

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 ◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q27. Based on your congregation's contacts with and services received from your synod over the past two years, which term best summarizes your congregation's relationship with the synod over that period?

n=383

Excellent .....	2%
Very good .....	5%
Good.....	12%
Fair.....	10%
Poor.....	7%
No opinion .....	12%
Not enough contact on which to base an opinion .....	52%

**Section 6. Relationships with the General Assembly and its Agencies**

Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

**a. Board of Pensions**

Paid dues for your pastor or other employee(s) to participate in a benefits plan of the Board of Pensions.....	80%
Had a pastor or other staff member who is covered by a Board of Pensions plan receive disability benefits .....	7%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
No contact with the Board of Pensions.....	18%

**b. General Assembly Mission Council**

Visited the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website (www.pcusa.org).....	86%
Read news stories from the Presbyterian News Service .....	53%
Read <i>Presbyterians Today</i> magazine.....	67%
Used an online resource from the General Assembly Mission Council (e.g., from such programs as Peacemaking, Theology & Worship, Evangelism, World Mission) .....	54%
Collected donations for any of the four churchwide special offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peacemaking, and Christmas Joy).....	90%
Donated funds designated for a particular program, such as supporting the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People, a missionary sent overseas by the World Mission office, etc. ....	79%
Had someone from your congregation do volunteer work with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance .....	26%
Using the Church Leadership Connection to search for a pastor or other staff person.....	26%
Had someone attend the World Mission Celebration in Cincinnati in October 2009.....	3%
Hosted a missionary as part of the World Mission Challenge in October 2009 .....	9%
Used curriculum developed by the General Assembly Mission Council (e.g., We Believe, The Present Word, Being Reformed, etc.) .....	39%
Accessed a Ten-Year Trend statistical report for your or another congregation via the PC(USA) website .....	37%
Received help on a capital fund drive from Church Financial Campaign Services.....	5%
Other (specify): _____ .....	3%
No contact with General Assembly Mission Council.....	8%

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

**c. Office of the General Assembly**

	◆, +
Had someone attend the General Assembly meeting in July 2010 in Minneapolis .....	19%
Had someone attend the first Big Tent conference in Atlanta in June 2009 .....	6%
Contacted someone to ask about an interpretation of the PC(USA) constitution (the <i>Book of Order</i> ).....	12%
Sought assistance from the Office of the General Assembly with completing your session annual statistical report .....	7%
Other (specify): _____ .....	4%
No contact with the Office of the General Assembly .....	65%

**d. Presbyterian Foundation**

	◆, +
Invested congregational funds with one or more of the mutual funds of the Presbyterian Foundation (e.g., New Covenant Funds).....	27%
Received funds from an endowment or other financial gift held in trust by the Presbyterian Foundation.....	14%
Set up with the Presbyterian Foundation an endowment, gift annuity, or other financial instrument whose proceeds pay out funds for your congregation or one or more of its programs .....	7%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
No contact with the Presbyterian Foundation .....	62%

**e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP)**

	◆, +
Received a loan for building construction or renovation from the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program.....	7%
Invested funds with the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program.....	4%
Other (specify): _____ .....	5%
No contact with the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program.....	86%

**f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

	◆
Purchased resources from The Thoughtful Christian.com or The Presbyterian Leader.com .....	35%
Bought a book published by Westminster John Knox Press or Geneva Press.....	55%
Subscribed to <i>These Days</i> .....	43%
Other (specify): _____ .....	7%
No contact with Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.....	25%

Q29. Based on your congregation’s contacts with and services received from the six General Assembly agencies over the past two years, which term best summarizes your congregation’s relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

a. Board of Pensions

Excellent .....	19%
Very good .....	26%
Good .....	21%
Fair .....	6%
Poor.....	2%
No opinion .....	17%
Not familiar.....	9%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q29. Based on your congregation's contacts with and services received from the six General Assembly agencies over the past two years, which term best summarizes your congregation's relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

b. General Assembly Mission Council

	+
Excellent .....	5%
Very good .....	12%
Good .....	21%
Fair .....	9%
Poor .....	3%
No opinion .....	28%
Not familiar .....	22%

c. Office of the General Assembly

	+
Excellent .....	3%
Very good .....	7%
Good .....	16%
Fair .....	9%
Poor .....	4%
No opinion .....	39%
Not familiar .....	21%

d. Presbyterian Foundation

Excellent .....	5%
Very good .....	9%
Good .....	14%
Fair .....	6%
Poor .....	3%
No opinion .....	39%
Not familiar .....	23%

e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program

	+
Excellent .....	3%
Very good .....	5%
Good .....	5%
Fair .....	4%
Poor .....	3%
No opinion .....	47%
Not familiar .....	32%

f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

	+
Excellent .....	10%
Very good .....	17%
Good .....	24%
Fair .....	8%
Poor .....	3%
No opinion .....	24%
Not familiar .....	14%

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**Section 7. Final Comments**

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:

a. Presbyteries and their oversight of congregations?

[tabulated separately]

b. Synods?

[tabulated separately]

c. The relationship of Presbyteries and synods with the General Assembly?

[tabulated separately]

Response from paper.....	13%
Response from web.....	87%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

**Appendix B**  
**Survey Questions and Responses**  
**Middle Governing Body Leader Survey for the MGB Commission**  
**Spring 2011**

Q1. Do you currently have a staff position or another leadership role in your presbytery? n=978  
 Yes .....70%  
 No.....30%

Q2. Do you currently have a staff position or another leadership role in your synod? n=978  
 Yes .....13%  
 No.....87%

*If yes to presbytery but no to synod, skip to Q4, below*

*If yes to synod but no to presbytery, skip to synod leader questions, beginning on with SQ4*

*If yes to both, proceed to Q3*

*If no to both, you have completed the survey. You may wish instead to complete the separate survey for individuals.*

*A total of 272 persons exited the survey at this point, based on their responses to Q1 and Q2; n=643 for the rest of the survey unless otherwise indicated.*

Q3. In which governing body is **your primary** leadership role? n=82  
 Presbytery → proceed to Q4 and the rest of the presbytery leader questions .....74%  
 Synod → skip to synod leader questions with SQ4.....26%

**Q4 through Q30 n=643 unless otherwise noted.**

**Your Presbytery**

Q4. Which of these roles do you currently occupy in your presbytery? (Check **all** that apply.) ◆

Executive or general presbyter.....	5%
Stated clerk.....	7%
Other staff .....	8%
Moderator.....	4%
Vice moderator.....	4%
Member of presbytery council.....	33%
Chair of Committee on Ministry.....	5%
Chair of Committee on Preparation for Ministry.....	3%
Other committee chair.....	28%
Other (specify): _____ .....	42%

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n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q5. How long have you served in this or another leadership role in this or any other presbytery? (If less than 1 year, enter 1.)

1 year or less .....	21%
2-3 years.....	25%
4-5 years.....	15%
6-10 years.....	18%
11-15 years.....	7%
16-20 years.....	5%
20-29 years.....	4%
30 or more years.....	5%
Mean .....	7.5
Median .....	4.0

Q6. How involved have you been in your presbytery in the past 12 months?

Very involved.....	60%
Involved .....	29%
Somewhat involved.....	8%
Involved only a little .....	2%
Not at all involved.....	*

Q7. Please indicate the phrase that best completes each sentence below.

a. The geographical area of our presbytery is:

Too large.....	31%
About right .....	60%
Too small.....	3%
No opinion.....	6%
Not applicable—we are a non-geographical presbytery.....	*

b. The number of congregations in our presbytery is:

Too large.....	15%
About right .....	64%
Too small.....	15%
No opinion.....	6%

Q8. How familiar are you with the mission strategy of your presbytery?

Very familiar.....	45%
Familiar .....	37%
Somewhat familiar .....	12%
Slightly familiar .....	4%
Not at all familiar → <i>Skip to Q11</i> .....	2%

Q9. How clear is your presbytery's mission strategy?

	n=628
Very clear.....	14%
Clear.....	46%
Somewhat clear.....	29%
Not clear.....	11%
No opinion .....	1%

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 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
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 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q-10. How much is each of the following an obstacle to your presbytery accomplishing its mission?

a. Differing congregational demographics (size, location, etc.)	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	11%
Moderate obstacle.....	42%
Small obstacle.....	28%
Not an obstacle .....	17%
Not sure .....	2%
b. Inability to manage conflict effectively	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	7%
Moderate obstacle.....	22%
Small obstacle.....	34%
Not an obstacle .....	34%
Not sure .....	3%
c. Insufficient support from congregations	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	13%
Moderate obstacle.....	43%
Small obstacle.....	31%
Not an obstacle .....	11%
Not sure .....	2%
d. Lack of funding	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	27%
Moderate obstacle.....	39%
Small obstacle.....	24%
Not an obstacle .....	8%
Not sure .....	1%
e. Lack of staff	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	6%
Moderate obstacle.....	24%
Small obstacle.....	32%
Not an obstacle .....	37%
Not sure .....	1%
f. Lack of vision	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	10%
Moderate obstacle.....	19%
Small obstacle.....	29%
Not an obstacle .....	40%
Not sure .....	2%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q-10. How much is each of the following an obstacle to your presbytery accomplishing its mission?

[Cont.]

g. Mismatch between staff and needs	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	5%
Moderate obstacle.....	12%
Small obstacle.....	24%
Not an obstacle .....	53%
Not sure .....	6%

h. Other (please specify): _____	n=628
	+
Great obstacle .....	27%
Moderate obstacle.....	19%
Small obstacle.....	4%
Not an obstacle .....	18%
Not sure .....	33%

Q11. How many paid staff members, including the executive presbyter and stated clerk, does your presbytery have?  
Write the numbers on the lines.

a. Full-time staff (35 or more hours per week):	
	+
None .....	2%
1 .....	18%
2 .....	21%
3 .....	20%
4 .....	15%
5 .....	10%
6-10.....	13%
11-20.....	1%
Mean.....	3.2
Median.....	3.0

b. Part-time staff:	
	+
None .....	4%
1 .....	16%
2 .....	23%
3 .....	23%
4 .....	16%
5 .....	9%
6-10.....	8%
11-20.....	1%
21 or more .....	*
Mean.....	3.2
Median.....	3.0

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q11. How many paid staff members, including the executive presbyter and stated clerk, does your presbytery have?  
 [Cont.] Write the numbers on the lines.

c. Total staff:

None .....	+
1 .....	*
2 .....	1%
3 .....	5%
4 .....	12%
5 .....	11%
6 .....	18%
7 .....	16%
8 .....	11%
9 .....	9%
10 .....	4%
11-20 .....	4%
21-30 .....	8%
More than 30 .....	1%
	*
Mean .....	6.4
Median .....	6.0

Q12. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your presbytery when it comes to:

a. The number of staff?

Increase .....	+
Stay about the same .....	6%
Decrease .....	40%
Not sure .....	52%
	2%

b. The amount of mission carried out by the presbytery?

Increase .....	+
Stay about the same .....	16%
Decrease .....	49%
Not sure .....	30%
	4%

c. The financial resources available for the presbytery's mission, in general?

Increase .....	+
Stay about the same .....	4%
Decrease .....	22%
Not sure .....	72%
	3%

d. Giving by congregations for the mission of your presbytery, in particular?

Increase .....	+
Stay about the same .....	4%
Decrease .....	20%
Not sure .....	69%
	6%

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◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



Q12. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your presbytery when it comes to:  
 [Cont.]

- e. Total worship attendance among all congregations in the presbytery?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 1%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 21% |
| Decrease.....            | 68% |
| Not sure.....            | 10% |
- f. Giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of *your synod*?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 1%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 28% |
| Decrease.....            | 44% |
| Not sure.....            | 28% |
- g. Giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of *the General Assembly*?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 2%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 28% |
| Decrease.....            | 46% |
| Not sure.....            | 23% |
- h. Comments on your responses to Q12a-g:  
       [tabulated separately]

Q13. In the *next five years*, what trends do you anticipate in your presbytery when it comes to:

- a. Number of staff?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 4%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 46% |
| Decrease.....            | 44% |
| Not sure.....            | 6%  |
- b. The amount of mission the presbytery will carry out?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 19% |
| Stay about the same..... | 41% |
| Decrease.....            | 33% |
| Not sure.....            | 7%  |
- c. The financial resources available for the presbytery's mission, in general?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 7%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 28% |
| Decrease.....            | 58% |
| Not sure.....            | 6%  |

---

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 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q13. In the *next five years*, what trends do you anticipate in your presbytery when it comes to:

[Cont.]

- d. Giving by congregations for the mission of your presbytery, in particular?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 7%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 31% |
| Decrease.....            | 54% |
| Not sure.....            | 8%  |
- e. Total worship attendance among all congregations in the presbytery?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 6%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 29% |
| Decrease.....            | 55% |
| Not sure.....            | 10% |
- f. Giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of *your synod*?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 2%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 20% |
| Decrease.....            | 58% |
| Not sure.....            | 19% |
- g. Giving by your presbytery and its congregations for the mission of *the General Assembly*?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
|                          | +   |
| Increase.....            | 3%  |
| Stay about the same..... | 27% |
| Decrease.....            | 51% |
| Not sure.....            | 18% |
- h. Comments on your response to Q13a-g:
- [tabulated separately]

Q14. The General Assembly and most presbyteries and synods support their ecclesial functions by assessing congregations a charge based on their number of members, an amount usually referred to as “per capita.” Do you think the current split of per capita funds among your presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly is:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
|  | +   |
| Very appropriate.....                                  | 8%  |
| Appropriate.....                                       | 52% |
| Inappropriate.....                                     | 15% |
| Very inappropriate.....                                | 4%  |
| Not sure.....  | 15% |
| We don't use per capita funding in our presbytery..... | 7%  |

Q14a. [If “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate,”] Please indicate how you would change the relative distribution of per capita funds. (Assume that the total amount of per capita funds stays the same, but is only being split differently.)

- a. A greater share of per capita should go to: (Check up to *two*.) n=102
- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
|                           | ◆   |
| My presbytery.....        | 95% |
| My synod.....             | 7%  |
| The General Assembly..... | 26% |

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q14a. [If “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate,”] Please indicate how you would change the relative distribution of per capita funds. (Assume that the total amount of per capita funds stays the same, but is only being split differently.)

b. . . . and a lesser share should go to: (Check up to *two*.) n=102

My presbytery.....	5%	◆
My synod.....	77%	
The General Assembly .....	46%	

c. Comments on your responses to Q14a-b: n=102

[tabulated separately]

Q15. How interested are you in moving away from a per-capita funding model to a different type of funding model for:

a. Presbyteries?

	+	
Very interested.....	13%	
Interested.....	16%	
Somewhat interested.....	22%	
Not interested.....	32%	
Not sure.....	17%	

b. Synods?

	+	
Very interested.....	26%	
Interested.....	14%	
Somewhat interested.....	17%	
Not interested.....	22%	
Not sure.....	21%	

c. The General Assembly?

	+	
Very interested.....	20%	
Interested.....	15%	
Somewhat interested.....	18%	
Not interested.....	28%	
Not sure.....	19%	

Q16. Are you familiar with the details of your presbytery’s budget—what percentages come from such sources as per capita, general mission giving, unified giving, investments and endowments, bequests, rents or fees, sale of property, or other sources?

	+	
Yes .....	48%	
No → Skip to Q18 .....	52%	

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q17. What percentage of your presbytery's current annual budget is expected to come from:

a. Per capita	n=264
	+
None .....	6%
1-10% .....	5%
11-20% .....	10%
21-30% .....	14%
31-40% .....	18%
41-50% .....	18%
51-60% .....	12%
61-70% .....	7%
71-80% .....	6%
81-90% .....	1%
91-100% .....	2%
Mean.....	41.1%
Median.....	40.0%
b. General mission giving	n=264
	+
None .....	3%
1-10% .....	11%
11-20% .....	17%
21-30% .....	17%
31-40% .....	19%
41-50% .....	11%
51-60% .....	8%
61-70% .....	3%
71-80% .....	7%
81-90% .....	2%
91-100% .....	2%
Mean.....	36.9%
Median.....	35.0%
c. Unified giving	n=264
	+
None .....	24%
1-10% .....	24%
11-20% .....	16%
21-30% .....	7%
31-40% .....	7%
41-50% .....	6%
51-60% .....	2%
61-70% .....	4%
71-80% .....	4%
81-90% .....	4%
91-100% .....	2%
Mean.....	24.6%
Median.....	14.5%

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q17. What percentage of your presbytery's current annual budget is expected to come from:

[Cont.]

d. Investments and endowments	n=264
	+
None .....	9%
1-10% .....	70%
11-20% .....	15%
21-30% .....	5%
31-40% .....	—
41-50% .....	1%
51-60% .....	—
61-70% .....	—
71-80% .....	—
81-90% .....	—
91-100% .....	—
Mean.....	8.3%
Median.....	5.0%
e. Bequests	n=264
	+
None .....	62%
1-10% .....	33%
11-20% .....	4%
21-30% .....	1%
31-40% .....	—
41-50% .....	—
51-60% .....	—
61-70% .....	—
71-80% .....	—
81-90% .....	—
91-100% .....	—
Mean.....	2.2%
Median.....	0.0%
f. Rents or fees	n=264
	+
None .....	50%
1-10% .....	41%
11-20% .....	5%
21-30% .....	2%
31-40% .....	2%
41-50% .....	—
51-60% .....	—
61-70% .....	—
71-80% .....	—
81-90% .....	—
91-100% .....	—
Mean.....	4.0%
Median.....	1.0%

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n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q17. What percentage of your presbytery's current annual budget is expected to come from:

[Cont.]

g. Sale of property	n=264
	+
None .....	74%
1-10% .....	21%
11-20% .....	2%
21-30% .....	1%
31-40% .....	1%
41-50% .....	—
51-60% .....	—
61-70% .....	—
71-80% .....	—
81-90% .....	—
91-100% .....	—
Mean.....	2.2%
Median.....	0.0%

h. Other (specify): _____	n=264
	+
None .....	32%
1-10% .....	33%
11-20% .....	20%
21-30% .....	8%
31-40% .....	1%
41-50% .....	1%
51-60% .....	3%
61-70% .....	—
71-80% .....	1%
81-90% .....	—
91-100% .....	—
Mean.....	10.8%
Median.....	4.0%

Q18. In the past year has your presbytery had any shared partnerships with one or more other presbyteries that were *not* facilitated by your synod?

	+
Yes .....	28%
No.....	37%
Not sure.....	35%

Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

a. Provide a strong vision for area Presbyterians?	+
Very effectively.....	8%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	42%
Not effectively.....	20%
Don't know or not applicable.....	2%

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 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

b. Provide support and guidance for congregations?	+
Very effectively .....	14%
Effectively .....	41%
Somewhat effectively .....	35%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	1%
c. Support and maintain existing presbytery programs?	+
Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	45%
Somewhat effectively .....	36%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know or not applicable .....	2%
d. Initiate new programs for congregations to participate in?	+
Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	25%
Somewhat effectively .....	37%
Not effectively .....	24%
Don't know or not applicable .....	4%
e. Initiate new mission in keeping with the larger strategy of the synod and the General Assembly?	+
Very effectively .....	3%
Effectively .....	17%
Somewhat effectively .....	34%
Not effectively .....	31%
Don't know or not applicable .....	16%
f. Arrange mission partnership opportunities?	+
Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	33%
Not effectively .....	15%
Don't know or not applicable .....	11%
g. Implement principles of participation, inclusiveness, and affirmative action when it hires personnel, appoints people to boards and committees, and chooses commissioners to synod and General Assembly?	+
Very effectively .....	19%
Effectively .....	42%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	9%

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Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

- h. Counsel congregations where specific constituencies are not represented on the session? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 4%  |
| Effectively .....                  | 14% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 22% |
| Not effectively .....              | 20% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 40% |
- i. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as leader development and church officer training? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 16% |
| Effectively .....                  | 37% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 34% |
| Not effectively .....              | 12% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 1%  |
- j. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as worship, nurture, witness, service, and stewardship? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 12% |
| Effectively .....                  | 28% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 40% |
| Not effectively .....              | 17% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 3%  |
- k. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as personnel policies, equitable compensation, and fair employment practices? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 9%  |
| Effectively .....                  | 28% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 35% |
| Not effectively .....              | 19% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 9%  |
- l. Provide support, guidance, and pastoral care for congregations? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 16% |
| Effectively .....                  | 38% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 33% |
| Not effectively .....              | 13% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 2%  |
- m. Provide pastoral care for ministers in the presbytery? +
- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Very effectively .....             | 18% |
| Effectively .....                  | 33% |
| Somewhat effectively .....         | 32% |
| Not effectively .....              | 12% |
| Don't know or not applicable ..... | 5%  |

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

n. Visit with sessions on a regular basis?	+
Very effectively .....	16%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	19%
Don't know or not applicable .....	3%
o. Organize or receive new congregations?	+
Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	14%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	38%
Don't know or not applicable .....	21%
p. Close, merge, divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members?	+
Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	31%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	14%
q. Exercise special oversight of congregations without pastors?	+
Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	42%
Somewhat effectively .....	32%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	7%
r. Assist congregations with the search process for pastoral leadership?	+
Very effectively .....	22%
Effectively .....	48%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don't know or not applicable .....	6%
s. Assist congregations dealing with conflict?	+
Very effectively .....	13%
Effectively .....	38%
Somewhat effectively .....	35%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know or not applicable .....	6%

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

t. Train, examine, and commission lay pastors?	+
Very effectively .....	23%
Effectively .....	33%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	11%
u. Work with inquirers and candidates for ministry?	+
Very effectively .....	30%
Effectively .....	49%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	1%
Don't know or not applicable .....	5%
v. Ordain, install, and receive ministers?	+
Very effectively .....	37%
Effectively .....	49%
Somewhat effectively .....	11%
Not effectively .....	1%
Don't know or not applicable .....	2%
w. Dismiss, remove, or discipline ministers, including dissolving pastoral relationships when necessary?	+
Very effectively .....	15%
Effectively .....	36%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	7%
Don't know or not applicable .....	19%
x. Establish minimum compensation and benefit requirements for all pastoral calls?	+
Very effectively .....	35%
Effectively .....	46%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	1%
Don't know or not applicable .....	4%
y. Elect commissioners to the synod and the General Assembly?	+
Very effectively .....	41%
Effectively .....	43%
Somewhat effectively .....	10%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	3%

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

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n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

z. Serve as a catalyst for interdenominational and interfaith activity in your area?

	+
Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	21%
Somewhat effectively .....	34%
Not effectively .....	25%
Don't know or not applicable .....	14%

aa. Establish and oversee the presbytery council?

	+
Very effectively .....	29%
Effectively .....	45%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	8%

bb. Establish a nominating committee that consists of equal numbers of ministers, laymen, and laywomen?

	+
Very effectively .....	30%
Effectively .....	43%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	4%
Don't know or not applicable .....	6%

cc. Consider and act upon requests from congregations regarding real property?

	+
Very effectively .....	26%
Effectively .....	44%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

dd. Review session minutes and records at least once a year?

	+
Very effectively .....	46%
Effectively .....	42%
Somewhat effectively .....	8%
Not effectively .....	2%
Don't know or not applicable .....	3%

ee. Provide grants to congregations?

	+
Very effectively .....	18%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	24%
Not effectively .....	11%
Don't know or not applicable .....	15%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q19. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:

[Cont.]

ff. Help congregations learn about and receive resources and services from General Assembly-related offices?

	+
Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	30%
Somewhat effectively .....	35%
Not effectively .....	15%
Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

Q20. Which of the following has your synod done for your presbytery in the past year? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Brought together Committees on Ministry from multiple presbyteries .....	17%
Brought together Committees on Preparation for Ministry from multiple presbyteries .....	12%
Trained commissioners to the General Assembly .....	19%
Provided forums, staff tables, collegiums, webinars, conference calls, or similar gatherings with representatives of more than one presbytery .....	35%
Conducted a common review of presbytery mission .....	9%
Fostered a shared approach to campus ministry across presbyteries .....	16%
Created/supported racial-ethnic caucuses across presbyteries .....	19%
Provided interim pastor training .....	20%
Facilitated other networking between or among presbyteries (specify): _____ .....	16%
Provided grants to presbyteries for mission or program .....	44%
Distributed newsletters, e-newsletters or other forms of communication (specify): _____ .....	44%
Other (specify): _____ .....	9%
None of these that I know of → skip to Q23 .....	25%

**Relationships with your Synod**

Q21. Given its current resources, do you think your synod could have provided more services to your presbytery than it did over the past two years? n=523

	+
Yes, much more .....	8%
Yes, a little more .....	19%
No, it's doing all that it can.....	41%
Not sure.....	32%

Q22. Based on your knowledge of your presbytery's contacts with and services received from your synod over the past two years, which term best summarizes its relationship with the synod over that period? n=523

	+
Excellent .....	10%
Very good .....	23%
Good.....	31%
Fair.....	13%
Poor.....	6%
No opinion .....	2%
Not familiar enough to rate this relationship .....	13%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

## Relationships with the General Assembly and its Six Agencies

Q23. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

	◆, +
Paid dues for your executive, clerk, or other employee(s) to participate in a benefits plan of the Board of Pensions.....	74%
Had an executive, clerk, or other staff member who is covered by a Board of Pensions plan receive disability benefits .....	11%
Other (specify): _____ .....	9%
None of these that I know of.....	22%

Q24. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the General Assembly Mission Council in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

	◆, +
Visited the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website (www.pcusa.org).....	88%
Read news stories from the Presbyterian News Service .....	78%
Read <i>Presbyterians Today</i> magazine.....	72%
Used an online resource from the General Assembly Mission Council (e.g., from such programs as Peacemaking, Theology & Worship, Evangelism, World Mission).....	66%
Donated funds designed for a particular program, such as supporting the Presbyterian Hunger program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of people, a missionary sent overseas by the World Mission office, etc. ....	66%
Did volunteer work with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance .....	38%
Used the Church Leadership Connection to search for an executive, clerk, or other staff person.....	40%
Attended the World Mission Celebration in Cincinnati in October 2009.....	10%
Hosted a missionary as part of the World Mission Challenge in October 2009 .....	35%
Attended the Moderator's Conference in Louisville in November 2009 or November 2010.....	49%
Accessed a Ten-Year Trend statistical report for your presbytery or a congregation via the PC(USA) website .....	49%
Received help on a capital fund drive from Church Financial Campaign Services.....	11%
Other (specify): _____ .....	7%
None of these that I know of.....	8%

Q25. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Office of the General Assembly in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

	◆, +
Attended the General Assembly meeting in July 2010 in Minneapolis.....	91%
Attended the first Big Tent conference in Atlanta in June 2009.....	44%
Contacted someone to ask about an interpretation of the PC(USA) constitution (the <i>Book of Order</i> ).....	67%
Sought assistance with completing annual statistical reports .....	30%
Other (specify): _____ .....	4%
None of these that I'm aware of.....	4%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q26. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Foundation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

◆, +

Invested presbytery funds with one or more of the mutual funds of the Presbyterian Foundation (e.g., New Covenant Funds) .....	36%
Received funds from an endowment or other financial gift held in trust by the Presbyterian Foundation.....	23%
Set up with the Presbyterian Foundation an endowment, gift annuity, or other financial instrument whose proceeds pay out funds for your presbytery or one or more of its programs .....	10%
Other (specify): _____ .....	4%
None of these that I know of.....	56%

Q27. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

◆, +

Received a loan for building construction or renovation from PILP .....	20%
Invested funds with PILP .....	14%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
None of these that I know of.....	70%

Q28. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

◆, +

Purchased resources from The Thoughtful Christian.com or The Presbyterian Leader.com .....	66%
Bought a book published by Westminster John Knox Press or Geneva Press.....	88%
Subscribed to <i>These Days</i> .....	41%
Had a visit from a PPC staff person.....	19%
Other (specify): _____ .....	7%
None of these that I know of.....	—

Q29. Based on your knowledge of your presbytery's contacts with and services received from the six General Assembly agencies over the past two year, which term best summarizes your presbytery's relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

a. Board of Pensions

+

Excellent .....	33%
Very good .....	40%
Good .....	17%
Fair .....	1%
Poor.....	*
No opinion .....	2%
Not familiar.....	7%

b. General Assembly Mission Council

+

Excellent .....	14%
Very good .....	26%
Good .....	30%
Fair.....	7%
Poor.....	2%
No opinion .....	7%
Not familiar.....	14%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q29. Based on your knowledge of your presbytery's contacts with and services received from the six General [Cont.] Assembly agencies over the past two year, which term best summarizes your presbytery's relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

c. Office of the General Assembly

	+
Excellent .....	20%
Very good .....	31%
Good .....	24%
Fair .....	7%
Poor .....	1%
No opinion .....	4%
Not familiar .....	12%

d. Presbyterian Foundation

	+
Excellent .....	10%
Very good .....	26%
Good .....	22%
Fair .....	9%
Poor .....	2%
No opinion .....	10%
Not familiar .....	21%

e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program

	+
Excellent .....	10%
Very good .....	23%
Good .....	18%
Fair .....	7%
Poor .....	2%
No opinion .....	13%
Not familiar .....	28%

f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

	+
Excellent .....	12%
Very good .....	21%
Good .....	24%
Fair .....	6%
Poor .....	3%
No opinion .....	13%
Not familiar .....	23%

**Final Comments**

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:

a. Presbyteries and their duties and functions?

[tabulated separately]

b. Presbyteries' relationships with their synods?

[tabulated separately]

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\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:

[Cont.]

c. Presbyteries' relationships with the General Assembly?

[tabulated separately]

**Presbytery leaders ended here**

**Your Synod**

**SQ4 through SQ26 n=63 unless otherwise noted.**

SQ4. Which of these roles do you currently occupy in your synod? (Check *all* that apply.)

Synod executive .....	5%	◆
Stated clerk.....	2%	
Other staff .....	12%	
Moderator.....	5%	
Vice moderator.....	5%	
Member of synod council .....	18%	
Committee chair.....	32%	
Other (specify): _____ .....	51%	

SQ5. How long have you served in this or another leadership role in this or any other synod?

1 year or less .....	16%
2-3 years.....	38%
4-5 years.....	14%
6-10 years.....	20%
11-15 years.....	7%
16-20 years.....	2%
20-29 years.....	4%
30 or more years.....	—
Mean .....	5.3
Median .....	3.0

SQ5a. How involved have you been in your synod in the past 12 months?

Very involved.....	55%
Involved .....	26%
Somewhat involved.....	7%
Involved only a little .....	7%
Not at all involved.....	5%

SQ6. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your synod when it comes to:

a. The number of staff?

Increased.....	2%
Stayed about the same .....	54%
Decreased .....	38%
Not sure .....	6%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



SQ6. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your synod when it comes to:

[Cont.]

b. The amount of mission carried out by the synod?

Increased.....	20%
Stayed about the same .....	54%
Decreased .....	18%
Not sure .....	7%

c. The financial resources available for the synod's mission, in general?

Increased.....	4%
Stayed about the same .....	27%
Decreased .....	64%
Not sure .....	6%

d. Giving by presbyteries for the mission of your synod, in particular?

Increased.....	2%
Stayed about the same .....	18%
Decreased .....	60%
Not sure .....	20%

e. Total worship attendance among all congregations in all presbyteries in the synod?

	+
Increased.....	—
Stayed about the same .....	11%
Decreased .....	48%
Not sure .....	41%

f. Giving by your presbyteries for the mission of your synod?

Increased.....	—
Stayed about the same .....	24%
Decreased .....	54%
Not sure .....	22%

g. Giving by your presbyteries for the mission of *the General Assembly*?

	+
Increased.....	—
Stayed about the same .....	11%
Decreased .....	57%
Not sure .....	32%

h. Comments on your responses to SQ6a-g:

[tabulated separately]

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n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ7. In the *next five years*, what trends do you anticipate in your synod when it comes to:

- a. Number of staff?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | —   | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 49% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 36% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 15% |   |
- b. The amount of mission the synod will carry out?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | 15% | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 38% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 28% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 19% |   |
- c. The financial resources available for the synod's mission, in general?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | 2%  | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 29% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 60% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 10% |   |
- d. Giving by presbyteries for the mission of your synod, in particular?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | 4%  | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 12% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 67% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 18% |   |
- e. Total worship attendance among all congregations in all presbyteries in *your synod*?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | 2%  | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 18% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 51% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 29% |   |
- f. Giving by your presbyteries for the mission of *the General Assembly*?
- |                             |     |   |
|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| Increased.....              | 4%  | + |
| Stayed about the same ..... | 15% |   |
| Decreased .....             | 52% |   |
| Not sure .....              | 29% |   |
- g. Comments on your responses to SQ7a-g:

[tabulated separately]

SQ8. Would you say that the total number of presbyteries in *your synod* is:

Too large .....	13%	
About right.....	80%	
Too small .....	6%	
No opinion .....	2%	

---

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 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ9.	Would you say that the geographical area of <i>synods, in general</i> is:	
	Too large .....	27%
	About right.....	58%
	Too small .....	2%
	No opinion .....	13%
SQ10.	How involved have you been in your synod in the past 12 months?	
	Very involved.....	57% <sup>+</sup>
	Involved .....	28%
	Somewhat involved.....	7%
	Involved only a little .....	2%
	Not at all involved.....	6%
SQ11.	Do you think the current split of per capita funds among your presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly is:	
	Very appropriate .....	7%
	Appropriate .....	69%
	Inappropriate.....	4%
	Very inappropriate .....	2%
	Not sure.....	18%
	We don't use per capita funding in our synod .....	—
SQ12.	[If “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate,] Please indicate how you would change the relative distribution of per capita funds. (Assume that the total amount of per capita funds stays the same, but is only being split differently.)	
a.	A greater share of per capita should go to: (Check up to <i>two</i> .)	n=3
		◆
	My presbytery .....	67%
	My synod.....	67%
	The General Assembly .....	33%
b.	... and a lesser share should go to: (Check up to <i>two</i> .)	n=3
		◆
	My presbytery.....	33%
	My synod.....	33%
	The General Assembly .....	33%
c.	Comments on your responses to SQ12a-b:	n=3
	[tabulated separately]	
SQ13.	How interested are you in moving away from a per-capita funding model to a different type of funding model for:	
a.	Presbyteries?	
	Very interested.....	9%
	Interested.....	16%
	Somewhat interested.....	11%
	Not interested.....	42%
	Not sure.....	22%

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+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ13. How interested are you in moving away from a per-capita funding model to a different type of funding model for:  
[Cont.]

b. Synods?

	+
Very interested.....	9%
Interested.....	20%
Somewhat interested.....	13%
Not interested.....	41%
Not sure.....	17%

c. The General Assembly?

Very interested.....	9%
Interested.....	18%
Somewhat interested.....	13%
Not interested.....	38%
Not sure.....	22%

SQ14. Are you familiar with the details of your synod’s budget—what percentages come from such sources as per capita, general mission giving, unified giving, investments and endowments, bequests, rents or fees, sale of property, or other sources?

Yes .....	49%
No → Skip to SQ16.....	51%

SQ15. What percentage of your synod’s current annual budget is expected to come from:

a. Per capita

n=27

	+
None.....	—
1-10%.....	6%
11-20%.....	18%
21-30%.....	—
31-40%.....	18%
41-50%.....	29%
51-60%.....	24%
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	6%
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	41.0%
Median.....	42.0%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ15. What percentage of your synod's current annual budget is expected to come from:

[Cont.]

b. General mission giving	n=27
	+
None.....	15%
1-10%.....	—
11-20%.....	54%
21-30%.....	8%
31-40%.....	15%
41-50%.....	8%
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	18.7%
Median.....	13.0%
c. Unified giving	n=27
	+
None.....	18%
1-10%.....	36%
11-20%.....	—
21-30%.....	27%
31-40%.....	18%
41-50%.....	—
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	16.6%
Median.....	10.0%
d. Investments and endowments	n=27
	+
None.....	—
1-10%.....	60%
11-20%.....	7%
21-30%.....	33%
31-40%.....	—
41-50%.....	—
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	12.3%
Median.....	10.0%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ15. What percentage of your synod's current annual budget is expected to come from:

[Cont.]

e. Bequests	n=27
	+
None.....	60%
1-10%.....	20%
11-20%.....	20%
21-30%.....	—
31-40%.....	—
41-50%.....	—
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	2.8%
Median.....	0.0%
f. Rents or fees	n=27
	+
None.....	60%
1-10%.....	40%
11-20%.....	—
21-30%.....	—
31-40%.....	—
41-50%.....	—
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.8%
Median.....	0.0%
g. Sale of property	n=27
	+
None.....	100%
1-10%.....	—
11-20%.....	—
21-30%.....	—
31-40%.....	—
41-50%.....	—
51-60%.....	—
61-70%.....	—
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	0.0%
Median.....	0.0%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ15. What percentage of your synod's current annual budget is expected to come from:

[Cont.]

h. Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_ n=27

None.....	—
1-10%.....	30%
11-20%.....	10%
21-30%.....	20%
31-40%.....	—
41-50%.....	10%
51-60%.....	10%
61-70%.....	20%
71-80%.....	—
81-90%.....	—
91-100%.....	—
Mean.....	31.4%
Median.....	26.0%

SQ16. Indicate which of the following your synod has done for some or all of its presbyteries in the past year? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Brought together Committees on Ministry from multiple presbyteries .....	44%
Brought together Committees on Preparation for Ministry from multiple presbyteries .....	30%
Trained commissioners to the General Assembly.....	32%
Provided forums, staff tables, collegiums, webinars, conference calls, or similar gatherings with representatives of more than one presbytery .....	78%
Conducted a common review of presbytery mission .....	12%
Fostered a shared approach to campus ministry across presbyteries .....	46%
Created/supported racial-ethnic caucuses across presbyteries .....	68%
Provided interim pastor training .....	16%
Facilitated other networking between or among presbyteries (specify): _____ .....	38%
Provided grants to presbyteries for mission or program .....	78%
Distributed newsletters, e-newsletters, or other forms of communication (specify): _____ .....	84%
Other (specify): _____ .....	18%
None of these that I know of → <i>Skip to SQ18</i> .....	2%

SQ17. Given current resources, do you think your synod could have provided more services to its presbyteries than it did over the past two years? n=60

	+
Yes, much more .....	4%
Yes, a little more .....	29%
No, we're doing all that we can .....	49%
Not sure.....	18%

SQ18. Based on your knowledge of your synod's contacts with and services provided for its presbyteries over the past two years, which term best summarizes the synod's relationships with its presbyteries over that period?

	+
Excellent .....	20%
Very good .....	29%
Good.....	31%
Fair.....	6%
Poor.....	6%
No opinion .....	2%
Not familiar enough to rate the overall relationship .....	6%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

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## Relationships with the General Assembly and its Agencies

SQ19. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Paid dues for your executive, clerk or other employee(s) to participate in a benefits plan of the Board of Pensions .....	73%
Had an executive, clerk, or other staff member who is covered by a Board of Pensions plan receive disability benefits .....	17%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
None of these that I know of.....	27%

SQ20. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the General Assembly Mission Council in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Visited the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website (www.pcusa.org).....	84%
Read news stories from the Presbyterian News Service .....	78%
Read <i>Presbyterians Today</i> magazine.....	70%
Used an online resource from the General Assembly Mission Council (e.g., from such programs as Peacemaking, Theology & Worship, Evangelism, World Mission) .....	70%
Donated funds designated for a particular program, such as supporting the Presbyterian Hunger program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People, a missionary sent overseas by the World Mission office, etc. ....	56%
Did volunteer work with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance .....	30%
Used the Church Leadership Connection to search for an executive, clerk, or other staff person.....	38%
Attended the World Mission Celebration in Cincinnati in October 2009.....	28%
Hosted a missionary as part of the World Mission Challenge in October 2009 .....	16%
Accessed a Ten-Year Trend statistical report for your presbytery or a congregation via the PC(USA) website.....	26%
Received help on a capital fund drive from Church Financial Campaign Services .....	
Other (specify): _____ .....	2%
None of these that I know of.....	16%

SQ21. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Office of the General Assembly in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Attended the General Assembly meeting in July 2010 in Minneapolis.....	94%
Attended the first Big Tent conference in Atlanta in June 2009.....	64%
Contacted someone to ask about an interpretation of the PC(USA) constitution (the <i>Book of Order</i> ).....	54%
Other (specify): _____ .....	6%
None of these that I know of.....	4%

SQ22. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Foundation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

	◆, +
Invested synod funds with one or more of the mutual funds of the Presbyterian Foundation (e.g., New Covenant Funds).....	50%
Received funds from an endowment or other financial gift held in trust by the Presbyterian Foundation.....	44%
Set up with the Presbyterian Foundation an endowment, gift annuity, or other financial instrument whose proceeds pay out funds for your synod or one or more of its programs .....	19%
Other (specify): _____ .....	12%
None of these that I know of.....	31%

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.



SQ23. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

◆, +

Received a loan for building construction or renovation from the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program .....	13%
Invested funds with the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program.....	42%
Other (specify): _____ .....	13%
None of these that I know of.....	49%

SQ24. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

◆, +

Purchased resources from The Thoughtful Christian.com or The Presbyterian Leader.com .....	26%
Bought a book published by Westminster John Knox Press or Geneva Press.....	45%
Subscribed to <i>These Days</i> .....	21%
Had a visit from a PPC staff person.....	8%
Other (specify): _____ .....	8%
None of these that I know of.....	49%

SQ25. Based on your knowledge of your synod's contacts with and services received from the six General Assembly agencies over the past two year, which term best summarizes your synod's relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

a. Board of Pensions

+

Excellent .....	41%
Very good .....	24%
Good .....	12%
Fair.....	2%
Poor.....	—
No opinion .....	6%
Not familiar.....	14%

b. General Assembly Mission Council

+

Excellent .....	22%
Very good .....	26%
Good .....	22%
Fair.....	4%
Poor.....	—
No opinion .....	8%
Not familiar.....	16%

c. Office of the General Assembly

+

Excellent .....	29%
Very good .....	24%
Good .....	20%
Fair.....	2%
Poor.....	—
No opinion .....	8%
Not familiar.....	16%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SQ25. Based on your knowledge of your synod's contacts with and services received from the six General Assembly [Cont.] agencies over the past two year, which term best summarizes your synod's relationship with each of these agencies over this period?

d. Presbyterian Foundation	
	+
Excellent .....	18%
Very good .....	24%
Good .....	24%
Fair .....	2%
Poor .....	2%
No opinion .....	8%
Not familiar .....	20%
e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	
	+
Excellent .....	27%
Very good .....	27%
Good .....	12%
Fair .....	2%
Poor .....	—
No opinion .....	8%
Not familiar .....	23%
f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	
	+
Excellent .....	10%
Very good .....	22%
Good .....	18%
Fair .....	4%
Poor .....	—
No opinion .....	14%
Not familiar .....	31%

**Final Comments**

SQ26. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:

- a. Synods and their duties and functions?  
[tabulated separately]
- b. Synods' relationships with the General Assembly?  
[tabulated separately]

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\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents who answered this question; if less than 10, results may not be accurate  
 ♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response  
 Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

**Appendix C**  
**Survey Questions and Responses**  
**Individual Survey for the MGB Commission**  
**Spring 2011**

**Your Relationship with Your Presbytery**

Q1. Do you currently hold any of these leadership roles in your presbytery or synod?  
 (Check *all* that apply.)

n=783

	◆
Executive .....	1%
Stated clerk.....	4%
Other staff .....	2%
Moderator.....	1%
Vice moderator.....	1%
Member of presbytery or synod council .....	8%
Chair of Committee on Ministry .....	1%
Chair of Committee on Preparation for Ministry .....	1%
Other committee chair.....	22%
Other (specify):_____ .....	14%
None of these .....	66%

*If you checked any of these items—except for “other” and “none”—you have completed the survey. You may wish instead to complete the separate survey for presbytery and synod leaders.*

*A total of 173 persons exited the survey at this point, based on their responses to Q1; n=610 for the rest of the survey unless otherwise indicated.*

Q2. Have you, personally, been involved with your presbytery in the past two years in any of the following ways?  
 (Check *all* that apply.)

	+, ◆
Served on a presbytery committee or task force .....	42%
Attended presbytery meeting(s) as a commissioner.....	52%
Attended an event sponsored by the presbytery (other than a presbytery meeting) .....	46%
Visited the presbytery resource center .....	31%
Visited the presbytery website .....	72%
Received a newsletter from the presbytery (whether via email or postal service).....	73%
Was involved in the presbytery’s mission partnership in another country .....	7%
Other (please specify):_____ .....	7%
Not involved with the presbytery.....	13%

Q3. How knowledgeable are you regarding your presbytery’s strategy for mission?

	+
Very knowledgeable .....	13%
Knowledgeable .....	29%
Somewhat knowledgeable .....	40%
Not knowledgeable .....	18%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q4.	Which statement below best describes the connection between your congregation and your presbytery?	
	Our congregation has a strong connection with our presbytery.....	54% +
	Our congregation has a weak connection with our presbytery .....	32%
	Not sure.....	10%
	Don't participate in a congregation → <i>Skip to Q6</i> .....	4%
Q5.	Over the past two years, has the connection between your congregation and your presbytery:	n=589
	Grown stronger?.....	26% +
	Stayed about the same? .....	53%
	Grown weaker? .....	13%
	Not sure.....	9%
	Do not have a congregation that I attend regularly .....	* *
Q6.	In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:	
	a. Provide a strong vision for area Presbyterians?	
	Very effectively.....	5% +
	Effectively .....	24%
	Somewhat effectively .....	35%
	Not effectively .....	28%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	8%
	b. Provide support and guidance for congregations?	
	Very effectively.....	9% +
	Effectively .....	31%
	Somewhat effectively .....	36%
	Not effectively .....	17%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	7%
	c. Support and maintain existing presbytery programs?	
	Very effectively.....	7% +
	Effectively .....	37%
	Somewhat effectively .....	36%
	Not effectively .....	12%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	8%
	d. Initiate new programs for congregations to participate in?	
	Very effectively.....	6% +
	Effectively .....	22%
	Somewhat effectively .....	33%
	Not effectively .....	26%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

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Q6. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

e. Initiate new mission in keeping with the larger strategy of the synod and the General Assembly?	+
Very effectively .....	4%
Effectively .....	21%
Somewhat effectively .....	24%
Not effectively .....	26%
Don't know or not applicable .....	24%
f. Arrange mission partnership opportunities?	+
Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	32%
Not effectively .....	16%
Don't know or not applicable .....	16%
g. Implement principles of participation, inclusiveness, and affirmative action when it hires personnel, appoints people to boards and committees, and chooses commissioners to synod and General Assembly?	+
Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	32%
Somewhat effectively .....	20%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	26%
h. Counsel congregations where specific constituencies are not represented on the session?	+
Very effectively .....	3%
Effectively .....	11%
Somewhat effectively .....	16%
Not effectively .....	17%
Don't know or not applicable .....	53%
i. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as leader development and church officer training?	+
Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	33%
Not effectively .....	19%
Don't know or not applicable .....	11%
j. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as worship, nurture, witness, service, and stewardship?	+
Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	25%
Somewhat effectively .....	30%
Not effectively .....	23%
Don't know or not applicable .....	13%

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Q6. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

k. Provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in areas such as personnel policies, equitable compensation, and fair employment practices?	+
Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	27%
Somewhat effectively .....	30%
Not effectively .....	18%
Don't know or not applicable .....	18%
l. Provide support, guidance, and pastoral care for congregations?	+
Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	32%
Not effectively .....	19%
Don't know or not applicable .....	12%
m. Provide pastoral care for ministers in the presbytery?	+
Very effectively .....	11%
Effectively .....	27%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	17%
Don't know or not applicable .....	22%
n. Visit with sessions on a regular basis?	+
Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	19%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	30%
Don't know or not applicable .....	15%
o. Organize or receive new congregations?	+
Very effectively .....	4%
Effectively .....	14%
Somewhat effectively .....	21%
Not effectively .....	31%
Don't know or not applicable .....	30%
p. Close, merge, divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members?	+
Very effectively .....	5%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	26%
Not effectively .....	14%
Don't know or not applicable .....	30%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

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Q6. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

q. Exercise special oversight of congregations without pastors?	+
Very effectively .....	6%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	27%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don't know or not applicable .....	28%
r. Assist congregations with the search process for pastoral leadership?	+
Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	35%
Somewhat effectively .....	25%
Not effectively .....	12%
Don't know or not applicable .....	15%
s. Assist congregations dealing with conflict?	+
Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	24%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	15%
Don't know or not applicable .....	23%
t. Train, examine, and commission lay pastors?	+
Very effectively .....	12%
Effectively .....	28%
Somewhat effectively .....	23%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know or not applicable .....	28%
u. Work with inquirers and candidates for ministry?	+
Very effectively .....	16%
Effectively .....	38%
Somewhat effectively .....	22%
Not effectively .....	5%
Don't know or not applicable .....	19%
v. Ordain, install, and receive ministers?	+
Very effectively .....	20%
Effectively .....	48%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	3%
Don't know or not applicable .....	12%

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Q6. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

w.	Dismiss, remove, or discipline ministers, including dissolving pastoral relationships when necessary?	+
	Very effectively .....	6%
	Effectively .....	23%
	Somewhat effectively .....	22%
	Not effectively .....	12%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	38%
x.	Establish minimum compensation and benefit requirements for all pastoral calls?	+
	Very effectively .....	20%
	Effectively .....	42%
	Somewhat effectively .....	17%
	Not effectively .....	2%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	20%
y.	Elect commissioners to the synod and the General Assembly?	+
	Very effectively .....	20%
	Effectively .....	43%
	Somewhat effectively .....	16%
	Not effectively .....	4%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	17%
z.	Serve as a catalyst for interdenominational and interfaith activity in your area?	+
	Very effectively .....	4%
	Effectively .....	14%
	Somewhat effectively .....	29%
	Not effectively .....	27%
	Don't Know or not applicable .....	26%
aa.	Establish and oversee the presbytery council?	+
	Very effectively .....	11%
	Effectively .....	33%
	Somewhat effectively .....	19%
	Not effectively .....	6%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	31%
bb.	Establish a nominating committee that consists of equal numbers of ministers, laymen, and laywomen?	+
	Very effectively .....	16%
	Effectively .....	35%
	Somewhat effectively .....	16%
	Not effectively .....	4%
	Don't know or not applicable .....	29%

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Q6. In the past two years, how effectively has your presbytery carried out its responsibility to:  
[cont.]

cc. Consider and act upon requests from congregations regarding real property?	+
Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	34%
Somewhat effectively .....	18%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know or not applicable .....	31%
dd. Review session minutes and records at least once a year?	+
Very effectively .....	29%
Effectively .....	36%
Somewhat effectively .....	14%
Not effectively .....	5%
Don't know or not applicable .....	15%
ee. Provide grants to congregations?	+
Very effectively .....	9%
Effectively .....	25%
Somewhat effectively .....	20%
Not effectively .....	9%
Don't know or not applicable .....	37%
ff. Help congregations learn about and receive resources and services from General Assembly-related offices?	+
Very effectively .....	4%
Effectively .....	21%
Somewhat effectively .....	29%
Not effectively .....	16%
Don't know or not applicable .....	29%

**Demographics and Financial Realities in Presbyteries and Synods**

Q7. How supportive with resources and other assistance has your presbytery been to congregations in each of these areas?

a. Helping congregations understand the changing demographics of their communities	+
Very supportive .....	6%
Supportive .....	24%
A little supportive .....	31%
Not supportive .....	17%
Don't know .....	22%

---

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 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 + = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
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Q7. How supportive with resources and other assistance has your presbytery been to congregations in each of these [cont.] areas?

b. Helping congregations establish relationships with ethnic and immigrant fellowships	+
Very supportive .....	5%
Supportive .....	25%
A little supportive .....	25%
Not supportive .....	17%
Don't know .....	29%
c. Helping with new models for new church development	+
Very supportive .....	5%
Supportive .....	21%
A little supportive .....	24%
Not supportive .....	21%
Don't know .....	29%
d. Helping congregations with church redevelopment or transformation	+
Very supportive .....	8%
Supportive .....	27%
A little supportive .....	29%
Not supportive .....	14%
Don't know .....	22%
e. Helping congregations with evangelism	+
Very supportive .....	2%
Supportive .....	23%
A little supportive .....	29%
Not supportive .....	25%
Don't know .....	21%
f. Helping congregations with financial matters	+
Very supportive .....	4%
Supportive .....	26%
A little supportive .....	26%
Not supportive .....	19%
Don't know .....	26%
g. Helping congregations with conflict	+
Very supportive .....	11%
Supportive .....	29%
A little supportive .....	23%
Not supportive .....	13%
Don't know .....	24%

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Q8. Please indicate the phrase that best completes each sentence below.

a. The geographical area of my presbytery is:

Too large.....	25%	+
About right .....	58%	
Too small.....	2%	
No opinion.....	15%	
Not applicable—we are a non-geographical presbytery.....	*	

b. The number of congregations in my presbytery is:

Too large.....	13%	+
About right .....	64%	
Too small.....	8%	
No opinion.....	15%	

**Diversity in the Role and Function of Middle Governing Bodies**

Q9. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *racial-ethnic diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery’s leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively.....	11%	+
Effectively .....	30%	
Somewhat effectively .....	26%	
Not effectively.....	12%	
Don’t know.....	20%	

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

Very effectively.....	12%	+
Effectively .....	30%	
Somewhat effectively .....	26%	
Not effectively.....	11%	
Don’t know.....	21%	

Q10. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *age and generational diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery’s leaders (both elected and paid)?

Very effectively.....	9%	+
Effectively .....	29%	
Somewhat effectively .....	30%	
Not effectively.....	18%	
Don’t know.....	15%	

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Q10. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *age and generational diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

	+
Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	26%
Somewhat effectively .....	29%
Not effectively .....	21%
Don't know .....	16%

Q11. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *economic/social class diversity* of its congregations and members when it comes to:

a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?

	+
Very effectively .....	7%
Effectively .....	27%
Somewhat effectively .....	29%
Not effectively .....	14%
Don't know .....	24%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

	+
Very effectively .....	8%
Effectively .....	27%
Somewhat effectively .....	26%
Not effectively .....	15%
Don't know .....	24%

Q12. How effectively does your presbytery represent the *rural-urban diversity* of its congregations when it comes to:

a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?

	+
Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	27%
Somewhat effectively .....	27%
Not effectively .....	10%
Don't know/ not applicable .....	26%

b. Participants in presbytery meetings?

	+
Very effectively .....	10%
Effectively .....	29%
Somewhat effectively .....	28%
Not effectively .....	8%
Don't know/ not applicable .....	25%

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q13.	How effectively does your presbytery represent the <i>size variation</i> of its congregations when it comes to:	
	a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?	
	Very effectively .....	11% +
	Effectively .....	32%
	Somewhat effectively .....	28%
	Not effectively .....	9%
	Don't know .....	20%
	b. Participants in presbytery meetings?	
	Very effectively .....	11% +
	Effectively .....	33%
	Somewhat effectively .....	28%
	Not effectively .....	8%
	Don't know .....	19%
Q14.	How effectively does your presbytery represent <i>the theological diversity</i> of its congregations and members when it comes to:	
	a. The presbytery's leaders (both elected and paid)?	
	Very effectively .....	9% +
	Effectively .....	26%
	Somewhat effectively .....	25%
	Not effectively .....	18%
	Don't know .....	22%
	b. Participants in presbytery meetings?	
	Very effectively .....	10% +
	Effectively .....	28%
	Somewhat effectively .....	26%
	Not effectively .....	15%
	Don't know .....	21%

**Information about Your Synod**

Q15.	Have you, personally, been involved with your synod in the past two years in any of the following ways? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	
	Served as commissioner to a synod meeting .....	4% +, ♦
	Served on a synod committee .....	8%
	Participated in a training or educational program of the synod .....	10%
	Participated in a higher education ministry of the synod .....	2%
	Attended a synod event .....	14%
	Visited or was visited by the synod executive or other synod employee or representative .....	8%
	Had other communication (email, postal mail, phone call) with the synod executive or other synod employee or representative .....	21%
	My congregation received a loan from the synod .....	1%
	My congregation received other financial assistance from the synod .....	3%
	Other (specify): _____ .....	5%
	Not involved with the synod .....	70%

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Q16. How knowledgeable are you regarding your synod's strategy for mission?

	+
Very knowledgeable .....	3%
Knowledgeable .....	12%
Somewhat knowledgeable .....	23%
Not knowledgeable .....	62%

Q17. Please indicate the phrase that best completes each sentence below.

a. The geographical area of my synod is:

	+
Too large.....	17%
About right .....	35%
Too small.....	1%
No opinion.....	47%

b. The number of presbyteries in my synod is:

	+
Too large.....	12%
About right .....	38%
Too small.....	3%
No opinion.....	46%

**Relationships with the General Assembly and its Agencies**

Q18. Presbyteries work in partnership with the six agencies of the church's General Assembly. How familiar are you with the services each of the six agencies of the General Assembly has provided for your presbytery over the past two years?

a. The Board of Pensions of the PC(USA)

	+
Very familiar .....	28%
Familiar .....	32%
Somewhat familiar .....	24%
Not familiar .....	16%

b. General Assembly Mission Council

	+
Very familiar .....	11%
Familiar .....	28%
Somewhat familiar .....	29%
Not familiar .....	32%

c. Office of the General Assembly

	+
Very familiar .....	11%
Familiar .....	28%
Somewhat familiar .....	34%
Not familiar .....	27%

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Q18. Presbyteries work in partnership with the six agencies of the church's General Assembly. How familiar are you [cont.] with the services each of the six agencies of the General Assembly has provided for your presbytery over the past two years?

d. Presbyterian Foundation

	+
Very familiar .....	13%
Familiar .....	24%
Somewhat familiar .....	33%
Not familiar .....	30%

e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP)

	+
Very familiar .....	10%
Familiar .....	16%
Somewhat familiar .....	35%
Not familiar .....	39%

f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

	+
Very familiar .....	14%
Familiar .....	27%
Somewhat familiar .....	27%
Not familiar .....	31%

Q19. How helpful have the services that each of these agencies has provided for your presbytery been over the past two years?

a. The Board of Pensions of the PC(USA)

	+
Very helpful.....	26%
Helpful.....	25%
Somewhat helpful.....	12%
Not helpful.....	2%
Don't know.....	34%

b. General Assembly Mission Council

	+
Very helpful.....	5%
Helpful.....	15%
Somewhat helpful.....	20%
Not helpful.....	8%
Don't know.....	53%

c. Office of the General Assembly

	+
Very helpful.....	7%
Helpful.....	16%
Somewhat helpful.....	17%
Not helpful.....	9%
Don't know.....	52%

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Q19. How helpful have the services that each of these agencies has provided for your presbytery been over the past two [cont.] years?

d. Presbyterian Foundation

	+
Very helpful.....	6%
Helpful.....	19%
Somewhat helpful.....	16%
Not helpful.....	8%
Don't know.....	51%

e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP)

	+
Very helpful.....	7%
Helpful.....	11%
Somewhat helpful.....	14%
Not helpful.....	7%
Don't know.....	62%

f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

	+
Very helpful.....	8%
Helpful.....	16%
Somewhat helpful.....	15%
Not helpful.....	8%
Don't know.....	52%

**About You**

Q20. What is your sex (gender)?

	+
Female.....	45%
Male.....	55%

Q21. What is your current age?

	+
Less than 30.....	2%
30 – 39.....	4%
40 – 49.....	12%
50 – 59.....	32%
60 – 69.....	26%
70 – 79.....	20%
80 – 89.....	5%
Mean.....	59.8
Median.....	60.0

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Q22. What is your race or origin? (Check *all* that apply.)

White or Caucasian.....	96%	+, ♦
Black or African American.....	2%	
Indian (American) or Alaska Native.....	*	
Asian or Pacific Islander.....	2%	
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish origin.....	1%	
Some other race (specify):.....	1%	

Q23. Which of these roles do you have in the PC(USA) or one of its congregations? (Check *all* that apply.)

Member of a PC(USA) congregation.....	58%	+, ♦
Ordained elder currently on session.....	25%	
Ordained elder not on session.....	28%	
Clerk of session.....	12%	
Ordained deacon in active service.....	2%	
Ordained deacon not in active service.....	16%	
Ordained minister of Word and Sacrament in active service (i.e., not retired).....	28%	
Retired minister of Word and Sacrament.....	8%	
Installed pastor (solo, head of staff, co-pastor, or associate pastor).....	13%	
Designated pastor.....	*	
Interim, stated supply, or temporary supply pastor.....	4%	
Commissioned lay pastor.....	2%	
Other staff person of a PC(USA) congregation.....	4%	
Staff person of a General Assembly agency.....	2%	
Faculty, administrator, or other staff person of a PC(USA) seminary.....	*	
Seminary student.....	2%	
Inquirer or candidate for ministry.....	2%	
Other (specify):.....	10%	

**Final Comments**

Q24. Is there anything you want to tell the Middle Governing Body Commission to inform their examination of:

a. Presbyteries and their duties and functions?

[tabulated separately]

b. Synods and their duties and functions?

[tabulated separately]

c. The General Assembly and its agencies and their duties and functions?

[tabulated separately]

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**Appendix D  
Session Survey  
Middle Governing Body Commission  
Spring 2011  
Verbatim Comments**

Q3. What type(s) of pastoral leaders does your congregation have? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Moderator & a Methodist retired preaching Pastor for 11 years now.
We have looked this entire survey over and there is not one mention of God or Jesus Christ. We see a definite problem here.
Moderator who serves as church leader
Certified lay speakers and guest minister for communion Sundays
Installed pastor since mid 2010, interim prior to that
3 yoked churches
Elder
Worship leaders
Congregation members
Stephen Ministers
Ordained worship leader
Rotation of retired, lay pastors, and non-denominational
Deacons and Elders
Stated Supply
Director of Christian Education & Youth Ministries
Weekly supply
Lay leaders
Pulpit supply
In PNC process
35 year pastor died in Feb
Parish Associate—mentioned 8 times
Director of Youth and Family ministry (non-ordained)
Non-ordained pastoral staff
your stance on gays in leadership
Contracted Ordained Minister
Student Pastor
retired pastor's in-residence
Ordained contract
we have head of staff and associate pastor
Lay Academy Student
Pulpit currently vacant; visiting minister and moderator conducting service
Seminary Intern
Tentmaking Pastor
Youth Director
lay speaker

Q4. In the past two years, which of these types of contact has your session or congregation had with your presbytery?  
 (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Lakes and Prairies Presbytery is void of Christian Leadership
Will we lose another 67,000 member this year? or more?
officer training
Person visit by Ex Pres
Special offering—OGHS
commissioning of certified lay pastor
pastoral sick leave policy
Participant in Lay Academy
helped celebrate our 200th anniversary
multiple contacts with COM moderator due to pastoral problems
hosted two meetings of the Presbytery
Resource center
Executive Presbyter visit with session
3 members/pastors serving on Presbytery Committees
guidance with regard to ordination and marriage standards
process of commissioned lay pastor
com, cdc, cnt
PET has always given us tremendous support. We would find it difficult to function without PET.
Older Adult Award
Met with camp committee
Respond to Presbytery requests for elder lists and call Presbytery to ask questions about Book of Order
Member served as Recording Clerk and Interim Stated Clerk/other members have served on various presbytery committees
Hosted a presbytery meeting
presbytery meetings attendance
Many members in service on Presbytery Committees
hosted a meeting of Presbytery Council
hosted Presbytery meeting
Several session members feel that we did NOT have the support we needed in dealing with conflict in the congregation
comment
attended leadership conference
participation on Prissy committees
consultation on sick leave
tax exemption status
host presbytery meetings on a regular basis
Living Water Information
Request to COM for help
advice on personnel/sexual misconduct policies—consultation regarding immigrant ministries
Presbytery Staff, Worship, Business Finance Consultation, Building/Grounds
Held Presbytery Meeting at our church
Pastor's Sabbatical
Role of Ex. Director of Presbytery
loan from presbytery
help with member discipline & Legalities of member actions

Pulpit supply
Library resources
Concern about pastor
Sexual misconduct policy workshop
Leadership training, lay pastor training
Money for Power Team event
Pastor is commissioner to Synod; DCE has been involved in SHYCE planning; member and elders on various Presbytery committees

Q13. What is the racial-ethnic composition of the membership of your congregation? Write in the percent for each group below. If none, enter "0" (zero). Do not enter the percent sign. Other (specify):

We need help in an urgent way.
Indian
Our congregation will be leaving PCUSA soon.
Guamanian
we don't query
Indian (from India)
Mixed race
Malotto
Brazilian
African American/White & Hispanic/White
Triidad, Jamaica, African (not African American), many of our non-European descent people are immigrants and not American.
native American
Hispanic, Indian, African/American
Japanese, Pakistani, Indian, Jamaican
unknown for sure
African
India/South America, Dutch
African
Pacific Islander
SAMOAN
Pacific island
Asian, Korean
Sri Lanka, Trinidad
Filipino
African Nationals

Q24. In the past two years, has your congregation had any of the following contacts with your synod? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Why does the synod exist? They are so lame.
GA needs a wakeup call, maybe from God!
member served on synod council
Received mailings about meetings
Staff a committee
PW Synod Summer Gathering

Know little or nothing about the activities of the synod, other than Living Waters for the World
Synod reps. have attended local Presbytery meetings and gave updates
Health Fair
an inactive elder serves on Synod Judicial Commission
Grant 2009
Financial contributions to Synod of Living Waters mission project
Participated in synod investment opportunities
Pastor on coordinating Council
legal & ecc matters on merger
Synod Mobile Health Fair Ministry
first call pastor's conference
sponsored synod youth event
Member (Female Elder) is Synod Moderator
PW Synod School
web program
payroll processing
Texas Presbyterian Foundation
Pastor participated in New Pastor's Support Group
Don't know [5 sessions made this comment]
Hosted Synod meeting
Mission to USA program
synod newsletter
Elder is moderator-elect of Synod
Executive attended Presbytery meeting
some get synod newsletter

Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

**a. Board of Pensions** Other (specify):

HELP!
All about \$\$\$\$. What about God and his son—that guy named Jesus?
Pastor received educational assistance grant for college student
403B GA
Pastor served on Board of Pensions for 7 years; came off board 2 years ago
Received mailings
medical coverage for lay employee
3 retired pastors in congregation
Not aware of any other aspect of Board of Pensions
contributions to 403(b)
Pastor attended CREDO
Pastor attends some Pension board meetings
pastor attended regional conference of BOP
protest intent to pay benefits to same sex partners
Abolishing position of Installed Pastor
Participation of staff in medical and retirement savings plans
Retirement of Pastor March 2011

Discussed how to calculate dues to be paid
vacancy issues
CREDO
Receive updates
Pastor has attended regional consultations and CREDO event
Participate in 403(b) plan
consultation on employment benefits options
figuring out retirement for senior pastor
Fidelity Investments Group Plan
Don't know
bequest resources
releases & updates, Insurance info
a session member heard a BOP rep speak at Presbytery
No full time Minister
Participate with a 403B
Members employed by church agencies & covered by BOP
we have a CLP; got advice on taxes
Clarified Interim's Dues
deferred compensation for retirement made by stated supply pastor
Tuition Assistance
Contributions to 403b Plan \$107.00 dollars

- Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)
- b. General Assembly Mission Council** Other (specify):

What are you hoping to learn from this survey???
Are you not wolves in sheep's clothing?
Received mailings
Order of Elders
Mentor to New Pastors
heard representatives speak at presbytery meetings
Worked with the YAV program
Grant 2009
Pastor convened Sudan Mission Network
Earth care congregation
Mission Year Book, Planning Calendar
Participate in G.A. Educator Certification Council
lectionary
Earth Care Congregation Environmental Ministries
We had Linda Valentine speak at a Presbytery meeting held at our church.
Not sure
3 day visit from PDA in response to vandalism of our church
Visit from a reporter with the Presbyterian news service!
multiple points of contact for resourcing, etc.

Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

**c. Office of the General Assembly** Other (specify):

We are praying for PCUSA to either get better or simply die and go away. This is not a viable denomination and we should lose our tax exempt status from the IRS.
Why is there a GA? What is its purpose other than to skim money off of congregations?
Some elders attended Kaleidoscope event in Indianapolis in October, 2009
Received mailings
N Damico spent a day with us.
serve on GA committee
participated in a survey
Don't know [3 sessions made this comment]
communicated regarding per capita matter
Pastoral letters from Stated Clerk, visit to United Nations office
Using "Starting New Initiatives" A discernment Process
ethnic meetings
Attended workshop on Annual Statistical Report
statistical information
Triennium Youth Conf & Youth in 3D
Rev Dr Hector Rodriguez
Historical Dept
amendments
Presented mission concern of interpretation of the Holocaust to our congregations.

Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.)

**d. Presbyterian Foundation** Other (specify):

Are we still pro abortion?
More money issues, what about God? We already have a fed gov't., are you not a duplication of that system?
Conducted research and hosted speaker
Received mailings
inquire
printed resources
workshop attendance
Received Information
Requested info on Foundation
not sure
Wills Emphasis materials [2 sessions made this comment]
Consultation with Foundation Staff
asking about our investments
Advice
Met with our P.F. regional rep, re endowment ideas.
Presentation on endowment by representative
Receive notices
Personal visit from Foundation representative
Got information from Presbyterian Foundation when we set up our own foundation.

rep. presented info/options to adults in congregation
Assistance in setting up an endowment
visit from representative and presentation
Program for Wills and Trusts
Don't know [2 sessions made this comment]
PW have New Covenant funds
Removed funds from Presbytery Foundation
occasional contact
Received Information
visit with committee
H.O.P.E.
Received information
Hearing from a Foundation Rep.
met with Presbyterian Foundation representative
visit from a regional representative for planned giving presentation

Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)  
**e. Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP)** Other (specify):

Too much about money, not enough about God. Shame on us!
learned more about the program
More money, see above answer!
inquire
received info re opportunities to participate
Contacted them to understand what their loan rates were at the time—turned out they were not competitive
Had funds invested
Mortgage
asked questions regarding a loan
Received Information
Have considered seeking financing for a project, and may yet do so.
Have a loan with the PILP
repayment of '08 loan
Paid off our PCUSA investment loan
Don't know [2 sessions made this comment]
review of GA loan
currently seeking loan
We are intending to invest over \$100,000.
visit with committee
GRACE PRESBY JUBILEE FUND
Paid off an Accessibility loan
Participate in a 403B
consulted but did not sign on to a program
inquired rates and financial instruments
loan with PILP
paying off loans
Currently in conversation re: a loan for substantial renovation of church campus.



Q28. Has your congregation or session related to national programs or agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.)

**f. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation** Other (specify):

More money issues! Please!
PW Bible Study, Book of Order, Book of Confessions
Yikes! All about money! AGAIN!
Sunday School curriculum [2 sessions made this comment]
bulletins
Horizon Bible Studies [2 sessions made this comment]
purchase/print curriculum e.g. Human Sexuality
Don't know
Birthday Offering; Thank Offering; Horizons
telephone contact to correct a shipping error
TRIED and failed w/Presby Leader
Adult Sunday School curriculum and Bible study Revelation
Our Daily Bread
Planning Calendars [6 sessions made this comment]
Presbyterian Women Bible Study magazines; New member information booklets
Purchase items directly from PDS
Pastor published an article for Horizon's
Presbyterian Women study books
Church Calendars
use curriculum
Offering packs
Pastor is a WJK author
unsure about this question
planning calendar and Books of Order and Confession
web resources
Horizons Bible Study: purchased and used
very little contact
Purchased Books of Order [2 sessions made this comment]
Not sure
Submitted materials to "Call to Worship"
PAM Call to Worship
Mission Yearbook, Horizons

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:

a. Presbyteries and their oversight of congregations?

Cut the crap! Stop the abuse of all pastors (especially women), harassment, bullying of all types!
We are a small rural church with 44 members which limits our participation with Presbytery. We have had good oversight by the Presbytery. We have excellent pastoral care.
There is no accountability and no sense of being connectional. It's like we are all playing survivor. The system is strangling itself. Can't we all just get along?
Be more aggressive in developing new churches in high growth areas of the Presbytery
We have a strong and healthy relationship with our Presbytery. The staff is efficient and responsive to our needs. The EP is outstanding and provides clear and positive leadership. We feel blessed!

WE are a small church in northwest Iowa and wondering why we are part of PCUSA. Where is God in all of this. Our presbytery is run by people who have no vision for anything other than their own politics. Our stated clerk assaulted an interim female pastor at another church, and we are wondering what anyone is doing about that. Many of our pastors live in fear of this person. It is definitely not a healthy situation here.
Several session members said to make the survey shorter.
1. Reports from the GA by Presbytery commissioners need to include reports on what happened, not just their impressions of their surroundings. 2. Because we are in a Presbytery that has numerous retired ministers that are still voting members of the Presbytery, votes at Presbytery are skewed not only by their presence, but by the various sizes of the congregations represented, the meeting dates (weekday meetings do not allow those who are employed to attend), and location (with current gas prices, it's not cost prohibitive to travel clear to the end of the Presbytery for a meeting).
Very dependent on whom is executive presbyter. Pastoral and administrative roles are difficult to meet with 1 individual. Travel and meeting times are a challenge to involvement with Presbytery. Need programmatic approach to engaging with each congregation on a routine basis, not just when troubled.
Our Presbytery sends an electronic newsletter to clerks (and others). Clerk sends it to Session members. Thus, there is an opportunity for Session to get information. However, our society is overwhelmed with information. People avoid that which does not speak to an immediate need.
It might be nice to be visited from time to time from a Presbytery Leader.
We are pleased with our fine Washington Presbytery and its excellent staff meetings and programs.
No [16 sessions made this comment]
This side of the Presbytery is ignored.
Presbytery is there when we need them. They have supported us in the past but we have not needed them in the last two years.
Presbytery does what it can with the situations that occur over which they have little or no control. They do a good job securing pastoral leadership for congregations. We have relatively little contact with our presbytery and their procedures and requirements seem burdensome at times. However, I am glad they are there when we need their services. Our church is a long way from presbytery headquarters and that is obvious by our lack of close involvement.
Excellent support for the Campus House at [deleted] University which our congregation oversees. Assists with providing a teacher and finances.
NONE—mentioned 8 times
We think they could do a better job of informing people of the job they are doing and the services available to congregations
Due to all the differences over Biblical authority, interpretation and application, particularly to the potential lifting of Fidelity and Chastity requirements, there is a distrust of higher governing authorities. Local congregations are retreating to their own autonomy. There is going to have to be an honest recognition that diversity has become disunity. There is going to have to be a formal or semi-formal organizational restructuring to encourage churches with similar theological views to bond together for mission.
One visit 3 years ago regarding our ministries.
Small churches tend to be overlooked. Need to encourage younger representatives Need Elder Training and lay training
Leadership at Presbytery level is critical to the health of its churches. Take the overhead of the Synods and push it back to the Presbytery level in improve paid staffing and quality of services.
Small churches need help w/basic finances- i.e.: bookkeeping, investing, and reporting
Make your surveys shorter
Do Presbyteries have the heart for doctrinal oversight? Do Presbyteries have the heart to close small churches to advance mission of Presbytery?
We believe that the Presbytery, primarily via the Committee on Ministry, should take a more pro-active position in being in contact with the small churches.
Our presbytery (Phila) is far too large (number of congregations) to effectively carry out its responsibilities vis-a-vis congregations. Too many congregations with too many problems.
Representatives from COM, [deleted], have been very supportive and helpful to our pastors and Session over the past year, and we very much appreciate that. [deleted] Presbyterian Church
This survey makes us realize that we are very unfamiliar with the actions of our presbytery and the relationship with our congregation.

You know when our Pastor left we were so desperate for a Pastor and now we are suffering. It's like the Presbytery through us away. When we did receive help it was more of the Presbytery had given up on us, because they feel no African American Preacher would fit the criteria to become a Presbyterian. Our church never stated that we had to have an African American preacher. When our church first open we had a Caucasian Pastor and we had Caucasian worship leader. Now we have someone moderating our session who really don't care. He is letting one elder do what he wants and when there is a verbal elder that go against this elder it's a blow off. I just hope Presbytery don't let this worship leader take the church. That church has potential in that area. If we can get strong elders to work together it will and can grow.
Our contact with the presbytery is through our appointed moderator of session after 2 years of no contact.
We have a wonderfully accessible presbytery, with outstanding staff.
Our congregation is currently coming to terms with issues related to the last 2 pastoral calls. Each of our last 2 pastors had issues that we were not made aware of. The session feels as though there is a serious flaw in the "process" of calling a pastor, either with the member presbytery not fully disclosing problems or with Trinity not fully disclosing what they may have found out prior to our church making a call. We are currently without a pastor and trying to come to terms with our feelings of anger, disappointment, and betrayal.
our presbytery is too large for the staff to handle they do the best they can with the resources available to them
This Session is strongly discourages with the rewording of the Book of Order that's founded on God's word.
The COM is very active in our Presbytery. This is important with the recent changes in the BoO. The Presbytery of the Inland Northwest is in the midst of a mission study and I believe this will encourage more congregational involvement.
Our Presbytery does an outstanding job of helping Sessions with preaching supplies—they've created a top-notch system.
We wish Presbytery could do more than "put out fires"—of which we have had many in the past two years. Restructuring may or may not help. Declining numbers and funds mean that volunteer leaders do what is necessary. It is time for a generational change in terms of leaders. It is happening. But many Sessions have little participation in Presbytery.
why is it so difficult to get info on new member material
Shrink Presbytery size. Find ways to increase theological diversity rather than the overemphasis on racial/ethnic/gender diversity.
The problem with this question is the word "oversight." We need a new paradigm. Some Presbyteries are searching for that paradigm. Ours was too, but it's been derailed by our EP.
Except for Committee on Ministry liaison seeing us annually, we really had no connection with Presbytery. We are seeing more connection through our Presbytery's transition.
If there is a merger of Presbyteries, Lehigh Presbytery would be better served merging with Lancaster Presbytery rather than Philadelphia Presbytery.
[deleted]'s per capita has increased from [deleted] to [deleted] during the past ten years. While the cost of living and other expenses have increased by 1% to 3% each year, per capita normally increases by two or three times this percentage. During this time, [deleted] has had to make cuts to staff and reduce giving to mission. We know the Presbytery has good people doing good work, but it seems that the Presbytery is not willing to make the same type of cuts as the congregations are making. Instead, the Presbytery significantly ups the per capita and passes the burden onto the congregations. [deleted] is deeply committed to its Presbyterian heritage, but financially it is becoming increasingly more difficult to be a Presbyterian because of the Presbytery's life-draining financial policy.
All info was an average of 7 session elders who took this survey.
Presbytery leadership and staff should make an effort to regularly communicate with—and listen to—individual churches to determine what forms of support are needed and how best to provide support for the health of the church.
Need clear vision and better use of technology
More transparency when placing pastors who have had serious problems in other congregations.
Our contacts with the Presbytery of Tampa Bay have been positive.
We have excellent relationships with our Presbytery. Due to actions of the GA and its agencies over the last several years, the opposite is true of the GA.
We are a very small congregation in a rural area a lot of these questions, don't apply to us.
Good job!
We would like more support from the Presbytery and have a stronger relationship with them.

We are pleased with our wonderful minister and our relationship with Mid-Kentucky Presbytery
Our Presbytery has sharply improved communications in the past couple of years through use of an on-line newsletter and announcements.
We would welcome more information about the Presbytery and opportunities to work together.
Our pastor received a call from a different congregation, and so we were left with a vacant pulpit. The representative from COM did not provide us with the guidance we needed to do a self study of our financial situation and lead us in a self-examination of our goals and mission in our community. We felt we were left adrift in the normal business of running the church and also needed guidance in selling the manse. After contacting additional persons in Presbytery, we have a different moderator and clergy to guide us on our journey. We also had trouble with the Pension Board not recognizing our status of vacant pulpit.
When there is a diverse area and the leadership is in the urban center of the presbytery, the rural outlying areas find it more difficult to relate to what is going on in the city and perhaps the reverse is also true. The churches in our county seem to be different theologically, and economically. We do not share the same issues of the urban churches.
We are involved in a mission partnership in another country however it is not Presbyterian.
We are a small rural struggling congregation that has not received much help from Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly.
Good.
It's largely irrelevant.
Our presbytery, Presbytery of New Covenant, should be a model for all other presbyteries.
Present leadership is doing well. We are concerned about deficit spending.
Our Presbytery, especially the COM does well in its oversight to congregations. Presbytery is too big—112 churches. Presbyteries must be open to more sharing of resources and personnel across boundaries. They must develop a new vision regarding ways to implement and support mission and ministry. There is a desperate need for renewed energy toward youth/young adult programs and events for presbyteries.
Our presbytery is very reactive and not proactive. This causes much tension and problems within the presbytery
Church members want more time and effort spent on church development and redevelopment.
Comments from session members: "damaging, no real leadership provided for church staffing and church yoking/merging." "Our experience with Presbytery has been one of conflict. It has been ineffective in finding solutions to pastor/congregation conflict." " Far too bureaucratic"
The relationship between Presbyteries and the congregations could stand improvement. It is becoming increasingly difficult to see the value of the body. Decisions are made with little or no input from the congregations. Conservative voices are discounted. Presbytery staff appoints pastors/elders/staff who will vote the agenda, not the congregational voice. Q15 We understand the per capita apportionment. There is a disconnect between the Presbytery/Synod/GA and the congregations. Q21 Small churches continue to out give larger churches per capita, but programs are developed for and housed in larger churches. Q23 Conservative voices are not well represented. The Presbytery's role is to provide opportunities for dialogue and debate on issues concerning the greater church. This is not happening! It appears that the local Presbytery's goal is pushing an agenda and the directive is being sent through the GA and Synod.
Share best practices of Presbytery meetings that work well.
Need more contact, and triennial visits need to be triennial, not every nine years. We are beginning a search for a new general presbyter. Hope that person will visit all churches.
The PET assisted us greatly during the 2008/2009 illness and then death of our minister and then our Interim minister and current Installed minister. The PET has been most helpful during our recent renovations. We are so very pleased with our presbytery. Thanks for asking.
Discussions of theology, church structure & diversity appear to have more attention than relationships with congregations.
Our Presbytery has worked hard in two areas: (a) Immigrant churches (b) Churches wanting to leave denomination—have developed an excellent "discernment process." Because our Presbytery is in the Northeast, we cover a large geographic area with a small number of churches in it.
Separate Presbyteries are better than 1 Presbytery because of the vast area in NM to be covered. There is no cost saving measures by having 1 Executive presbyter. She has to cover a vast area, have 2 assistants, extra gasoline expenses and no time to breathe. It's better to have 2 Executive Presbyters.
Grace does a good job of keeping our church informed about happenings, information needed by our church,
What oversight?

Q17 Our Presbytery is not really geographically too large, but the "headquarters" are not central, but in the northern area where the metroplex is, leaving us in the south rural feeling isolated and remote.
The Session is now receiving the newsletter from the Presbytery so that they can become better informed.
They are not as involved as they could be and there is not much strategic planning.
Newton Presbytery does an excellent job in this area.
Some individuals believe the process for calling a pastor takes too long.
Our church has a very good relationship with our Presbytery.
We have an outstanding E P in Dr. Paige McRight.
Would like more training for deacons and elders. More education would help transfer information back to congregations. We have several new session members that are unsure of the whole process.
Our presbytery plays a valuable role in promoting fellowship among ministers.
Increase support—need more oversight and guidance
Be more proactive in providing triennial visits with healthy congregations. Visits often wait until congregations are in trouble.
Respond to inquiries.
A lot of the Questions don't relate to the realities of a small presbytery.
Largest problem in our Presbytery is the number of large church—approx. 35% who do not pay there per capita in full. This has caused our per capita to be \$7.00 higher than it would be if all contributed their fair share.
Things are getting much better now that we have a new General Presbyter in Grace Presbytery
Have a good relationship with our Presbytery, but diminishing resources cripple Presbytery's ability to provide programs and services. Session felt ill-equipped to complete the survey questionnaire
Trinity Presbytery has been very supportive of our church for years. It is a good relationship that we have.
We allotted 30 minutes for this survey during a session meeting; therefore we did not have enough time to complete all the questions.
The Presbytery office is too far away from the upstate, and everything seems to center around the Columbia area.
Discouraging, unreliable, no real leadership provided for church staffing and church yoking/merging. Our experience with Presbytery has been one of conflict/ ineffective in finding solutions to pastor/congregation conflict. Far too bureaucratic.
Is the Presbytery no longer in favor of God and the word of God. How can a church of God condone the sin that God condemns? To affirm any sin is to disaffirm God and the word of God. Will the presbytery affirm adulteries and prostitutes in the future as long as they are committed to those relationships? Why would you allow your synod to affirm homosexuality as a good practice in the church of God and change your constitution to go against the word of God. It seems that you no longer want to be a church of God. It is really appalling how you have caved in to society and its whims instead of standing strong for God. One cannot have the love of God without the law of God. I will be praying for your synod and your presbytery that it will return to God and not teach people that it is okay to ignore the word of God as a Christian. [deleted]
communication with churches needs to improve
The PNK was very, very supportive of the [deleted] Presbyterian Church in [deleted] when we had a split and a large number of members left to join the Evangelical Presby. Church. Those of us that remained with PCUSA and PNK are grateful for the guidance and the expertise the Presbytery gave us. The Commission on Ministry was especially effective in their leadership and assistance to us.
We as a session don't participate in many presbytery actives
Overall support from The Presbytery of Grace is very good.
Our Presbytery covers a very large geographical area.
Our Triennial Visit meeting results with our Presbytery was offensive.
Disagree with Book of Order Change!!
Helpful when asked, not necessarily proactive.
We have been without a minister/moderator for over 3 years. In that time no one from Presbytery has contacted us to determine our needs or ask about assigning a moderator. A member of our session has scheduled regular meetings and was eventually appointed moderator by Presbytery. That person has received no contact or assistance from Presbytery or its Committee on Ministry. We feel very much isolated from and unsupported by our Presbytery.

We have a wonderful relationship with the General Presbyter. The personal relationships between MGB officials and staff and the congregations they serve and support is critical to their success.
FYI—The Session could not answer most of these questions; the survey answers were mostly from the Senior Pastor. For the most part, the pastors have a connection with the Presbytery. The individual members of the Session have limited connection with the Presbytery. The pastor believes the Presbytery is supportive and resourceful.
WE have not needed oversight except for when we had pastoral transitions, where we worked very closely with our Committee on Ministry and the Executive Presbyter.
They have had to cut budget and staff which has caused a drop in services. Survey was entirely too long.
They do not appear to be a positive influencing factor in dealing with individual church issues. Session contact limited to reports from commissioners to Presbytery meetings and Pastor reports from contacts with Presbytery. Working with Presbytery can be a disadvantage based on several cases observed. Not supportive of churches in trouble or that are having problems.
We need to keep communication open across the theological spectrum.
Have someone write a summary of presbytery meetings. Move 1-2 meetings per year to weekends for working elders to be able to attend.
Need to have regularly established visits with congregation.
Clearer vision statement
Generally very supportive of our activities, missions and requests for information. However, Presbytery MEETINGS have little to offer us as a congregation, so we tend to participate only sporadically.
Our church has been seriously damaged by former pastors. The Presbytery has been of some help but also surprisingly powerless in acting in a timely fashion. Two if the three abusive pastors that were asked to resign continue to return to the community to cause further damage. What can be done by the Presbytery to enforce the ethics and directives in the Book of Order?
We have lost sight of the real purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ: to make disciples who keep His commands.
Suggest a "hospice" for churches struggling to stay alive but facing closing, which is happening so much lately. Our church feels that we have had very little support from our Presbytery over the years.
May need to take one layer off, possibly Synod. Some Presbyteries might be merged in order to make the geographical area of the churches all in one geographical area rather than churches miles and miles apart in some current Presbyteries. It would be easier for General Presbyter to visit churches in one's Presbytery if area was smaller or "clustered" together.
Presbytery needs to be less involved with its own structural mechanisms and more involved in supporting local churches, pastors and programs.
Visit churches to discern God's will—Don't try to build or renew a church/denomination from surveys. Smaller presbyteries
Jeff Hutchison is doing an excellent job in the Presbytery of Southeastern IL. The [deleted] visited our congregation during worship one Sunday to let us know Presbytery is interested in us and sees great things going on at our church. The pastor and clerk are active in Presbytery. Even with all the good things going on in our Presbytery, we as a Session are dismayed at the decision to abandon the Word of God with the change in ordination.
Our Presbytery does not support us and does not represent us.
Presbytery has a very liberal bias.
Based on the geographical area we believe the Presbytery could be more helpful. When we were searching for a Stated Supply Pastor, the Committee on Ministry was an invaluable resource for us.
The Sierra Mission Partnership (SMP), of which our Presbytery [deleted] was a partner, was dissolved at the end of 2010. In all fairness, we would like to point out that [deleted] Presbytery is still getting itself organized and functioning after the SMP dissolution.
We think that the Presbytery needs to be a bit more aware of the fact that many of the meetings that are scheduled are not convenient for persons that work full time. We also think there needs to be more frequent communications, particularly with the smaller congregations.
Our Presbytery has an interim exec that has done a great job in-house with issues. Since only part-time, he has not gotten into the local churches during this past year. Other Exec did to some extent.
SURVEY TOO LONG
They are there and assist when asked and have been very creative and generous with their assistance. However, it would have been extremely beneficial for them to have had a greater presence when things were going well so that that could have picked up on signs when things started to go downhill.

smaller presbyteries would be helpful and realistic; more emphasis on collegial presbyteries with only a Stated Clerk and administrative assistant as staff, with churches working together directly to plan/carry out mission in the region of the presbytery
Need more communication
Betty Meadows does an excellent job
A good relationship
Presbyteries should be active in making sure Church Officers (layman) are trained for the office they are filling.
Our Pastor is on the "What Next" committee to reform our Presbytery
Presbytery is politically divided and economically strapped.
Within the past year our congregation joined with two other Presbyterian churches to form a local parish ministry, following the guidelines contained in section G-14.4504 of the 2009 Book of Order. This section has been deleted from subsequent editions. We feel strongly that enabling guidelines for the establishment of a parish should be restored to the Book of Order. It is a viable mechanism to help small, declining congregations join together in establishing a stronger Christian witness in their areas. Our experience with our two sister churches has been an outstanding, joyful and inspiring experience.
There is hardly any oversight of congregations.
Elder training would be appreciated.
Refer to question Q12 regarding a removed pastor who nearly splintered the congregation but was allowed to be called again in this presbytery and is now causing difficulties for that congregation.
Minimal
State Clerk of the Presbytery personally helped our Pastor & Session on several instances of issues regarding different congregants. We greatly appreciated the support.
Our Presbytery has made efforts to improve oversight of congregations, but communication continues to need improvement in several areas.
Would like to have some meetings/events in cities other than Presbytery office—some north, some south. There is: No CE youth resource person; No Youth programs. There is another Presbytery just across the river but there are no interactions between presbyteries or churches.
The biggest problem is responding to specific requests. Presbytery is solving this by creating a Presbytery Yellow Pages. Church members will go directly to another church member in another congregation listed in the Yellow Pages for specific needs. This eliminates going through Presbytery.
Presbytery has been helpful in many ways to our church this year.
Oversight or partnership with?
We have a very close-knit Presbytery. We receive such comments from visitors and new members. Wyoming is a large area to cover, but that's just the way things are.
Provide more group meetings including congregations with prominent scholars and opinion led. Annual All-Presbytery Fall Celebration Meeting with massed choirs.
When advice or help is needed it is supplied.
Real good relationship with Mid-Kentucky Presbytery and their oversight of our congregation when called upon
The treatment and loss of The Rev Dr. Gerry Tyer greatly affected our evaluation of the Presbytery. Overall our scores would have been more positive had he been supported and retained as Executive Presbyter. He was supportive of our congregation and is highly regarded for his work on Leadership and the REACH Initiative.
We have found the Executive Presbyter (Laura Stillman) to be very effective in assisting us with the process of transitions (pastors departing and seeking a replacement over the last two years). Also, she has participated with us during one of our annual Session Retreats. She is professional, informative, supportive, and offers well considered opinions (when asked).
Good luck—our presbyteries are so different that any "one size fits all" will be dismissed out of hand.

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
b. Synods?

Why do they exist? No help here.
Due to the size of the congregation we have limited contact with Synod. We miss having Synod School.

There is no accountability and no sense of being connectional. It's like we are all playing survivor. The system is strangling itself. Can't we all just get along?
Do away with Synods
Synod is anachronistic. Mission can be effectively administered by Session, Presbytery and GA.
See above.
Are synods required for good order, discipline, or faith building? I think not.
Our session expressed concern about the viability and sustainability of synods.
Unnecessary.
Understandably, our contact with Synod is not as frequent or as close. However, we feel that the leadership has provided good oversight and support to our Presbytery and, our church, in kind.
There seems to be a significant breakdown between congregations and Synods. We don't know what it is or what it does, or why it exists.
Synods need to either be absorbed into GA and or Presbyteries
No [25 sessions made this comment]
Our session feels like we are ignored and should be given more time.
Unfortunately, our Synod is not a part of our ministry. We value the work and service of the Synod, but it is time for our denomination to say, "Thank you," and "good-bye" to our Synods.
Weak presbytery involvement leads to weak involvement with synod. We have no direct contact with our synod.
NONE [7 sessions made this comment]
What do Synods do? The congregations need more information regarding resources and programming.
Not familiar, no understanding of what it does with our small congregation.
An outdated concept that should sunset with program delegated to the Presbyteries or GA.
Our knowledge of Synod is through PW which is the only contact we've ever had with Synod.
Should be abolished.
What functions do they serve?
The effectiveness of synods has declined greatly in the last quarter century. Synods should be disbanded.
Don't need them
If presbyteries are going to stay their current size, then most synods are largely redundant.
Synod is anachronistic. Mission can be effectively administered by Session, Presbytery and GA.
Sending information to the churches directly helps to keep the local congregations in the loop.
Very little at the congregational level. I have just become a member of the Synod Peacemaking Committee—I my first meeting will be in September. The Presbytery recently received a loan from Synod to get us through a tight spot.
This survey makes us realize that we are very unfamiliar with the actions of our synod and the relationship with our congregation.
should be eliminated
The purpose of the Synod is unclear to us. Is this a level of the church that is necessary?
Our Session considers Synod something of a dinosaur. It is not visible most of the year, and has little effect on our activities or theology.
Put them out of their and our misery; but we still need regional trainings and gatherings.
I've never thought synods were a good idea
Consider non-geographic synods. Get the synod leadership out of their offices and out visiting churches.
They seem to be an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy.
Our congregation and Session are unaware of any benefits from having Synod within the church structure. Synod should either become a visible partner in ministry or be dissolved (other than any required judicial function).
Nebulous nothing
We are not aware of our Synod's resources, plans, personnel, mission, etc.
What is it? What does it do?
We will miss correspondence from Synod



We would like more information about synod committees, such as Self Development of People.
None of us, including this pastor of 25+ years, understands the need or function of the synod.
Our congregation would not be impacted if there were no synod.
Many congregations are just clueless about their governing body. Our church has a hard time with the whole idea of being "connectional". Although there is a great deal of ecumenism going on in our county, it is not inspired by the PCUSA.
We have essentially lost touch with Synod Not sure of their necessity
We are a small rural struggling congregation that has not received much help from Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly.
Invisible.
It's totally irrelevant.
We question synods' usefulness.
Not knowledgeable-what is it useful for?
We don't need synods.
For our congregation, synods seem irrelevant.
Better interpretation of Synod to Presbyteries and congregations.
Synod school covers 2 synods and draws 75 people. Need to rethink this.
comments from session members: "Ineffectual to local church"
Synods need to be more active with the local congregations!
Synod staff of one limits the amount of help and information possible to presbyteries and congregations. An active and interactive synod website would be helpful.
Synod serves no purpose now. Either go back to letting the synod be an avenue for presbyteries to carry our joint missions, or abolish synods.
Who are they?
Why do synods still exist?
As far as we're concerned, the Synod plays no role in what we do on a daily, weekly, monthly or yearly basis.
What does the synod do?
Don't know of their need to exist.
They are no longer effective.
As a Session, we do not understand the purpose or value of synods.
We have no personal contact with the Synod—only through Presbytery.
Pacific Synod is very large and dispersed—not sure this "layer" in the structure of the church given the resources involved is the best structure for the churches.
Recommendation: eliminate them—in this time of financial pinch especially
Resources are being used for an entity that does not seem to provide services to congregations. Our synod used to provide excellent leadership training through synod schools.
Respond to inquiries.
communication with churches needs to improve
I'm not sure they are a useful tool for the church in our day. No one seems to know what their mission is or what work they are doing.
Our congregation has little or no knowledge of the purpose of Synods
Eliminate synods. We do not need them. If neighboring Presbyteries want to work together, we can figure out how to do that without a synod. Would save the church money.
Just no connection at all with Synod of the Southeast. We know that they have something to do with Presbyterian College and Thornwell Orphanage, but we just don't interact at all.
Need to strengthen communication about the role and responsibility of Synod.
Ineffectual to local church.
See above
Not much contact with the Synod of the Sun.

Synods are a waste of time and money. They contribute little to nothing to the mission of the PCUSA and should be abolished, so the material and personnel resources they require could be used in a more effective fashion.
Thanks to the Synod of Lincoln Trails for the new pastor's group provision.
Our synod has been most used and useful as a judicial stop before a case goes to G.A.—little else.
Our congregation—including Pastors & Session—have no experience with the Synod.
Are they still needed outside of their judicial appeal function?
Where will unique concerns of racial ethnic caucuses, women's advocacy, and youth be supported?
LITTLE OR NO CONTACT FROM OUR SYNOD.
Why do we still have synods?
No relationship. Too far removed from our daily activities as a congregation.
Unclear about any support we get from synod though we continue to send money each year.
Synod school is wonderful.
We don't see a need in our area however, one size does not fit all. If a synod is needed in an area, then let them be used.
No real relationship.
We have lost sight of the real purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ: to make disciples who keep His commands.
Should be abolished. Unneeded layer.
The role and services of the Synod are not well communicated. If the synod is to continue as a viable entity, its specific and unique function in the presbytery hierarchy needs to be delineated and communicated to local churches and presbyteries.
Outlived their usefulness
Our Synod's work in Missions with Living Waters for the World are an example for Synods, we are proud to be in the Synod of Living Waters.
Synods have out-lived their missional usefulness.
To our knowledge our church has never had any contact with the Synod. This level of management probably is not needed. We would like more information regarding the work of the synod.
The Synod of the Pacific functions essentially as a financial institution; it appears to have no additional mission. What it does could be done a different, specialized organization. As a "middle governing body," it adds a layer of bureaucracy that seems redundant to us. So far as the Synod of the Pacific is concerned, it has outlived its usefulness, and our suspicion is that this perspective may apply to many, perhaps all, Synods.
We think that the Synod needs to be more engaging with the congregations, particularly the smaller congregations.
Never hear from them, not sure what they do or provide at a session level.
seriously doubt their usefulness any longer, even with the institutions they "oversee" (and Pastor has chaired the Board of one such)
No contact and little knowledge about.
Need representation and more information
The fact that we don't hear much is probably a good thing, in that it probably means they do their job well.
Do away with the Synods. Unnecessary layer of beauracracy
In the Internet Age, is the Synod a necessary body for the local congregation?
Lack of direct communications; an overall feeling of lack of support.
These folks do what they want and they don't tell us about it.
What is the purpose of the Synod in today's world?
Needs more Communication
We are not sure if we understand these relationships.
We have not experienced any recent contact with our Synod, so we are not sure of the value of its function in relation to Presbyteries and congregations.
The five presbyteries of South Carolina act as their own de facto synod. We have no idea what happens at the synod.
We don't hear much about our synod.
No real contact

Need better synod to congregational communications
Do not really understand the value/purpose of the synod for us

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
 c. The relationship of Presbyteries and synods with the General Assembly?

Satisfied.
There is no accountability and no sense of being connectional. It's like we are all playing survivor. The system is strangling itself. Can't we all just get along?
See two answers above.
We are glad to see that your website is improving, and hope to see continued progress.
1. The PC(USA) website needs to be more navigational and user friendly. It's often difficult to find what you are looking for. 2. Define General Mission Fund. We support validated mission within the church; however, as stated above, when we searched for "General Mission Fund" it was not to be found anywhere. 3. This applies to all of the above....a number of our Session members believe that the governing bodies of the PC(USA) are either unaware of or insensitive to the operating environment of small congregations. For example, fair rental value of our manse in our small town is not the same as it would be in the big city. There is no way we could rent the house for what Louisville says its rental value should be. Anyone with that much money would buy their own house. No one determines rental value based upon the occupant's salary, except in low-cost housing. Another example....we are required to continue paying the pastor's salary during a 3 month sabbatical, in addition to having to pay for pulpit supply and mileage during that time, but there is no financial assistance for us to meet this burden.....our minister hasn't been here long enough according to the fine print in the grants.
We support the General Assembly financially and prayerfully. Those that serve do a good job providing fair and reasonable support to Presbyteries and Synods, as best we can tell. We have not had any problem with the decisions that have been made.
Do we need 2 levels of structure? With technology, we should be migrating to electronic/web-based records and communications to simplify and streamline the organizational structure and improve communications.
No [25 sessions made this comment]
Same answer as B.
This does not pertain to this question, but we have no other place to make further comments. We felt this survey was too limited in time period and it was too time consuming a survey.
Our involvement with General Assembly is practically non-existent.
NONE [9 sessions made this comment]
What is the relationship?
This survey makes us realize that we are very unfamiliar with the actions of our General Assembly and the relationship with our congregation.
1. There are several International students who join us in Worship each week, because of the near-by university. The students participate regularly in our programs but for the most part do not become "members". So, we feel our congregation is much more diverse than our numbers indicate because of their presence. 2. Our church is located several hundred miles from the Presbytery 'seat' and consequently time and money are major concerns for attending meetings. It takes our members two days of travel and an overnight to attend most meetings and there is little financial reimbursement. 3. We would have answered a lot of the questions differently in this questionnaire if the questionnaire had asked us to go back three years, rather than only two years. Three years ago our church was searching for a minister and the Presbytery did assist us in our search and we were appreciative of their help. Also, three years ago we received a Mission Grant from the Presbytery and Synod. The grant was revoked when our pastor left and never reinstated when we hired our new pastor.
The General Assembly seems to be out of touch with the "average" church member. Policies made at the GA do not seem to reflect the feelings of a majority of members—just those who go to the GA with an agenda. Without the local churches and presbyteries, there would be no General Assembly!
This last year has been exciting with all of the questions that GA has asked us to vote on. The Session of Faith Presbyterian Church has a task force to look at the problem of living with the nFoG. Our particular congregation is doing very well with the changes and I believe we will be the better for them. There are congregations in PIN that are not doing so well with the changes, i.e., the ordination standards.

unable to comment
This survey makes us realize that we are very unfamiliar with the actions of our General Assembly and the relationship with our congregation.
Our Presbytery has had several people sit on major committees, and even on Mission Council. We are blessed by these contacts and it has allowed us to learn more about how GA operates.
Middle governing body leadership is changing drastically. The usual networks will no longer work to get resources out to the congregations. Electronic communication will be the way to go...but perhaps we can Skype more to keep relationships a little more personal.
Not sure what that relationship is.
The General Assembly web presence has been very helpful to our local congregation—even when the Presbytery and Synod were very non-present with us in any real way.
We don't know what the relationship is.
Not familiar.
Why is there no mention of Christ in the survey?
To best of our knowledge, good relationship
Your website (General Assembly) needs improving to make it easier to navigate.
GA is the "enemy" that passes "laws" that our church doesn't agree with. It is frustrating.
We are a small rural struggling congregation that has not received much help from Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly.
Does the Synod have a relationship with General Assembly? GA has provided significant funding/support to PNNE.
Better communication is needed.
Have more direct contact with local leaders.
Only need Synod for Permanent Judicial Commission.
Not sure what the relationship with the General Assembly is.
From our perspective, the relationship between the Presbytery, Synod and GA is very good. However, the local congregations have been minimalized. You are not listening to the congregations. Clearly, you are unwilling to correlate the decreasing membership and financial support to the ongoing theological issues that are ravaging and dividing the Presbyterian church.
PCUSA personnel and resources are excellent; those spoken to on the phone are always eager to help. GAMC is particularly helpful and resourceful.
Discussions of theology, church structure & diversity appear to have more attention than what Presbyterians have to offer now and what we might become with a coordinated effort—maybe with other churches & denominations
Our Presbytery worked out a good process to ensure people from different congregations get the experience of GA.
General Assembly may hear people who want to change the Book of Order but the General Assembly isn't effective for the small congregations or Presbyteries as far as we're concerned. There is too much arguing about issues instead of helping the smaller churches. Make it a rule that no changes can be done to the Book of Order but every 10 years.
GA should be more responsive to the congregations and sessions.
There is one?
No knowledge of.
Appears to be good.
OUR PRESBYTERY NEEDS MORE CONTACT WITH CONGREGATIONS; BETTER COMMUNICATION; THE WEB SITE IS OF LITTLE HELP; AND THE TRIANUAL VISIT HAS NOT BEEN DONE IN SEVEN (7)+ YEARS. TOO OFTEN MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION QUESTION THE SERVICES THE CHURCH RECEIVES FOT THEIR PER CAPITIA PAYMENT TO THE PREBYTERY.
Not sure about presbyteries and synods relationship with General Assembly, but our congregation makes very good use of General Assembly resources, staff and programs
We have people who go to the General Assembly meeting every year and have had commissioners in the past. We actively follow what comes out of the GA and there are a few in the church who are upset with the events, but really most are not really involved.
General Assembly needs to be trimmed back or focus on ministry and mission and not be so concerned with self preservation

Reasonable on Presbytery level. No comment on Synod.
Reduce size and scope of General Assembly meetings. Too much business, too many commissioners.
Perhaps synods could be made larger and pared down to a judicial function.
Our relationship with presbytery, Synod, and GA is still and has been strained when the sound Biblical foundation of our communion has been deteriorated by repeated attempts to diminish that basis. If there was a way to affiliate with those congregations and presbyteries of sound Spirit and biblical basis, then we could support the same type of ministries that build Christ's church.
Please do not just tweak—transform us instead.
There needs to be a set policy for Presbyterian churches that decide to leave the denomination—what should they pay PCUSA if they want to retain their church building, etc. Leaving it up to the individual Presbyteries creates too much pressure—it is also enormously unfair because some rogue churches are paying pennies on the dollar of fair market value for their buildings.
We have lost sight of the real purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ: to make disciples who keep His commands. This questionnaire addresses none of the real concerns our Session has.
Local churches are unaware of most services of GA. Better communication is needed to help presbyteries and local churches know what is available plus how to contact resource people/departments at the GA level.
Visit churches to discern God's will—Don't try to build or renew a church/denomination from surveys.
In 2001 our church was a redevelopment/relocation church, which received grants from both the Synod and GA. Their concern and oversight along with our Presbytery was excellent.
Pleased with General Assembly's support.
We have been requesting information and documentation on a reported outstanding loan for five months. We have had great difficulty getting a response. Five telephone calls were made with no results to date!
We need a better website. A member of our Session has tried multiple times to obtain materials via a link or URL provided and cannot access anything. Also, the Presbyteries website is NOT user friendly. If materials are available we have not been able to access or locate them.
We think that there needs to be more direct contact from the Presbyteries & Synods with the General Assembly that would result in greater communications & dialogue with the local congregations. We also think that the entire Presbyterian Church (USA), would be strengthened if the communications were direct, ongoing and most of all, inclusive, to the extent that the various perspectives are considered with equal weight.
Other than issues at GA on which our congregation has commissioner to vote at Presbytery, we have no contact with GA. The press does not give any positive view of GA.
Not sure what they do or provide at a session level.
no opinion able to be formed
No information
I wish the Foundation could be better known about the mutual fund program and how churches could invest through this vehicle.
Don't really know. As for direct support of churches, the GA does a great job with worship materials, but it is a bit frustrating sometimes actually finding those resources.
Each has a constitutional role; however, in reality, folks in the churches only hear from them when they need something.
See answer to b.
It seems like there is a gulf between the presbytery level and the GA.
Nothing else
No relationship other than attending meetings
1. The 'new' PC(USA) website is Horrible. Difficult navigate and to use. Nothing about it is User Friendly. 2. The PCUSA should be doing National Advertising on behalf of the denomination as we see being done by; The United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Church and the Lutheran Church. Synods and Presbyteries cannot afford this and would benefit greatly. With membership dwindling this seems like common sense.
Don't get sidetracked trying to remake the GA itself (agency or meetings). That is, as we understand it, not the purpose of your group. There is enough work to be done with Presbyteries and Synods.

**Appendix E**  
**Middle Governing Body Leader Survey**  
**Middle Governing Body Commission**  
**Spring 2011**  
**Verbatim Comments**

**Your Presbytery**

Q4. Which of these roles do you currently occupy in your presbytery? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

member of COM, former chair of COM, member of presbytery nominating committee
EP Search Committee Chair
Personnel Committee Chair
Member C.O.M., International Mission Advocate
COR
committee on representation55
member nominating and CPM
Organizing Pastor Hispanic New Church Development
chair subcommittee on retirements
associate executive
Associate Stated Clerk/Office Manager
Coordinating Council
past Moderator of Presbytery and Council, current COM member
COM member, Coach
Clergy commissioner to synod
member of COM [41 leaders made this comment]
member
I am active and involved in CPM and Worship & theology committee
Outgoing Moderator, Moderator of Presbytery Council
Chair of Coordinating Team
COMMITTEE MEMBER [11 leaders made this comment]
NOMINATIONS
personnel committee
chair subcommittee
Retired Executive Presbyter
transformation leadership team
member administrative council
AC
Lay Academy
member of Leadership Development Team
joint presbytery committee
Committee on Ministry District Chair
CPM member [9 leaders made this comment]
COM Committee, Team Leader
Presbyterian Women
Associate Stated Clerk
Training and Retreats

PW-P Moderator
Vice-Chair of Council
Trustee Member
deacon
Moderator of council
Minister of the Word and Sacrament
Vision Team, EP Search Committee
Member, COM; Former Clerk of PJC
spiritual advisor
Older Adult Ministry Comm
Stewardship
Associate General Presbyter
Evangelism & Church Growth
Transformation
Committee on Ministry Vice Chair
Chair, Executive Nominating Committee
Budget, Finance and Property
Member, Implementation Team
mission committee member
Trustees
Presbytery Committee
Implementation Team Chair
certified lay pastor
Member of church development
Presbyterian Women co-moderator
Camp Committee
Treasurer [6 leaders made this comment]
nominating committee
office manager
judicial commission
Member of the COM and the CoPM
Web Manager
GA commissioner, Presbytery commissioner
Personnel
conflict/crisis management team, also Helping Hands Care Team(disaster), also a member of the National Response Team for PDA5
Moderator of Council
Pastor/Parish relations
Leadership Development
Associate Presbyter for Education & Leadership
carry-over responsibilities as immediate past moderator
[deleted] Young Adult Volunteer Project Coordinator
Chair of Presbytery Council
Campus Minister
Missions
Serve on Visioning Council

Nominating Committee outgoing chair and trainer
PW Moderator
Committee vice-chair
Presbytery Trustee
AC Chair
CLP Chair
Membership chair under COM
BAC
Nominations
Financial Assistant
Member, Finance & Stewardship committee
PJC member
Committee on Nominations
secretary Equip Mission Team
Validated Minister
Member at Large, HR, Administrative Commission for a member congregation
Coordinating Council for Vision and Mission
Administrative Assistant
Human Resources Chair
Vision Committee, committee developing policy for churches seeking dismissal
Nominations Committee
Moderator elect
Lay Pastor committee
Chair, Care of Church Professionals
Session
nominating committee member
Church Development & Evangelism
member of CLP committee, overseer of School of the Laity
Communication & Resources Coordinator & Project Assistant
VMod. POAM for [deleted] PBY
NOMINATING COMMITTEE
auditor
Member: Board of Mission & Ministry
Moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery
Commissioned Lay Pastor
Coordinator of the Encouragement Project and coordinator of the Older Adult Ministry Team
HAE
Admin Asst, Resource Center Administrator
ELDER
Director of Financial Services
Congregational Development Unit
Chair COM Subcommittee for Transitions
Pastor
associate presbyter
Global Committee
Education & Equipping Ministry Team



PJC
Nicaragua Mission
GA Commissioner
Hispanic Ministry
Chair of Sub-Committee of Committee On Ministry
Committee on Staff
Congregational Resource Coordinator
Previous COM Chair
Member PJC
Pastor
Presbytery Council
elder member of COM
member of Board of Trustees
Mission
Christian Education
Member Session Partnership and What's Next committees
Consultant, Justice Ministries
Committee on Representation, Moderator; [deleted] Committee, member & secretary
consultant
Chair of another group, member of 2 committees
Resource Center director
Clerk of Committee on Ministry
staff support taskforce member; discernment team for congregation seeking to leave
serve on two committees
Pensions & Compensation
Moderator Temp. Relationships Comm
Member of Budget/Fianace Committee
CPM Vice Moderator
member Presbytery Life Comm.
Member of COP
member of Presbytery Nominating Committee
executive council
currently Vice-Moderator of COM; hier apparent for 2012
Member Mission Interpretation/Stewardship Committee
GA Commissioner
serve on Presbytery Life Committee
Presbytery Life Committee, Church Futures TF of Council
Moderator, of Multicultural Ministry Team of the Church Development Committee
Associate Executive
Examinations
Leadership in Presbytery Camping Program
Administrative Committee on Property and Church Development Committee
Youth Consultant
member: PW & congregational Support Committee
COR
Vice Moderator - COM

PNK BOT
Administrative Commission
former moderator - currently PJC member
Church and Society
resource center director
Evangelism and New Church Development
member of church development committee, moderator of CSI commission
Youth Ministry Committee
Council member
PW-P Moderator
Associate Stated Clerk
Director of Vocations
Youth Ministry Committee Chair
pjc
Member of CPM and Evangelism Com
Stewardship and Mission
Moderator PJC
Just moved from being COM chair to being on COM in new presbytery
Committee on Preparation for Ministry and on College Programs Team
Chair of council
Peacemaking enabler
Council Moderator
AC member
Missional Task Force [2 leaders made this comment]

Q-10. How much is each of the following an obstacle to your presbytery accomplishing its mission? h. Other (please specify):

culture of passivity
Lack of commitment to fulfilling per capita obligations on the part of several churches.
Staffing model is outdated and ineffectively "top heavy." No real need for an EP position in this Presbytery
Vision is being clarified given newly implemented shared staff with neighboring presbytery.
We are in transition
too many tiny churches - need to combine or close some
disconnect of info presbytery down to pews
Our EP is also the camp director, and I think it takes too much of his time. We should get rid of the camp ministry, or it should act as its own entity.
Disagreement on role of presbytery.
Why the word 'obstacle'? Produces a negative response.
Urban verses rural
churches not participating in presbytery
Lack of participation by pastors and elders
We are in the process of finding a new Executive Presbyter
lack of connection and meetings too infrequent to have a shared work and vision
adjusting to regional and national structural changes
no opinion
Travel Distance

over representation of racial-ethnic people in leadership vs. actual constituency of congregations
Presbytery staff too large
85% of congregations are <150 in membership
Denominational apostasy
differing views of congregations
living in transition
Building pressures
geographic distances and differing community cultures
New Staff/New structure
Huge distances between churches. High proportion of old people to young/energetic/having free time.
lack of trust
The "burden of blessings" we have inherited lovely old facilities which are expensive to maintain. We have to commit a lot to keeping up the property that could be going to mission.
Diminishing commitment to work of presbytery as members of committees/teams
theological division
National church focusing on smaller issues instead of great God
very wounded from misuse of power
Expense of travel between congregations. Need to fly or ferry to each location. Cost of furnace fuel in smaller village church areas. Declining small community populations.
congregations have individual strategies
Geographic isolation of congregations
Geographic Distribution of congregations
Many of our congregations are tiny and very old.
Lack of understanding of what it means to be connectional
change of staff and leadership has changed the mission communicated
Small sized churches
As is true for many churches and presbyteries, lack of adequate funding is a major issue. Most things that we do cost money. While it is true that we are in a recession, money has been an obstacle for another reason. Some congregations and pastors do not trust the presbytery to use their money appropriately. This lack of trust issue shows itself in a variety of ways. Also, we face the added problem of some of the larger churches thinking that they can exist alone and consequently do not need presbytery.
lack of buy-in due to trust and theological differences
:Unwilling to make tough decisions
Funding and staff not well managed. Note that I am responding based on state prior to our recent reorganization.
We are actively searching for our mission through dialog, study and prayer.
Since we just became a single Presbytery January 1, we are in the midst of creating our vision, and my responses are predicated on what my views are as a result of my involvement in the Sacramento Presbytery.
transitional time
change in communications and society and family life
Lack of connection between Presbytery to the Rank and File members
Disconnect between congregational laity and leadership and Presbytery. Lack of church-to-church connectedness.
Vision not clearly communicated; denominational disagreements
Presbytery is not focused on helping congregations; rather it is focused on Presbytery mission. Also, there is no clear vision at all in our Presbytery.
get neighboring presbyteries to work together on common vision
Immediate needs and pressures at congregational level take most energy and focus.
lack of SHARED vision
two opposing views of what the PCUSA should be

The presbytery in which I live is too often following ruts of long ago Presbyterians in this area. Ways of doing and believing don't change easily in this area of the country. People move here partly for that reason. I experience it in PW.
Different view on practical theology
Deep theological divide
general presbytery lacks experience and leadership direction
Political machinations by some churches & individuals within and outside the Presbytery
presbyters are uninspired, unable, or unwilling to do the real work of the presbytery, look to pby staff too much for answers rather than doing the work themselves
Many (most?) of the congregations function as though we are congregationalist, not Presbyterian. They see the Presbytery as a source of funds (resources) and fellowship, but don't see the need to contribute--ideas, opportunities, etc.
Lack of leadership for change.
Need to be set up non geographically with common vision and understanding of ministry
theological differences
churches don't attract multicultural population
Travel between congregations in the Presbytery is by ferry, or small plane, therefore meeting face to face is expensive.
It is a challenge to get minority congregations involved
We suffer from having 10% of our churches in Hawaii. Also, we have a handful of very large churches who are overbearing in their relationship to the rest of the Presbytery. Some of these same large church do not contribute financially to the Presbytery or denomination as they should.
need to promote vision more
Too many of our congregations have lost the connectional nature of what it means to be Presbyterian. They are becoming "Lone Rangers". They are very inwardly focused within their own four walls.
Distrust of Presbytery/GA
Communication among the congregations
Staff new, in transition
too large
lack of volunteers
Our General Presbyter likes the perceived power in her role as the GP. They seem to enjoy secretiveness and playing sides. This is an obstacle because it cultivates suspicion and division.
Need to restruct mission to match staff competencies
Insufficient visible support to local congregations from presbytery
geography - distances and cultures
Staff and volunteers don't represent the full theological diversity of the presbytery
ownership of the vision
large geographical area=less interest by some congregations
pending financial crises
Presbytery does not know what congregations want/need re: support, shared resources, local challenges and opportunities, etc.
This is a small presbytery with small congregations. We do well for what we are able to do and yet are limited by size of congregations, aging within congregations and distance between congregations
Inability to embrace change and redirection.
We have enough staff, just not the right staff.
no single presbytery mission strategy; each church on its own
the executive presby is not involved enough
geography of presbytery which is over 50,000 square miles in three states
huge theological chasm leading to unending cycles of pain

Limited leadership
congregational interest

Q12. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your presbytery when it comes to:  
h. Comments on your responses to Q12a-g:

Staff increase was possible due to a grant from a foundation. We are about to reduce one support staff person in the coming months. Our larger congregations in urban areas are growing and are healthy. Our smaller rural congregations, and congregations in blighted urban areas, are in decline.
by decreasing staff, we have been able to maintain the mission and ministry of the presbytery
Our congregations are very supportive of mission at all levels
There has been little interpretation of the central core values or mission or ministry of the Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly, so there is little commitment to the wider judicatories. Congregations know that the world has changed, but structure, connections and ministries seem to have remained the same. While flat lining authority in this presbytery, the disconnect with purpose, passion and relationships has hampered the effectiveness of our witness. Six churches have closed in the past two years, leaving the Presbytery with assets for Transformation and Church Development, but little vision for such ministries
This presbytery shares non-designated mission funds with the Synod and General Assembly based on these percentages: Presbytery, 41% Synod, 20% GA, 39% I am not sure how long we will be able to maintain those percentages.
It's depressing.
The churches which are unhappy with the GA tend to decrease giving to the presbytery.
The amount raised by per capita continues to increase as does the unified giving amount (albeit by inappropriately changing the formula). Increasing dependence of admin fees is being developed on the mission budget in order to balance...
Our Presbytery is one which cares greatly about all folks and a special need to help those in need. This attitude is encouraged and shared with the churches. Small, rural churches step up when a call is received and fill the needs.
We have merged with Santa Fe Presbytery in order to save expense. We have A genera Presbyter/stated clerk who covers both presbyteries and an administrative Assistant in each Presbytery. This aids the mission of both presbyteries
Haven't been in the presbytery for five years, so responses limited to three years of membership here.
Moderate decrease noted during last five years.
Our presbytery has consistently given well above per-capita which, combined, is better than 10%.
We have been shrinking in numbers, influence, and resources. We have had to do more with less.
We are in a situation similar to the Israelites in Egypt of having to make more bricks with no straw, of having to do more with less.
Mission giving THROUGH the Presbytery to all three governing bodies has declined. However, giving to mission projects within the Presbytery has remained constant: congregations are funding them directly rather than through the Presbytery.
We as a Presbytery have mostly small churches who are struggling to survive. And thus the commitment to higher governing bodies in getting harder and harder for these congregations with limited resources to support.
The lack of identity with the Synod & GA is beginning to take its toll. As the GA moves father to the left and with the revised standards on ordination my guess this will greatly continue.
Decreases are primarily due to withholding of per capita by some congregations, and a few congregations having left the PC(USA) for the EPC.
Not quite as familiar with the finances, but structurally we have gone from an executive for a three presbytery Mission Area with a part time person assisting in each presbytery, to half time staff in each presbytery. We started in the 70's with one executive and one program person serving three presbyteries after the regional synods restructure. Looking back we spent far too much effort, time and money putting together those new ways of organization. The church has been pushing back against that over structure ever since. I appreciate that we are beginning to slim down the staff and structures and hope for more vision about mission.
As congregations fail to pay their full per capita, the presbytery is not able to forward 100% to Synod or GA. Part of this is requested by Sessions withholding/redirecting their per capita but in other cases it is basic economic realities.

Because of the general trend of fewer members in our presbytery, it is likely that for all the items that I marked "Stayed about the same," there was a general down-ward trend, but compared to other losses of funding it is relatively insignificant and represents no change in the desire of congregations to support the work of presbytery, synod and GA
Many churches and church members see little to no benefit in supporting G.A. and Synod.
Economy has hit this also.....several churches refuse to give per capita or cut the amount
Decreasing membership and economic hard times leads congregations to be more locally focused.
number of congregations has decreased overall population of our area has decreased
Congregations are dealing with high unemployment and older membership so giving has decreased. Theological differences lead some congregations to limit mission giving and to not pay per capita as a way to "protest" GA decisions.
I believe Newton Presbytery's leaders are intentional and faithful in using resources wisely considering the changing landscape of the mainline church in America.
Mission dollars are used to support presbytery operations/salaries rather than mission because per capita is so low. Neither Synod nor General Assembly do a good job of publicizing the good work of missionaries or mission projects
Some of the larger congregations in the more populous areas of the state have withheld or been slow in paying the per capita. As the Presbytery fulfills its obligations to synod and GA per capita, these funds come out of the presbytery budget for local mission and ministry
Declines in all areas are overwhelmingly due to mortality. Our folks are steady givers of time and funds
Among our 18 churches, we all know pretty well what the others are doing. Even two mission trips a year by two different churches seems a lot. We are a small presbytery in numbers, huge in area. It takes ingenuity to carry out mission by churches' cooperating.
We are in process of using a new model; sharing staff with our sister Presbytery so all positions are shared between the 2.
We had a sudden need to which people gave (d) but overall the resources were challenged (c)
Churches under economic pressure; national issues causing divide; several large churches only pay the per capita that they collect from members which puts extreme pressure on other churches.
Doing about the same with less all the time. Coming to a head and the next staff retirements will bring a restructuring of staff.
The presbytery has been in leadership transition. That has been quite positive but change is slow.
Our numbers and strength are in steady decline
mission supports staff salaries and per capita is uncertain
Downsizing in staff, support (both staff and information) and funds, to the Synod NW has created a major change in our presbyteries association with our synod.
Locally giving to mission of GA is up but I'm not sure about Presbytery wide.
Membership in our churches has declined, having a ripple effect on our resources. Half the churches in our Presbytery did not contribute any money to the work of upper bodies. This has been the case for more than the last five years. Our Presbytery pays its full per capita apportionment anyway.
I do not see the value of the synod.
While our churches tend to be supportive of local mission opportunities, they are often less so for mission conducted by the synod or General Assembly. There seems to be a suspicion that in the larger governing bodies, mission funds will not be spent in the ways local congregations intend. This seems to be the case for our more conservative congregations -- I don't see the same concerns from the more moderate to progressive folks.
The population of our geographic area is aging and shrinking and our congregations (tend to be) aging and shrinking.
We do have congregations who withhold funds for the Synod and GA, we are discussing whether we will continue to make up this difference from our resources
These are hard questions. The staff fluctuates because we contract for specific tasks, some of which are not paid positions. I still counted them. Our finances are adequate, but we still have congregations refusing to pay per capita because they do not like something GA has done. So we pay anyway. Mission giving depends on what we are promoting. We are looking at other ways to do regional mission/fundraising.
Several large congregation were dismissed from our presbytery reducing everything

I would say that presbytery has, in general, seen a shift in mission from being done by the presbytery to being done by the local congregations. So there may be a perceived decrease in the total amount of mission being done, though it may be more of a shift in how that mission is being done.
No great changes noted. Stability remains fairly good, as does the cooperation and coordination of services.
I'm not sure about these questions because I have only been a part of this presbytery for 6 mths and am still learning about the presbytery.
The term "mission" is very general and is thrown around in the denomination as if everyone knows exactly what it means. However, the interpretation of the term varies. How does the MGB interpret the term?
It is mostly the economy, but alienation and disenchantment also contribute.
We recently restructured to have 3 part-time Associate Missional Presbyteries to coordinate mission and ministry within a smaller geography. Again however the difficult is a lack of trust in the Presbytery, Synod and GA that money will go for the right purposes (which is a concern) there is also a greater emphasis on having the congregation do mission rather than outsourcing to the Presbytery Synod and GA (which I think is a good thing.)
We lost the largest congregation with respect to giving in our presbytery which seriously impacted our funding and ability to give.
We are struggling with decreased giving, what is perceived to be a lack of vision. Having said that, let me say that we are emerging from several difficult years due to a mismatch with our former Presbyter Exec. Under the skillful guidance of an interim exec who brought much healing and much hope to the presbytery, we were able to call a "General Presbyter" who is calling us to ministry. We are beginning to heed his words. It us exciting to watch this transformation begin.
I am very new to my position - I am still have a lot to learn about the presbytery, congregations, history and vision for the future
The demographics have changed... increase in Hispanics and other races and cultures... The job market has shifted from high tech to service jobs Education is also a factor New ways of communication have brought about changes which cannot be easily measured -- many churches have changed their worship style. The controversy of theological perspectives is difficult for many.
Giving differences are slight. Staff differences are big - our shared paid staff resources (among 3 presbyteries) have just gone away as the sharing agreement expired at the will of the participating presbyteries. This is the last of several such arrangements in our synod that have expired over the last five years.
In general the Presbytery is decreasing in members and congregations both in numbers and \$\$ resources. This is a reflection of what is happen with the congregations. However, this is aggravated by a disconnection between the rank and file member and the role, function, missions, etc of the Presbytery. As for the Synod, multiply this disconnection by 100 fold. Event to this day, as 35 year Presbyterian I am not sure I really understand the role, need, function of the Synod.
How do you define "mission". Is it outreaching beyond ourselves, or is it carrying out our internal work? This is a source of disconnect with our congregations. They see their "mission giving" as to be used for "outreach beyond ourselves", not for paying the salaries of staff or presbytery programming, even if that is educational work within the presbytery. More and more they are directing their "mission giving" to specific programs, such as missionary support, food banks, homeless support or programs such as presbytery camp.
We are GIVING less to mission programs, but I think the presbytery is focusing more now on developing CHURCHES, which is where it ought to be. If we'd quit fighting about sex, I think giving would be substantially larger - conservative churches are redirecting funding, and they have more money. But if we count all mission funding, I think it has stayed the same or even increased; they are just not giving to PCUSA or presbytery mission causes.
We had several churches leave the denomination, the largest in the Presbytery.
We lost a huge and wealthy congregation to the EPC, on top of the recent financial debacle.
As with many PBYs and particular churches, giving patterns have been more focused on local rather than regional or national mission.
I wish I had the numbers in front of me.
Our Presbytery has made a commitment to remit the full amount of per capita to the Synod and GA even if congregations do not provide per capita to the Presbytery for that purpose.
Staff increase reflects change from part-time camp director to full-time. Change to GA Mission reflects both change in percentage allocated from shared giving and dissatisfaction with GA positions among some churches.
Churches are increasingly withholding money because of discontent.

My husband and I moved into this presbytery in Aug. 2006 so I do not have the background information to answer f. and g. Financial resources dropped because one large church left the denomination and another large church decreased its giving over 2 yrs. by \$58K.
Because of the theological divide, and the continuing controversy over ordination standards, there is a great lack of enthusiasm and support.
these are hard times in Michigan
Percentage of Mission Dollars went down for both Synod and G.A. Big decreases from churches on Mission Giving. Offset by no staff salary increases and decrease of project funding - only project funding we do is from our endowments at present.
My sense is that the presbytery is trying to do more with less resources. I believe that we give the suggested per capita and mission dollars to the GA and Synod but do not get as much financial support from the congregations. Several have not paid per capita for several years.
Only been in this presbytery for 1 year so have no clue how to answer these questions.
Decreases are mostly a result of decreased membership.
The percentage of giving to Synod and the General Assembly stayed the same.....
We have available funds in a sort of endowment so the presbytery can make up the difference for some decline in the giving by individual congregations.
Sorry, my brain does not compute numbers very well, so I'm in a fog in this area.
a. The ability to sustain the staff size has been a matter of debate f & g. It seems that directed giving has increased, but how much of that is being directed to specified synod or General Assembly mission is not clear
Some congregations are giving directly to the GA and Synod and the Presbytery doesn't necessarily know what is given directly.
We downsized one staff person in 2010, first time in recent history. We also reluctantly decreased giving to the Synod and GA about 3 years ago.
With the addition of a part time Mission Coordinator we have increased the amount of hands on mission our churches are doing together. We also made the decision to get read of the "laundry list" of small missions the Presbytery was focusing on and consolidate our efforts to one international mission, (Sudan) one regional mission (Pine Springs Camp) and one grassroots mission...that soon became disaster relief. We have made many trips to places within the USA that have been impacted by Natural Disasters.
The biggest problem is the doing away with per capita apportionment on a presbytery level. Congregations have not caught the vision, and presbytery was caught in the lurch. It's now using reserves and searching for an answer.
giving has been maintained because it is virtually all designated
I think it is important to note that the Presbytery has continued to pay its full per capita assessment to the General Assembly.
We transitioned from a full time Associate Executive Presbyter to five part time Regional Associates in our Presbytery. These Associates are not technically staff of the Presbytery. This was an intentional, innovative restructuring.
Emphasis and recognition of Unified Giving has been done. This has kept the giving levels at about the same over the years.
We have closed some churches. There seems to be a general feeling of scarcity, accompanied by some local-church-first attitude.
Change in funding strategy has great theology but has been detrimental in practicality and actual dollars.
The decreases speak for themselves. The presbytery is irrelevant to the mission of its congregations. The synod is even more irrelevant. The presbytery has a plethora of policies and rules with which it inflicts and threatens smaller congregations. It steers clear of the "mid sized" and large congregations in case it pisses them off even more and they contribute even less. Look at the decline in membership and giving in the PCUSA for fifty plus years and you wonder what is the relevance of the presbytery. This has nothing to do with the ongoing battle over ordination standards. The decline in enthusiasm and membership was in effect years before. The PCUSA is broke and it has constantly obdurately refused to look at its structures. The abolition if synods was suggested in the 1980's and no action was taken. Congregations can get excited about entities like "Habitat" etc and support them generously. Presbytery means nothing, this is not good but will things change anytime soon? I suspect "decreased" will be the most checked box.
Believing that, while discouraging, our continued dedication on all these issues and more is what we are called to do with faith, hope and daring to think outside the box.



I am not completely sure, but I believe that all financial giving is on a downward turn
Infrastructure, overhead, expectations that the presbytery is supposed to provide services, expectations staff have to run committees all help create this situation. Too many complex rules and time driving to meetings means there is no time or money for proactive work to connect our churches. Congregations don't feel the value of MGB and often feel the MGBs think the congregations exist to serve them or only offer what they want without even asking the congregations what they need. Even when they ask nothing changes to respond to reality congregation's face. Less staff who are adaptable and flexible could help churches share resources with each other at minimal cost and be far more valuable. Virtual offices and get out with the people. Stop promoting people to incompetence and seek people with new ideas with experience outside of the church.
The sense of connectionalism -- or more accurately, relationalism -- is diminishing in leaps & bounds!
I am not in possession of the relevant statistical reports. I could have responded "not sure" to all of the above, but have attempted to answer from my perception.
This survey does not include local & international mission activity done by congregations beyond presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.
Our church has specifically not sent funds to the synod and GA, but we continue to support our presbytery.
When most of your congregations are small and your losing members the possibility of giving to go up is slim or not at all except these congregations are in small rural communities and farming and ranching has been good the past several years. There is new growth taking place in rural communities.
May not be the best resource to answer. Think that we can better use the churches and their unused space to consolidate the offices of our Presbyteries. Eliminating rents and sharing secretarial services would allow more funds to be used for our mission/church work.
Trends and other key financial information, including headcount not widely available.
There is a significant trend in decreasing attendance overall in our congregations, and some focus on church growth, but not enough to address the decreases concretely (more triage). These decreases and the inability to address them with concrete actions have lead to decreased funding, staff, giving at the larger church. Inability to change has also been a challenge in identifying and responding to decline.
The presbytery suffers from the facts that it has only 34 churches and that most are quite small. There is a cluster of stronger churches in one county.
Everything depends on how you define mission. We may be meeting our "mission goals," but are they worth having. We're in the process of developing a new structure and mission, but for the most part it's the same old people doing the work. Maybe we should be asking if we need a Presbytery for anything other than tending to our congregations and their mission. With regard to Synods and GA, whether we need them or not is an even bigger question. They perform virtually no useful functions for us at this point.
The Synod of the Mid-Atlantic is a minimal, non-programmatic synod. Thus, none of our undesignated mission receipts are allocated to the synod.
A new committee this past year has increased awareness, and offered some funding, for local congregations' mission. Presbytery mission \$\$ going to local organizations known primarily to Council & others who study the Annual budget
Percentage giving to GA and synod has not decreased but overall giving has.
Mission-giving is becoming more and more localized--congregations want to have a more personal connection to the mission efforts they support.
I've only recently become involved with Grace Presbytery and do not have that much knowledge of staff and missions.
The economy has been a factor.
Congregations have little interest in presbytery and no interest in synod. Difficult to assess congregations' understanding of and familiarity with General Assembly.
Mission Giving in general is down over the last two years, due to the poor economy.
We have lost mission dollars from GA
As membership decreased, so giving

- Q13. In the *next five years*, what trends do you anticipate in your presbytery when it comes to:  
 h. Comments on your response to Q13a-g:

I assume you mean total dollars, not per capita giving
Due to the overall economy, I see less giving; in part due to aging and declining congregations.
We are a smaller, stronger, more vital network of thoughtful Christians. Worship experiences in this presbytery are of the spirit, and the discernment by groups of pastors, elders and missionaries is beginning. While we have a long, long way to go, we have an increasing vitality and joy. The overwhelming opinion in this Presbytery among leaders is that Synods are redundant, taking up resources which can be more effectively placed in technological advances and connections rather than administration and holding onto the past. While the Synod emphasizes racial ethnic ministry and Health Fairs, in actuality, there is little effective connection made with local congregations. The old ways prevail, meaning that energy gets smashed, enthusiasm is dampened, and the Spirit goes elsewhere.
In Western Pennsylvania the population is getting older and the youth are leaving.
Unfortunately, I haven't seen anything indicating the decline has reached its nadir, though I remain hopeful that it may have and things will rebound.
Unless 10a passes at which point mission giving to the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly will likely plummet by 20-40%
I anticipate more volunteering and partnerships across the presbytery to carry out mission. The financial picture reflects the larger economic picture of diminishing wages for working class and middle income people. We'll have to increase giving just to stay where we are.
God gives us Hope for tomorrow. Our Presbytery encourages us to Hope and act on what we need to increase our call to serve in every way possible. I hope in tomorrow and the growth that hopefully will be.
Our two merging Presbyteries is new. The outcome will have to be monitored
The congregations are all getting smaller, which means there is less and less to give.
General trend in mainline denominations informs my responses.
I think more conservative churches will leave the denomination as a whole with the passage of 10-A, and therefore the financial resources will also go down.
The lower numbers in congregations will dictate fewer financial resources for all higher governing bodies.
There is little hope for an uptick in resources, people, and giving.
We are pushing mission down at the congregation level stressing the importance of the missional nature of the church. Presbytery is seen increasingly as helping, equipping, empowering, and resourcing the local congregation to be a mission outpost.
Sadly, this is a very local-oriented presbytery and that's where their money will go first. On the flip side, we are known for our mission giving and have ranked in the top five for several years.
Lake Erie Presbytery is in a region of our country where population is stable to slowing declining. Most of the congregations reflect that trend as well although there is some forward looking energy in some of them.
Lake Erie presbytery is in a region where the population is steady to slowly declining. Most churches reflect that demographic although there are some good conversations and energy in a number of the churches.
These of course are projections of long term trends going back decades. Since we do not know the future, there is always a surprise out there waiting for us. Who knows what the Spirit may do in the next five years.
I expect the same declines due to withholding and transfers.
After returning to this presbytery from a few years in de Cristo, I do not find the commitment to mission in this presbytery very strong.
No feeling of connectionalism...other judicatories just want our money and are quite insensitive to the spirit of connectionalism. E.g., G.A. is the "Big Boss" and church members are mostly sources of money.
our increase would be because of the sharing of the per capita funds in presbytery with local missions, inaugurated by congregational members and backed by a presbytery committee
None
Giving and action in presbytery mission will greatly depend on conflict resolution strategies in the presbytery and the outcome of hoped-for mission and vision work together.
It really depends on how many of our congregations decide to remain PCUSA. There is a lot of uncertainty about the result of the amendment votes. Many congregations give independently to mission and do not give to GA, Synod or Presbytery. It is a challenge for the future.

number of congregations will decrease overall population of our area will decrease
Presbyterians are a dying breed in the Northeast. How can a denomination or presbytery or congregation reverse a societal trend away from organized religion?
The lack of support from synod and GA to local ministry after years of aid-to- field for the small rural congregations is leaving the presbytery with reduced or substandard pastoral leadership. The recent failure of the various synod and national PJC to uphold the authority of either the Book of Order or the Scripture does not sit well with many of the more traditional faith members of the churches. As the connectional system has been primarily felt to be only going one way [from the local church to the denomination and no support coming from the national, synod, or presbytery to the local church] the sense of connection with the larger Church is already much less than a few years ago. With the 35 year battle over the authority of scripture seemingly moving further away from the traditional views, the connection is exceedingly fragile.
Again, the decline will probably be mortality. Our economy has been declining since 1950, and our churches have slid since then. Many are at the tipping point of inability to carry out mission. But they are loyal to their congregation, the presbytery, and the General Assembly.
People in the pews are beginning to understand and appreciate the work of our presbytery, not so for Synod.
I thought the Synod was becoming extinct. I am hopeful that we are moving toward a Revival led by our ministerial team. If so perhaps e will be increase!
Congregations are focusing more and more about what they can do locally, either alone or in partnerships with other churches, both Presbyterian and those of other denominations. Hence more funds stay "at home."
Difficult to predict what response to amendment of G-6.0106b (if it is ratified) will be. Our next to largest and most conservative/evangelical church has withheld per capita support for some years and might re-consider their unified giving commitment to presbytery or even leave the denomination.
there is little interest at presbytery level in any mission because we hear constantly can't afford that the several larger churches have carried the weight of that but one of them had major losses in the investments and the other two have decreased their pledge as well
We are taking a new approach to stewardship that will increase giving in all areas. Initial response has been favorable. Increase giving, combined with re-visioning of staff needs and responsibilities will allow us to be better stewards of what we have, which will ultimately increase the level of giving.
Our funds will increase as we sell church properties of closed congregations. Our hope is that as we focus on healthy growing congregations our worship attendance will increase presbytery-wide. Some congregations are very concerned about the vote on amendment 10A. This could affect (in a negative way) giving to presbytery and GA. Congregations may look to designate giving.
are in a depressed area economically and not evangelizing folks...new members tend to be church members somewhere else...very few first time Christians
Again with the aging and shrinking.
Congregations will be smaller as we continue to drop in membership. Congregations will be asking to be dismissed due to several issues. The PC(USA) does not have a program for evangelism. We will continue to lose members in several ways
I foresee little change, despite efforts at church planting. Sizes of churches in not expected to grow significantly, with stability strived for.
I think unfortunately we will see 3-4 of the largest 6 congregations leave the denomination in the next 2 years. This will obviously greatly impact the Presbytery as a whole...
At the present time there is nothing that we can see that will cause our mission and giving to change.
All the hoopla about ordaining gay ministers is dividing the congregation and will cause a decrease in all things good. One way or another we need to make a decision and put it behind us so we can move forward.
The impact on our presbytery of the constitutional changes will likely have an impact on our mission.
Without vision and sufficient leadership, things will only continue their present downward trend.
My presbytery is in flux due to a reduction in Mission Partnership Funds.
Most people do not see value at the synod level
The road ahead is full of twists and turns, but I am convinced that God is walking beside us and will grant us insight to minister to his people.
Increased mission will be due to individuals volunteering in the missions they particularly wish to promote. Also, Lay Pastors will contribute their time and talents to the work of missions.

Staffing is hard to predict as the committees shoulder the responsibilities formerly performed by the sharing arrangement.
Do not anything that would change the current trend with the exception of the number of staff. We are currently operating at a minimum level short of asking the Exe to become part time. This minimum level of staff is aggravating the trend.
We have two large congregations that are growing, along with several medium size congregations that are also growing. The majority of our smaller churches are declining in membership and attendance. Critical issues such as changing theology, governance, ordination issues, and perception of lack of effective outreach to the unchurched locally and abroad are dividing our congregations and churches and may well cause us to lose either one or more congregations or substantial portions of congregations, which will have a crippling effect in our congregations, presbyteries and denomination.
IF we keep fighting, we'll keep shrinking. Gal 5:15
Our general presbyter has been very proactive in suggesting ways to trim staff costs through some sharing with other presbyteries, even though this would impact his job. I appreciate his vision, although the neighboring presbyteries haven't been as open to such ideas.
I am hopeful but I believe more churches will leave the PCUSA.
Who knows. Is this a glass half full/glass half empty question?
We are in transition in our presbytery, perhaps moving to a smaller staffing model. With goal emphasis on helping congregations grow, our hope is for increased attendance & giving, but true outcome is unknown.
e. I believe worship attendance mayor may not increase depending on the ability and willingness of current church members to adapt to new and/or different ways of worship. Many congregations across the country have done so successfully. In our region of the country people are more stuck in the traditional.
Given that at least two large churches in our Presbytery have publicly declared their intent to join the new non-geographic, theologically based synods and presbyteries, the total giving could actually go up, if those church begin to dramatically increase giving to an 'affinity' presbytery. That would leave 'our' presbytery weakened, however.
I don't know what will happen with the congregational responses to changes in the Constitution.
We are working on 2 options of revitalization processes with our congregations. It is still early, but our goal is to increase mission giving and worship attendance
These answers look bleak, but I honestly don't see how we are going to change this trend in our presbytery. A good part of our Presbytery is in an economically disadvantaged area. We have dozens of small churches just hanging on trying to keep the doors open. Most of our large churches are taking issue with the direction in which the PCUSA is moving and we have already lost one of our biggest churches and are in the process of losing another. I fear that there will be more in line as the votes come in on the "fidelity and chastity" issue.
If the per capita crisis is not well-addressed, we will continue to lose ground.
change in G-6.0106b will definitely cause a decrease in GA giving
I do not see many of the congregations increasing in members or giving given the demographics of the small communities in which the congregations are located.
There is a new vision, relatively new EP, new Stated Clerk, and a plan for transformation of congregations within the Presbytery, and enhanced mission opportunities. Whether those are fulfilled waits to be seen.
Hard to comment given the nFOG and the fact that our Presbytery has an enormous debt due to a payout from a sexual misconduct lawsuit. The Presbytery voted to give the payout due to the amount of damage incurred to the individuals.
I'd like to be hopeful but I don't see it turning around any time soon.
Membership is declining and aging and has been for years. From where is the money going to come?
Some very small churches will close within two-3 years. Worship attendance and giving in some churches will increase slightly.
Again - a guess.
I answered these questions as if Amendment 10-A will become G.60106b, which it is very likely to do. We have a large conservative church in our presbytery and many small conservative ones, too.
A number of congregations, especially some larger ones, are concerned about Amendment A's impending passage, and may withhold or reduce giving when/if it passes.
I personally have been disappointed that contributions to synod and GA have decreased; but with dwindling financial resources, the choice has been made to keep more of the available funds "at home."

<p>Radical change is necessary. Some things appear to be changing, but the reason for the change can't be so that we can "save" the denomination. Change needs to happen to help our churches share resources with each other and build relationships and synergy. The world has changed and a hierarchical system is a hindrance. The system needs to be reset to what it was meant to be. The governing bodies are to be facilitators for churches to function in ways that allow flexibility and encourage health. Constant arguments about negative issue where there is no clear consensus also serves to leave congregations with a negative attitude that speeds the decline.</p>
<p>Pessimistic about it. Yet hope in new leadership that conflict can be decreased and giving increase</p>
<p>I anticipate that imminent constitutional changes for the PC(USA) will result in loss of membership across the PNK, including potential defections of entire congregations to the EPC. The loss in membership will translate into a decrease in giving. I pray that these consequences will not occur.</p>
<p>The next five years trends depend upon mission interpretation by staff, committees, presbyters (active session elders and active ministers of Word and Sacraments, use of websites, emails, Presbyterian Outlook subscriptions, Presbyterians Today, and specific mission printed/email resources. Presbytery online newsletters do help inspire some viewers. Presbytery staff does send mission alerts emails and these do inspire some readers. Mission team reports back to congregations, and mtgs of presbytery do reach those who are there and are listening.</p>
<p>Demographics are working against us.</p>
<p>While these answers seem negative on the surface, I think they are part of a changing model that we see in the church. More of the mission will be driven by the congregants than the middle bodies, perhaps partnerships forged between churches rather than the presbytery as a whole.</p>
<p>We will become more congregationally focused and higher governing bodies will need to adjust re: their role vis-a-vis congregations (ask, listen and respond vs. current practice of top down direction and wondering why response not sufficient).</p>
<p>Unless we are willing to intervene and concretely help congregations redirect and resurrect their mission, we will have to work through at least another decade of closing churches before we will be prepared to redirect our mission overall.</p>
<p>Some of the larger churches and a few of the smaller churches are growing in membership. However, only recently we have begun to realize that some of our smaller churches may have to close, and one former large church faces substantial obstacles to its struggle to survive because of poor leadership and high overhead costs for its physical plant.</p>
<p>With regard to "f", we can only hope that there will be a decrease. Of all governing bodies, it is clear that Synods are least useful. People were already saying this in the 1960's. It is clearly time for Synods to go away.</p>
<p>Of our undesignated mission receipts, 22% is allocated to GA mission.</p>
<p>Giving to Synod/GA will increase gradually for a few congregations, decrease dramatically for a few congregations, and stay the same, most likely, for many.</p>
<p>b, f &amp; g--our presbytery currently has real property for sale (1 pending sale and 1 just listed for sale) which will allow our presbytery to increase fluid financial assets and resources to support all mission in general.</p>
<p>We may have to decrease percentage giving to Synod and GA</p>
<p>Trends in giving are decreasing and most churches rather designate their gifts.</p>
<p>Presbytery going through transition time and get better answer these questions after the presbytery has discerned its future</p>
<p>This is assuming that some congregations will leave the PC(USA) because of theological issues.</p>
<p>I expect at least one of our larger churches to withdraw from the PCUSA and others to reduce their giving to presbytery, synod, and GA.</p>

Q14. The General Assembly and most presbyteries and synods support their ecclesial functions by assessing congregations a charge based on their number of members, an amount usually referred to as “per capita.” Do you think the current split of per capita funds among your presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly is:

Q14a. [If “inappropriate” or “very inappropriate,”] Please indicate how you would change the relative distribution of per capita funds. (Assume that the total amount of per capita funds stays the same, but is only being split differently.)

c. Comments on your responses to Q14a-b:

Our presbytery serves SMALL rural churches who often need help. Our presbytery wants to help and funds are limited. If more of our money stayed within their hands, more would be available. Our mission giving is greater than the giving for local needs, because we are a caring people, within a caring presbytery. Our churches would be more comfortable going to presbytery for help, if they felt they were not taking funds from others.
Synods are based on an outdated model in which travel was far more restricted. There is no need for Synods in modern times, in my opinion.
per capita should decrease or at very least not increase; per capita is becoming alternative offset to decreased mission giving
The Synod should get nearly nothing; and the GA should get significantly less than it does. Things have changed, and we don't need a bloated staff in Louisville.
We still seem to be confusing the difference between "social gospel" and mission in our denomination.
The synod has a decreased role and function and does not need the same amount of money. The General Assembly is putting more roles on the presbytery and so the funds for presbytery should increase.
There's not an option here for eliminating per capita altogether, which I would prefer. If the funding information we've received from the Lake Research folks at IU is accurate, requiring or compelling "gifts" is just not the way forward.
We need to fix the required imbalance between mandatory per capita and optional mission giving (OGA vs GAMC)... when our presbytery budget went down 30-40%, we had to keep per capita the same, and so GA mission giving was cut more than the 30-40%. These two should not be in competition. Also, presbyteries should not have to pay per capita for churches that do not submit it.
G.A. gives us bupkis on the positive side and a host of headaches on the negative side
In Hudson River Presbytery the per capita is too low to support its intended goal
The presbytery is where the hands on ministry is. It is, as we used to say in the Army, “boots on the ground” mission. GA officials meeting with the presbytery have said, “You feed the hungry but we do the more important work of looking at hunger's causes.” Really? And what has been accomplished? How many full time staff are on the Washington DC lobby group? [5] How many staff at the U.N. [3]? How many for the small Church ministry which represents 52% of our denomination [occasionally 1] Some 1500 of our 5,000 + small churches cannot afford a pastor and efforts to offer new models of ministry to fill those slots are ignored by GA and Synod and Presbytery. But if the “boots on the ground” pastors are to do the work of the ministry, it will have to be at the presbytery level that support, encouragement, and mission aid comes.
As synods go, ours is excellent, but I am increasingly convinced that the role of synod has become completely obsolete. As our denomination struggles with loss of membership and funding--this is an easy call.
Both synod and GA are entities that serve no purpose except to try and manage local congregations. All monies come from local congregations imagine what we could do if we did not send any of it to synod or GA.
It isn't so much that the proportion is off, it is that the Presbytery portion of per capita is \$20 which is too high. But I think there is also a concern with how Synod and GA use the funds as well.
My presbytery would be able to function if we could absorb Synod per capita from Synod and find ways to be better stewards of our resources between Presbyteries.
Synod should be eliminated
The structure is too top heavy.
I think synods should be disbanded.
These questions really don't get at the heart of the matter which is what are roles of these governing bodies.
It is hard to justify Synods in 21st C. USA. The Synod is not necessary for the mission of the church and actually demands resources for staff and program that could be better used at the local level. While some Synods do great work in mission, most simply add an extra expensive level of management that does nothing for the local congregation.

It is time to do away with Synods - when communication was more difficult, there may have been need for three levels of government, but that time has passed. Synods may need to have a Stated Clerk for judicial process, to organize EMI type of courses, and to bring clerks together for minutes reading, but we have too many levels of mission. It is very disorganized and inefficient.
If given the options I would have checked all three in "b"
No per capita. If the congregations believe in what the governing bodies are doing then they will abundantly fund them for what is important and necessary. Per capita does fund necessary things but it also allows continuance of behaviors that are not beneficial to our congregations.
They decreased it by a large percentage in recent years - as specific churches gave less due to "politics" at National level. Yet some things national level does best.
This is, of course, a very tricky balance, because most of the "front-line" mission work is initiated by the presbytery. But weakening the synod and GA is counter-productive in the long run I believe.
I see no reasonable role for synods today.
Synod is not needed; is a body looking for a purpose. My presbytery needs to consider merging with another body.

Q17. What percentage of your presbytery's current annual budget is expected to come from:  
h. Other (specify):

2400
1
90
grants from Synod and GA
grant for staffing; hunger; living waters for the world
Grants [4 leaders made this comment]
GA & Synod Staff Support
Other denomination support of NCD
We have the figures but I don't look at them.
Donor restricted grants
currently everything is in flux
11% Missional Development Grant, 8% Partnership Funding, 1% Hunger Grant
Does not include Speer Trust income.
Preparation for Ministry, Peacemaking, Miscellaneous
Synod Investment and Loan
don't know [5 leaders made this comment]
Various sources, including funds from Synod for shared campus ministry costs
reserves, special gifts
Reserves, funds
Mostly Reserves and a little investment income on reserves.
I'm familiar. I don't have photographic memory.
Mission Partnership Funds
Transfers from Presbytery portion of Peacemaking, Synod (for Hawaii Delegate Travel) and G.A. (for HAE grant)
Not sure about percentages
Special Offerings
extra individual donations
Mission Partnership Funds
CPSS funds received from the Synod
first fruits from cong.
Gifts and Grants [2 leaders made this comment]

Reserves, misc.
First Fruits Offering
we don't break it down this way
Camp & Conference Fees, Scholarships, Royalty Income, Other (not defined)
Reserves & other income
Reserves [3 leaders made this comment]
Synod grant

Q20. Which of the following has your synod done for your presbytery in the past year? (Check *all* that apply.)  
Facilitated other networking between or among presbyteries (specify):

youth ministry, campus ministry
There are several networks across the Synod
Helped our presbytery and a neighboring presbytery decide to hire a Regional Executive Presbyter.
Presbytery Partnership Groups
joint council meetings
meeting of stated clerks and lunch relative to minutes review
Self-Development of People joint committee
all presbyteries within synod are networked within geographic groupings
Border Ministries Team
shared staffing between our Presbytery and another
camping ministries
co-sponsors training for Commissioned Lay Pastors with Synod of Mid America
Several presbyteries, with assistance from Synod, have carried on a series of Equipping Pastors events.
Several presbyteries in the Synod of the Trinity have worked together for Equipping Pastor events - particularly for newer pastors.
Assisted with congregational redevelopment project
Considering shared staff (executive)
CLP training
we're working on sharing accounting needs and other office support
Lay training
Are Synod has as one of its core principles the formation of Networks not only among presbyteries but like minded groups of folk from beyond the Presbyterian traditions. Fantastic approach that the GA could learn from!!
North and South Alabama
Ga participants following GA
coordinated funds distribution among multiple presbyteries
facilitated consortium of 4 presbyteries
Through the Synod of the Northeast Presbytery Partnership Groups
PJC training
PJC training; Disabilities Network, many networks
teaching/coaching
camping ministry
We are financially supported by other presbyteries
shared CE trainer between Pres.
newly ordained pastors, coaching and conflict mediation training
Missional church, conflict training
Executive forums, synod meetings



preaching conferences for pastors, young pastors networking, and stewardship conference
revitalization task force
PDA Mission opportunities
News Letter
PDA
Training of GA Commissioners, Living Waters
New congregation development efforts and excellent networking.
I'm not aware of it.
church transformation network
Our Synod has a new pastors program that works with ministers in their first 3 years of ordained ministry.
synod training events
for Hispanic ministry and PW gatherings
Synod School is Great!
5 eastern PA presbyteries join for transformational training and conflict management team training. Donegal, Lehigh and Phila join to support first call pastors in missional ministry support
EP gatherings
quad presbytery grant for revitalization and encourages working together, sharing information
Partnership for the Missional Church
Synod has a Staff Forum which meets several times a year. One of the functions is to share ideas and support each other.
Immigration issues, new pastor seminar with Synod
Coaching Clinic
the synod probably did some of the other things listed but I don't know for sure
missional church; ep forum
educational events
Leadership forum, coaching classes
Newly ordained minister training
created an environment of cooperation that in turn has encouraged and facilitated networking
Our Synod is broken into clusters or presbytery partnership groups. The PPG in which my presbytery is a member predates the Synod clustering and may well have been one of the models for this approach
presbytery partnership groups
PPGs, church closings
EPs network

Q20. Which of the following has your synod done for your presbytery in the past year? (Check **all** that apply.)  
Distributed newsletters, e-newsletters or other forms of communication (specify):

website, newsletters, synod reports
e-newsletter, mission interpretation
e-newsletters [49 leaders made this comment]
Synod website
The Synod has assisted with negotiating and funding the redesign of our website.
Distributes the Nor'easter, a synod newsletter, throughout the synod.
Synod Newsletter
newsletter in pdf format via e-mail to presbytery which is sent out by presbytery.
e letter from general Presbyter to both presbyteries
regular e-letter and Facebook presence

Regular e-publication
Website
all formats
Email
e-newsletters, weekly e-mail updates
camping ministries
Synod of the Trinity website is a very helpful source.
Synod of the Trinity website is quite helpful.
e-newsletter and pastoral letters
provided networking for ARMSS convention and other events through e-newsletters
emailing news items
E-newsletters and Skype style Synod Meetings
newsletters, e-news, meetings
Synod newsletter
Quarterly newsletter...transitioning from printed to electronic format
bulletin inserts on mission
bi-weekly e-bulletins
monthly newsletters and weekly e-mail updates
weekly e-mail but very controlled access and information
weekly e-newsletter and quarterly news
newsletter and e-newsletter
rather ineffective e-mail newsletter
e-newsletters, presbypac, emails, blogs, on-line training, on-line resources
yes
Synod sends out a leadership update with GA/Synod news, very useful
monthly newsletter
Synod newsletter every few months
Newsletters/enewsletters
Presbyterian voice
Presbyterian Voice-- paper and electronic
The Voice - but recently ceased
The Synod newsletter is made available via e-mail.
from Stated Clerk and Presby. Exc.
Living Waters Voice
sent out synod newsletter w/ a page for each presbytery
Presbytery newsletter, Synod Newsletter
The Nor'easter
Had maintained one of the longest run of a Synod Newspaper with a dedicated page for each Presbytery. However, the last issue was just published.
quarterly newsletters
emails
newsletter from synod
e-newsletter, website
Synod School materials and regular updates by email of activities, events, and personnel news within the synod
now on line only
synod newsletter

Our Synod has a regular e-newsletter that updates us on activities in the Synod & Presbyteries.
very limited/minimal
e-newsletters to presbytery members
emails
newsletter and e-newsletter
Musings of the Synod Ex. on the web site
newsletter
The Voice
printed newsletter that will now be available only on-line
synod commissioner distributed newsletter to pby
Synod newspaper which will be electronically distributed
Had a newspaper and now is on line...
Regular, informative synod newsletter
newsletter, e-newsletters
Presbyterian Women
A weekly email from the Presbytery office
Synod newsletter at least every other week
newsletters and e-newsletters
printed newsletter & website
weekly newsletter, facebook and email & communicators conference
via Website
Weekly
newsletter
Regular newsletter
synod newsletter
enews; posters
effective email newsletter
newsletters
newspaper that just folded
Synod ceased this in recent downsizing
Synod of Sun Newspaper
Synod of the Sun News in cooperation with PNS
Enewsletter, emails
monthly presbytery enews
available on presbytery website
regular bi-weekly e-mail newsletter
I emailed a flyer regarding Youth Mission Opportunities in the Detroit area and it was posted several times on the Synod eblast newsletter
monthly newsletter
newsletters and website links are emailed regularly
in the past year have gone to an electronic newsletter available on website along with other kinds of information
newsletters
newsletters, email
regular Synod Newsletter on web; emailed to all pastors & churches
synod website posts regular reports submitted by synod and/or presbyteries information upon request and space available

Synod School
Print changing to e-newsletter
e-newsletters and newsletters
Synod e-newsletter
Synod Moderator & a Newsletter

Q20. Which of the following has your synod done for your presbytery in the past year? (Check *all* that apply.)  
Other (specify):

website cooperative was set up
Synod activity was down due to resignation of Synod Executive to take another call.
we're part of a four presbytery unified camping ministry
Our Synod provided legal defense and negotiation in resolution of conflicts with dismissed congregations
Multiple-presbytery sponsored pastor conferences
OPERATES A CREDIT UNION
Retreats
PJC cases
First Call retreat for new pastors; Living Waters for the World
Adjudicated PJC Appeal
provided sexual misconduct prevention/ boundary training for 4 presbyteries
Western National Leadership Training
This state is enormous and has two huge presbyteries. It is a major thing to go outside this presbytery--hundreds of miles. I am not aware of what the synod does in our presbytery, except that the Executive regularly attends presbytery meetings, which we love him to do. I really don't pay much attention to what the Synod does in our (enormous) area.
Fundraising
mass web communication
At my level of involvement I am not able to answer these questions.
some individuals and committed do provide limited conversations and information
website hosting
PJC tried a remedial case; stated clerk convened group of pby stated clerks for minutes review and continuing ed.
Synod may have done others of these listed, but I am not aware of it.
provided a common mission - Living Waters for the World
Presentations at Presbytery Meetings
Synod School
training of new pastors
I really haven't done much with the synod.
Not well informed about Synod
Don't know.
Our Synod conducts a pre-commissioning training program for future CLPs and continuing education activities for CLPs as well.
Grant to partially offset Hawaii Delegate Travel
I honestly don't know
I'm sure that the Synod has done lots of these things - but - I do not have firsthand knowledge such that I can provide appropriate input.
Not sure of Synod activities
Synod Men's Fellowship
pastoral training, summer conference, youth conference

Helped with an Executive Presbyter Search committee. I am really not that familiar with the Synod we are in. It could be that some of these have been done and I am just not aware of it.
Funded the Mission to the USA--a wonderful program!
don't know
shared ownership of office building (Synod/Presbytery/Foundation
As an at-large pastor in Grace Presb. I have little knowledge of what the Synod is responsible for.
Seek to involve pastors who aren't chosen by a presbytery nominating committee to serve
Not aware of what's been done
used to have strong programs for COMs and COPMs and campus ministry - decreasing funds for support part of cause for demise
Have no knowledge of this area
Synod presbyter facilitated a presbytery council visioning retreat

Q23. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Sponsored BOP visits, seminars
retirement forum
Received advice, counsel and assistance for pastors in need and for transitions - excellent ministry, service and leadership
Held BOP Benefits Seminar in this presbytery
regional Benefits Consultation
contact regarding dues in arrears
temp. stated clerk serving on a GA comm.
COM member coordinate with BOP to help ministers employ benefits/tax plans & procedures
Am not familiar with this aspect.
regular visits from Bd of Pensions rep
Got help with disability benefits for ministers in general; retirement planning workshops, treasurers workshops
I don't know. I changed my standing from the UCC after I was enrolled in its Board of Pensions and I have not paid attention to the matters enumerated here.
training of stated clerks
I don't know
Advocated for Benefits for Pastors
Present to Stated Meeting
annual visit from BOP liaison
assistance for pastors
participation is part of salary package for clergy employed but other staa. no information
not sure
shared grants
Participate in CREDO
Committee on Ministry chair attends update meetings with BOP
Don't know
attended BOP consultations
Gone for Out-Service Training - Stated Clerk and Treasurer
maternity benefits
had minister who had to retire on disabilities
our regional rep has made several visits for updates and lead workshops

BOP rep. at presby. mtgs.
have had regular visits from BOP representative at functions within the presbytery
Our Presbytery participates in the regional benefits consultation conducted annually by the BOP.
attend BoP conferences
unsure
HR's meet with B of P area rep.
rep visited
Not sure
Grant to support missional ministry with first call pastors. Also conflict management training
Planned local presentations by BOP
appointed a member to be the liaison with the Board of Pensions and then serve as the contact person for our Presbytery
attend regional briefings
Presbytery staff and COM moderators have attended regional BOP consultations
training and information
attend regional gatherings

Q24. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the General Assembly Mission Council in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

coordinated mission work in country and overseas
answered questions on phone regarding ministries throughout the world
Contacted Office of Native American Congregational Enhancement (now Support), contacted Office of Cultural Proficiency, and contacted World Missions about the place of Native American missions.
A ridiculous question -- how would anyone - ANYONE know that?!?!?!?
Read Horizons Magazine
attended GAMC meetings
used online preparation for ministry resources and forms
Sponsored a visits by Linda Valentine and Cynthia Bolbach
Am not familiar with this aspect.
Young Adult volunteer, staffed a GAMC-related committee at G.A.
There could be other contacts that I don't know about. I checked ones that apply to me.
complained about new website
2 moderators went to the conference because one who was active knew about the conferences, but no more; we can't afford it. There is a group who
not sure on some questions
We had someone from the National Evangelism Office come as a trainer for our Lay Pastor students
Not sure of a lot of these
I don't know what other people are reading or how they're relating to others.
Probably lots of other stuff I don't know about.
hosted international peacemaker in 2010
I'm sure they have, but I don't specifically know this, so I'd rather leave it blank.
just talking about me
one leader on GAMC
at least the above
led or served on GA committees
Unsure of items not checked

clerk consult and conference
I'm sure more happened, but I don't know
My knowledge is limited.
I am unaware of what the Presbytery staff has done in this area.
Participated in stated clerk conferences
have limited knowledge of this area
Don't know

Q25. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Office of the General Assembly in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Rec'd legal advice from Stated Clerk Office
Sought and received excellent advice and support for tough issues - excellent ministry and leadership assistance with search for transitional leader
OVT consultation
Served on OGA-related task forces and committees; CPM interaction; hosted the G.A. stated clerk in our presbytery; Advice on immigrant fellowships
I don't know who uses what.
Attended annual polity conferences
Not sure on some?
training for PJC
Tried to help other churches submit their statistical reports
not sure
There may be more, but these are all I'm sure of.
again, just me
unsure
World Mission, Hunger Program
Help immigration issues
Again, I am unaware of how the Presbytery staff may have related to the Office except that I know staff attended the GA last summer.
again, very limited knowledge of this area
Don't know

Q26. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Foundation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Had a visit from a representative of the Foundation who has since worked with several congregations
Presentations from foundation at meeting of Presbytery.
Host foundation regional person in our office
met with rep to discuss investments
do not know
Worked with a church that was struggling to pay its PILP loan
Don't know
added to existing Pres Foundation endowments
we have in the past, not sure in the last two years
again, just me
unsure

Info on establishing an endowment
Unsure
I'm not sure about these.
Use Texas Pres. Foundation
I know they are housed in the same location
I may not be aware of the full extent of the contacts with the Foundation.
have no knowledge of this area
Don't know

Q27. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Investigated re-finance of a congregational mortgage with PILP
Directed congregations to this resource.
Have excellent relationship with Mickey, she regularly attends our Presbytery meetings and people 'know' her.
not sure if within 2 yrs
assisted congregations with PILP loans
worked with some existing loans
not sure
Consultation with PILP on problem loan
Worked with a congregation struggling to pay its PILP loan
Don't know
don't know
Encouraged presbytery to invest with PILP
me
unsure
Unsure
Not familiar enough to answer this question.
Renegotiated a church loan
worked with them on the Presbytery loan debt
been required to pay for ancient loans
Staff has been involved in exploring opportunities with PILP in addition to those available through our Church Development Corporation
assisted churches with PILP loans
have no knowledge of this area
Don't know
contacted PILP regarding a church loan
completed loan repayment

Q28. Has your presbytery office, executive, clerk, other presbytery staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

I have done these things in my role as pastor, not committee moderator
PCUSA Mod attended a presbytery meeting
Bought planning calendars
wrote for The Presbyterian Leader Series



written for pubs
if they have it is personal
not sure
Dunno what he does in his personal time!
Probably, but I'm not sure.
Resource Center Subscription
me
unsure
PPC bd connections to arrange for a speaker
Had personal contact with PPC personal at GA and at Writers Guild events
Took part in a PPC focus group for the new hymnal
participated in the POINT program
Worked with PPC at APCE in Albuquerque NM meeting this past February
Presbyterian Outlook subscription
I am unaware of the full extent of the relationship with the PPC
have no knowledge of this area
Don't know

- Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:
- a. Presbyteries and their duties and functions?

Presbyteries have the historic duty, since 1789, of care and oversight of both pastors and churches. The last 40 years have seen programmatic responsibilities dumped onto what was once an ecclesiastical body. What Synods used to do, Presbyteries do now. What GA used to do, presbyteries do now. It has strained presbyteries almost to the breaking point. They are stressed by being the "pinch point" between congregations and GA.
We are in the midst of a program designed to discover, as a Presbytery, what God has in mind for us. We are looking closely at the ways our Presbytery serves the congregations and pastors, and the spiritual guidance and encouragement they offer.
Presbyteries have too many redundant positions. Every presbytery has a stated clerk, yet the job of the stated clerk could be shared by multiple presbyteries if we could work out the "be a member of that particular judicatory: Every Presbytery has a web master. That is redundant. Why can we not have one webmaster for multiple settings? We have multiple offices, yet, most of us can function virtually. The connections are the relationships - by phone or in person. These have to be made. The jobs of resourcing congregations can be outsourced to multiple presbyteries, using the money we currently use for Synods to assist.
Given the reality of declining membership, I believe it is imperative that Presbyteries become more efficient. With new technologies, we ought to be able to do more with less staff. I see this happening in our Presbytery and it needs to happen everywhere.
In order to function effectively in the changing ecclesiological culture in which we find ourselves I believe that it will be increasingly necessary to reduce our Presbytery geographic and staff sizes in order to more effectively address the needs of our congregations. Please get presbyteries to stop using unified mission monies/budgets to pay for administrative expenses that can't be provided for in the administrative budgets. Please also ask them to replace the unified giving percentages we were using in the 1970's.
I'm not sure how to address the isolation experienced by small churches in presbyteries with expansive geographic boundaries. Wouldn't Synods be able to provide some programmatic resourcing for congregations regionally in such cases?
We have some members of the church working very hard and serving on more than one committee while other members refuse service or are not asked.
Allow non-geographic presbyteries based on theology. It may be the only way to hold the PCUSA together. It is better to have theological alignment than to lose our conservative brothers and sisters in Christ.
It is time to move away from per capita funding, a regressive "tax" which does not take into account a church's income. It's quite possible for a smaller church to have significantly more income per year than a larger church and yet pay less per capita.

That "Presbyteries" are not a collection of staff persons, but the body of members/commissioners that take actions that are facilitated by the staff. The term "presbytery" is misconstrued by most PCUSA congregations.
To foster collegiality presbyteries need to be smaller.
We need to combine Presbyteries, giving us more churches, more people, and more money to work with.
OUR presbytery IS EXTREMELY DIVIDED OVER THEOLOGY TO THE POINT OF WANTING TO SPLIT TO AVOID FURTHER CONFLICT
Our presbytery is in its first full year of functioning without an executive. As a member of Council, I am part of the group that is doing work to update our Manual of Operations to make it easier for committee chairs to transition without that kind of staff person's oversight. I believe that our presbytery is growing to be more "connectional" and more intentional in mission, now that the clergy and lay members of presbytery feel more responsibility to carry out these functions without an executive on staff. The transition is proving to be a good thing for us.
We are now working without an Executive Presbyter. We have a Stated Clerk and Asst. Clerk. The Stated Clerk is has some part time employment. We have one part time office manager. We are collaborating with another Presbytery for Accounting services. The rest is all volunteer initiative. We're busy and looking forward to updating our manual of operations and services to our congregations.
The same comment could be applied to each judicatory: We continue to use a business model to function rather than a missional model. Unless many of the Presbyterians in the PC(USA) feel that their more direct support from each judicatory, we'll probably continue to decline.
Size is toooooo large, to hard to reach everyone, to form connections
Activities are not widely known
Presbyteries need to become less bureaucratic, less focused on meetings, and more focused on healthy congregations, healthy pastors and REAL accountability for leaders. Rolls need to be cleansed of all retired and specialized clergy - pastors and elders who actually represent congregations - should ALONE have vote in presbytery.
NO [3 leaders made this comment]
It is not clear how strong the Presbytery mandate is to close/consolidate very small churches. As a result we wait until they wither and die.
Staff too large and takes too much of the operating budget
Presbyteries exist to support local congregations, not the other way around.
Presbyteries need to focus on the individual congregations and become the conduit for connectionalism to flow both ways.
The Presbytery is where the action is and needs to be the primary partner with local congregations as they are empowered to carry on effective ministry for Jesus Christ.
Primary focus should be on presbytery's role of determining minister members' fitness for membership, on resourcing its congregations, and formation of strong theological understanding of presbytery's core values (theological and ecclesiastical)
Seems we have become dysfunctional due to conservative/liberal split. This split on certain committees has left them unable to function effectively.
We are a small, harmonious, and hard-working presbytery. I am currently moderator of COM, quite green at this, and not involved in the other committees. The whole state is big in area, small in population, hard-pressed economically even in boom times, used to relying on ourselves. Conditions taken for granted elsewhere are irrelevant to us. Perhaps we are closet isolationists, but happy ones.
Distance needs to be considered. It takes me 3 1/2 hours to get to our Presbytery office and mileage and other travel costs add up. We want to encourage people from all over the Presbytery to be active, and for many, its cost prohibitive unless the Presbytery can reimburse.
We need lots of authorization to use technology in our meetings as we have large distances and few people. It's unreasonable to meet in person year around.
With electronic communications and the availability of on-line resources, the Presbytery is moving to becoming an enabler and assistant to the churches to obtain resources rather than providing them. Presbytery needs to focus on assuring high quality pastors and resolving unhealthy congregational situations.
Ministers and those elders who attend presbytery meetings with some regularity and/or who are members of presbytery committees/teams have some working knowledge of what presbyteries do. Otherwise, the members in the pews have little awareness (and likely little interest) in presbytery's duties and functions.
We are looking at restructuring triennial visits whether NFOG passes or not.

The Presbytery is envisioning changes regarding its functions for the member churches. It is just now revising its mission statement in that regard and council is conducting "envisioning" discussions.
Without a great deal to compare it to, I sense that this Presbytery functions at a very high level especially given its dwindling resources.
As at least this presbytery is best represented by its Council, it may not be totally helpful to depend on staff input to the MGB Commission, although it may seem more convenient.
Facilitate sharing of models and structures; analysis of viability criteria
I think it would be good to encourage the formation of non-geographical presbyteries, or perhaps "orders" to which congregations and pastors could subscribe, perhaps in line with the suggestions made in the recent letter published by pastors of large churches.
My presbytery is in free fall and operates by the seat of its pants. It reorganized about six years ago and quickly placed the plans in a bottom desk drawer. The serving exec was hired for teaching not administrating. 75% of his time is spent in administrative matters for which he is not qualified or particularly interested. Presbytery has a \$172,000 mission budget for which \$100,000 goes into the teaching Presbyter's compensation package.
The leadership in any capacity needs to be better informed of inter presbytery, intra presbytery and GA. The key will be to have solid leadership rather than simply taking care of someone who is without a call. The understanding of vote percentages needs to be clarified; rather than accepting a 60/40 split both presbytery and staff person need not move ahead. It is stressed for others and needs to be stressed for other called positions. The staff people need solid training in a wide variety of areas. When there is a major conflict and a complaint has been filed, staff needs to know how to handle it timely.
It's difficult for the "person in the pew" to understand what Presbytery is, what it does, why we need to support it.
Maximize flexibility
If the new nFOG comes into effect, the range of duties and responsibilities for a Presbytery greatly increases. Are our presbyteries up to the task or will we live in a 'local rule' kind of network of churches?
Partnership, sharing of resources and simple good stewardship are essential to the future of Presbyteries.
Property ownership. Because of the theological climate in the PC(USA), I don't think that congregations should be held hostage by a theological or scriptural interpretation that they do not agree with. Ordination of a practicing homosexual does not uphold scriptural authority. What happens to congregations (pastors, leaders and members) who will not uphold this practice? There needs to be more freedom with how a congregation associates and is in relationship with presbytery, synod and GA.
Watching the vote results on amendments this year I notice the great difference in membership of our presbyteries; some have hundreds voting, many have dozens. Generally smaller membership presbyteries promote relationships that larger, corporate, programmatic presbyteries can't (or don't) achieve. The MGB commission should look at realigning presbyteries into smaller groups.
in all areas of the church I feel that the PCUSA does the worst job at telling the congregational members in the pews what wonderful things are actually happening in the church. All they hear is the negative and many will not take the time to look for anything else. This goes for Synods and GA.
connectionalism needs definition.
As our denomination loses members it may begin to make excellent sense to merge/close/combine some Presbyteries. If you could help to create a process to make that easier--that would be great.
We are clearly in a situation where we are going to have to consider working more closely with other Presbyteries in our area to control operating costs.
Geography is always a problem. We meet centrally to resolve that so the farthest anyone has to drive is 2 hours. Smaller area would not be helpful. Perhaps you should look at where churches are on a map and put those on the edge of another presbytery with it. For instance, we have a NCD in Quincy, IL, which is on the border with East Iowa. What does that look like on the map?
My sense is that presbyteries are moving towards facilitating the life and mission of local congregations, which strikes me as exactly the right purpose of a presbytery.
As COM chair, I am an un-paid Presbytery staff person. I am finding the work load to be a challenge. A small presbytery has fewer folks to draw from to do the work. A larger presbytery may have more work to do. I think the changing times are generating more church conflicts. The ability of a presbytery to respond constructively to that needs to be kept in mind.
I see presbyteries as THE middle governing body.
reducing the size and scope of a presbytery could be a useful vision;

As PW Moderator I have been most impressed with the workings of our Presbytery Council. Everyone on the Council is knowledgeable, friendly and eager to answer questions when asked. Every meeting is conducted in a businesslike manner.
The biggest difficulty our Presbytery faces is distrust and suspicion between 'liberals' and 'conservatives.' We are about to lose one of our wealthier congregations due to the divisive leadership of its pastor, but seemed unable to do anything about it.
feel that we are active and concerned to cooperate with Synod, and the General Assembly, and all of our fifty (50) congregations in aiding in their work of spreading the Word and doing their jobs.
Generally speaking, presbyteries in our region work well together.
The ministries and projects that comprise the (Biblically mandated) mission of the church, that are only possible at the Presbytery level, need to be clarified and promoted.
It will not be beneficial to advise presbyteries to become non-geographical. The hurdles to a non-geographical presbytery--financial, communication, etc. are significant.
I think we need to allow congregations (if they wish) to join other Presbyteries non-geographically and/or form small presbyteries. I think we will have greater participation and connectional focus.
We are a small presbytery with most of the small congregation are without pastors. The presbytery has trained CLP who are serving these small churches.
Look for simplicity and clarity in ministries. Stop trying to do everything for everybody, and be everything for everybody. Furthermore, educate, educate and educate more about what a presbytery can and should do -- and, again, that does NOT mean trying to do everything for everybody. We have too much dependence by sessions and pastors of small churches on waiting for the presbytery to do for them, when they can do so much more for themselves!
My response to a, b, and c is education. Few of our members are lifelong Presbyterians who are familiar with a, b, and c. Therefore they need to be introduced to the entities so that they may learn that they are a vital part of our connectionalism. So often, we assume that every member knows as much about our form of government as do those of us who are lifelong Presbyterians. We do a poor job of bringing new members into the larger church. And yet the larger church - presbytery, synod and GA is a portion of our identification.
change at all levels
I think the basic functions of the Presbyteries are being done well that is overseeing and caring for the sessions and pastoral staff within the Presbytery. The weakness is in the area of connecting to the general rank and file members.
Need to focus more on supporting churches than on programs. It's easy to get people together on committees, but the real meat of a presbytery is supporting churches and pastors.
I think the book, "The Fly in the Ointment: Why Denominations Aren't Helping Their Congregations...And How They Can" (Church Publishing: NY) summarizes well my feelings about Presbytery. It ends up setting up alternative to the churches, instead of focusing on helping churches grow. We have a great new Executive. Yet the Presbytery itself does not have a vision of what we need to do to help congregations thrive.
Presbyteries serve an important role, but I think it might be time to take another look at presbytery boundaries or presbytery inter-cooperation, to see if there might be ways to work together more efficiently for the future while still supporting local churches.
We need to teach our pastors and elders the importance of being imbedded in Scripture.
The diversity of theology, geography, demographics, congregational size and context created by geographic presbyteries has been very valuable for our presbytery and allows for congregations to experience new & different contexts for ministry. Moving to non-geographic presbyteries would significantly diminish this wonderful asset as we would likely become more homogeneous and exposed to less ways of experiencing God's vision for ministry in the world.
Deeply desire that we find a way to come together for mission instead of politics and better support our congregations on the front line.
Continue the focus on the Presbytery supporting the local congregations as opposed to the local congregations supporting the Presbytery.
We should have non geographical presbyteries so churches can form like minded bodies to avoid leaving the denomination
It may need a system to equip and train peoples to be effective elders.
There needs to be more vision and an effort to rationalize churches in size and location.

We must form Presbyteries and bodies that fall along theological lines - especially with regards to GLBT ordination. The conservative and evangelical congregations will not stay in the PCUSA. If there is going to be at least some connectional system, it must be with like-minded theological bodies.
We should have non geographical presbyteries so churches can form like minded bodies to avoid leaving the denomination
Presbyteries play a key role in keeping track of the local churches. The network of people that are part of the committees and commissions are a key resource in detecting early signs of trouble in congregations. They are also a resource in helping the congregations
I would be interested in a conversation about presbytery leadership and governance in our denomination and wonder what resources are available on these topics. Specifically, I am concerned that presbytery staff may be encouraged to over-function (do the work of COM) rather than help lead and cast a vision for the ministry and mission of the presbytery. This has been a struggle in our presbytery . . . what is the role of the EP?
I see the issues in the PCUSA related to individuals, congregations, presbyteries, synods, etc., as analogous to the political debate between libertarians (individuals), conservatives (local government), state rights, and "big" government. The idea of "connectedness" has been lost (or never understood) by many rank-and-file members. The best way to get this communicated and experienced is congregation to Presbytery. That means that INITIALLY (not ultimately) the individual members and individual congregations have to see the direction of help/initiation of relationship, etc. being Presbytery to local. Then, as the relationship is better established (not just experienced by the pastor and an elder for occasional presbytery meetings) and connectedness is lived out, individuals and congregations can comprehend that we are the Presbytery. That means Presbytery staff and leaders must do more than "have meetings."
Providence Presbytery is a very effective Presbytery and a great size with number of churches and amount of area it covers. Charlotte Presbytery is too large and poor staff communication and direction. There is no congregational support from the Presbytery staff. Western North Carolina is too Large of an area and Gaston County churches are left out of the loop.
Less is more...
Presbyteries should focus on administration and not programs. Membership in the presbyteries should be non-geographical in nature and based on common theology and vision for ministry. Local sessions should be given the freedom to choose which presbytery to belong.
I am a general presbyter so I am aware of the vital role that presbyteries can play in the life of congregations. Presbyteries can nurture congregations, support them in times for crises, applaud them in times of expanding mission, help them find pastors, provide building loans, and the list goes on and on. It is a pleasure to serve the congregations in this presbytery.
I think a compelling role of presbyteries is to as an organized network of churches in mission together.
The purpose of the Presbytery is to assist the local congregation in it's mission and ministry. It does not need to do it's own mission. The Presbytery should also have a lean staffing plan.
Many of the Mission Churches within our Presbytery are experiencing a very high cost of heating fuel, and electricity. This makes loss of mission support funds a hardship for our mission churches.
I feel the Presbytery still serves a vital role in the overall mission of the PCUSA. Without it, the churches would soon become individual entities unto themselves. There needs to be some body that promotes the connectional nature of our denomination. Some body that promotes shared worship, stewardship, mission, etc. There needs to be some body that oversees the ministry of the local congregations and deals with "issues" as they occur, whether this be filling pulpits, finding called and installed pastors, shepherding candidates and inquirers, or generally challenging churches in their outreach and vision within their communities. It also is an independent body for dealing with conflicts that manifest within the individual congregations.
Presbytery is a major component of our Presbyterian system.
need to become non-geographical
Our Presbytery is going through a transitional period for the next 3 years.
Our Presbytery co-sponsors with McCormick Seminary a Leadership development day in Winter each year. It is extremely well attended and valuable for lay people and speakers come from within the Presbytery, except for the Key Note speaker.
I believe the Presbyterian Church needs to continue to find ways to allow Presbyteries to work together, merge, change boundaries. All of this takes time but with the the use of computers and technology, it no longers means that a Presbytery has to have an office or a building.

I have been serving on committees of the Presbytery of Northern New England and have not known of any training program for leaders, other than Early Ministry Institute for newly ordained clergy.
We have a wonderful presbytery and it provides important support to the churches. I wish the churches would make more of an effort to utilize what the presbytery offers.
Presbyteries need to continue to work on being more relational and less regulatory; more program facilitators and less program developers.
if nfog passes this could change a lot. COM would do better if it could move beyond dike-plugging. Attention to prayer and resourcing congregations has improved relations and functionality.
Make presbyteries smaller and eliminate wherever possible "General Presbyters; "Executive Presbyters" and the like who are overpaid and un-necessary functionaries that harken back to a vanished era in the life of the church. The PCUSA used to live without them it can do so effectively again. Large presbyteries have little sense of community and identity. Distance and the associated costs impact attendance. If the church wants to encourage what few younger elders are left to attend presbytery why hold meetings on weekdays during working hours? Ministers don't like meetings on Saturdays but where in our polity does it state presbytery meetings are for the convenience of the clergy? if presbyteries were smaller with less structure and more collegiality and informality and devoid of "Presbyters" who think they are the boss then they might, just might, recapture some of their relevance.
Presbyteries need to be more relational and less regulatory.
most congregations are not aware of Presbytery's duties and functions
I have concern about presbytery's inability to assist Candidates, who have completed seminary training three or four years ago, in suitable full or part-time positions when many small churches have no pastor. I really appreciate and utilize the Resource Center of Presbytery.
Please help presbyteries become smaller and do less!! I believe that the local church is where 99% of the mission and evangelism should be done. Let presbyteries be an theological and (when needed) bureaucratic structures that minimally holds us together as presbyterians.
Given the rising gasoline prices, large presbyteries need to do more with technology such as Skype to facilitate committee and council meetings so less travel time and money is being spent just getting to and from meetings.
Staff should be out with the people and not sitting in meetings. They can be most valuable by connecting congregations to share resources rather than consuming financial resources and attempting to provide services.
clarity and purpose with a smaller staff and the increase of regional church connections within presbyteries
Presbyteries are a vital link in a connectional church. In addition to oversight and administrative functions, they can bring local congregations together to accomplish more than they could alone. I would like to see more efforts across PNK to develop cross-congregation dialog and mission.
Assist ordained officers in their understanding and use of all creeds and confessions in the Book of Confessions as a "confessional" church. Enable elected officers in understanding the Ordination Questions and the applications of their responses to these Ordination Questions as the sessions approve newly elected officers to the leadership of the church (Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assembly).
We need help adopting new technology and structures that will allow us to better serve churches that are distanced from each other.
There has been interest in our church with nongeographic presbyteries of like minded, conservative, congregations. The constant disagreement over fidelity and chastity has had a negative impact on our congregation and its willingness to work in the local presbytery. This is a congregational response, not my personal response.
More proactive contact with churches on successes in growing congregations.
My presbytery is BIG - but we have been blessed with great staff and excellent programming over the years. There is always talk of dividing the presbytery into smaller sections; but I think that many would be disappointed in what each new body could actually do with their respective new sizes.
We no longer have an EP, we have a Presbytery Administrator. We are doing well financially but I believe we are really missing out on service to congregations and ministers. What to do?
Need to increase level of communication and transparency with local congregations.
our presbytery (Geneva) has been on a nearly six-year journey to respond to God and the needs of our congregations, primarily in vision and role and only secondarily in structure. Our calling is to resource our congregations as they transform their mission and ministries in their communities. It's making a big difference!
We have many dedicated elders, pastors and other lay people who provide many services for the PY, especially in the COM, CPM, Nominations, Council and in one specific subject, Social Justice.
some presbyteries are too big, making relationships and pastoral care difficult,

I think that these years are a time of transition to newer forms of communication, newer models for doing ministry, and allowing for change in structure from the top-down models and staff-driven models of the past. Change is painful, and a lot of presbytery work will focus on closing churches until we work between congregations to train more evangelists and allow for new models of doing church that have broader leadership (not just pastor do everything), less connection with buildings, and concrete focus on church growth... helping churches not to accept sustainability, but growth as model. Unfortunately many, many churches are not willing, ready, or believe they are able to engage in growth, and it is presbytery's function to help identify leaders, training, strategies, and wake up calls to hold those congregations accountable to the six great ends of the church.
Presbyterian church was never intended to be the hierarchy it has become. GA, and some presbyteries have forgotten that they are to be coalitions, not bishops and arch-bishops. We need the connectionalism of presbyteries, but they must be relational and equipping, not mandating and punitive. Camps, and joint missions and combined officer training, and these things help churches.
Our Presbytery has not been able to leave behind our 1950's organizational model, possibly because the entire denomination has not been able to give up its comfort with this model.
In today's world with so many churches having funding issues as well as all the issues with church officer standards, the main question for presbyteries is how they can best be of service to the smaller churches in their area. These are the churches we are going to lose whether by just shutting down in small towns or the congregation leaves for other churches. Presbyteries need to be more entrepreneurial in spirit and not so focused on committees, councils and other bureaucracy and instead get out in the community and be hands on by helping those in need.
Our presbytery is so large we are focusing on finding ways to function in smaller "communities." A lot of energy and money is spent trying to find effective ways to function as a large presbytery.
In general, congregations fail to show interest in or engagement with the presbytery. This presbytery continues to attempt to live the connectional model of our denomination.
Establishment of minimum guidelines for an effective and healthy presbytery based on church size, etc.
Move from an Executive to a Moderator..Stated Clerk Model...Consolidate Presbyteries to compensate for lack of financial resources
If this denomination is to survive, we must strengthen the ties of individual churches to the Presbytery.
I think that the Presbytery staff are to support the pastors and the congregations. Not the congregations to support the staff.

Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
b. Presbyteries' relationships with their synods?

If there wasn't a Synod, presbyteries in a region would probably have to form one. That said, most people in a presbytery don't know or care what a synod does. But then they don't have to.
I see the Synod as a dinosaur - it sits there, and is pretty big, but it does little of relevance to the congregations and is on its way out.
The relationship with the Synod has not been effective for years because the foundational principle - that we need geographical connections - is no longer true or helpful. No matter who is in the position, the relationship is characterized by lack of effective cooperation and vision. Synods are unnecessary. Regional PJC's can do the judicial work that is necessary. We are not that big anymore.
In the Synod of the Trinity the relationship of the presbyteries to the Synod seems to be good.
I am convinced that we can no longer support synods. I believe their duties should be folded into the Presbytery level and that Presbyteries (at least on the East Coast) should be merged to make fewer judicatories. People in the church are frustrated with high administrative costs and want a greater proportion of their money to go directly to mission.
We don't need Synods. Period.
Synods are needed to facilitate regional mission among Presbyteries that cover several states rather than several counties. IMHO.
Our relationship with the synod has been positive
We hope to improve this in the future. Our poor relationship seems to have been a problem from our end, not synod's.
I question the need for synods, Our synod dropped much programming and few around here noticed it, particularly at the congregational level.

Synods are unnecessary in the modern age. They add a layer of bureaucracy that does not provide sufficient benefit for the cost of the investment. There is no reason the function of synods could not be divided between presbyteries and GA at a much lower cost than continuing the synods.
No need for synods
In this era Synods seem to have far less relevance and, indeed, usefulness.
As a presbytery, I think we have a good relationship with our synod, but there is a breakdown in communication somewhere between us and the Presbyterian in the pews: they haven't a clue about what the synods do and why we have them.
The Church of Scotland hae nae Synods
Synod truly may not have much of a role in the long term. (I say that as someone who participates in the Synod of the Trinity which is quite helpful. But I realize that the vast majority of people in this presbytery would not notice if the Synod were to disappear.)
We are well supported by our Synod staff and find their expertise to be invaluable.
Their PJC seems useful., Other than that, it's hard to see a value.
It is time to conclude the synod structure.
In my opinion, the synod level governing body should be eliminated.
More and more Presbyteries are distancing from Synod relationships. It seems redundant.
Our involvement with Synod is irrelevant. Synod does very little to assist our Presbytery.
As a minister member of PCUSA for the last 30 years I can no longer understand the purpose of Synod. I think they need to be eliminated with the hope of non-geographical type relationships built around missional goals. Working on projects and events that will connect our people with like minded people.
<b>OTHER THAN THE CREDIT UNION SYNOD APPEARS TO BE AN UNECESSARY FILTER BETWEEN PRESBYTERY AND GA</b>
There is not a lot of activity with our Synod. There were successful youth trips to the Pres. Office of the UN that was initiated at the Synod level and included five Presbyteries in our region. Meetings of the Exec. Presbyters from our Synod forget to invite our Moderator or Clerk to these meetings. Even before the untimely death of our Synod Moderator, there was not a lot of services or connection. This is even more true at the congregational level.
We need to abolish Synods!!!! An old model that can be addressed with modern technical methods. Don't need the expense involved.
Our Presbytery is a major supporter of our Synod. We work very closely together and continue to rely heavily on the wisdom, leadership, spiritual direction, and dollars in all forms from our Synod.
Not too much going on with the Synod except in PW
Most congregations are unaware of relationships
what are synods for? they feel like black holes where money goes but nothing ever comes back.
NO [3 leaders made this comment]
We work better as a state cluster of presbyteries. Synod isn't "there" in any significant way, other than as a funnel for money and PJC review. Find another way to handle these functions and do away with synod.
Synod does nothing and should be abolished
Synods should keep out of the way and let presbyteries work.
Other than hearing PJC appeals, there seems to be little benefit from this organization.
Synods need to be phased out completely - with regional judicial functions re-imagined - and with equitable distribution of existing funds and endowments
Get rid of synods
We see no purpose for the synod and have see no benefit derived from them.
Synods are a thing of the past, and no longer necessary. My sense is the Synod of the Northeast is only around because it has so too money and doesn't know what to do with it.
I don't know; I never think about this. We know that nobody in the Church has money to throw around, and so far, so far as I know, we don't expect outside entities to solve our problems. Maybe if I had been higher up in the hierarchy, for longer, I would know more about this.
Synod of the Trinity has successfully reduced its role to the provision of services actively requested by presbyteries. As such it is very useful and light on the administrative budget.



Our Synod has been glue in our relationships with other Presbyteries. However, I understood they were "going away".
Synod of Northeast has Presbytery Partnership Groups which occasionally work together. Ours has the camp at Holmes.
Synods are becoming irrelevant with the new communications available
Really don't see the point of the synod. It seems like a duplication of services and expense. Rather than consolidating and merging presbyteries, it would make more sense to eliminate the synods.
Except for those ministers and elders who are actively involved in some aspect of synod work, the role of synod is not well understood or appreciated. As a presbytery stated clerk, I had some grasp of synod's function, but it was not until I became stated clerk of synod that I became aware of the scope of synod's responsibilities.
It would seem that Synod functions could be streamlined and reworked to avoid duplication of the work of other levels of the governing structure.
I have not been very involved with Synod matters but in listening to reports see little benefit
We are actively involved in our synod with the last and vice moderators from our presbytery.
Synods are of real value in modulating the connectionalism of the presbyteries with the General Assembly-level life of the PC(USA).
I believe that the synod is as effective as any. However, there is a real possibility that the structure could fill only ecclesiastical functions only and the remainder of synod work could be accomplished without the structure itself.
Presbyteries would function better by relating directly to the General Assembly without the intervening synods.
They seem to have little ry.relevance in our area of the count
I do not think Synods are necessary any longer
Synod needs to be abolished. The work they do does not equal the salaries being paid.
There's a general feeling that synods are unnecessary - an extra layer of bureaucracy that doesn't mean a great deal.
Do away with synods
Synods are s resource. Presbyteries need to share a vision for the role Synods should play and then allow Synod leadership to model themselves appropriately.
Property ownership. Because of the theological climate in the PC(USA), I don't think that congregations should be held hostage by a theological or scriptural interpretation that they do not agree with. Ordination of a practicing homosexual does not uphold scriptural authority. What happens to congregations (pastors, leaders and members) who will not uphold this practice? There needs to be more freedom with how a congregation associates and is in relationship with presbytery, synod and GA.
The presbyteries in our synod have a very poor relationship and a very poor opinion of our synod. Abolish synods.
The synod level of our church government needs to be eliminated.
synods are no longer relevant.
I registered my enthusiasm for eliminating synods earlier in the survey, and I want to make it explicit here. Synods are geographically too large to have regular and meaningful meetings, and I know of no synod event that couldn't be done just as well by a collection of Presbyteries. A small Office of Presbytery Relations (maybe we could come up with a snappier name) at the Presbyterian Center could very effectively replace our many synod offices, and a few (maybe four) appellate level judicial commissions could replace synod PJs. Please consider taking the radical step of recommending the elimination of synod as a layer of Presbyterian governance.
Our Synod has very little impact on the functioning of our congregations or Presbytery.
We have a fine relationship with the Synod of Lincoln Trails. Many Presbytery of Great Rivers folk have been on Synod committees or leaders/moderators. I think Lincoln Trails has found what it can best do for us: train lay pastors and other leaders, and they do it well. Other synods might learn from them. I was on a Synod committee when there were four or five executives, now there's one. A new day and a new opportunity for focus.
Other than being another link in the chain, I am skeptical of the purpose and necessity of the synod. In a time of declining resources, I do not see the necessity of maintaining (at a cost) the office of the synod. The primary purpose I can see would be to provide for a regional Permanent Judicial Commission that covers a larger geographical range than a presbytery. Other than that, I would advocate beginning to eliminate them.
Synod has been a helpful source of funding. It has been more banker/cheerleader than leader.
Our PW Presbytery group and the Synod PW group work closely together. This is a very good working relationship and I have seen no problems at all in my time in serving on both.

In our Presbytery, there is a strong contingent which is actively working to destroy the relationship between Presbytery and Synod, and get the Synod dismantled. This is unfortunate, as our Synod has actually picked up a big chunk of pastoral support and training which cannot be effected at the Presbytery level.
Effective working relationship through our Executive Presbyter who is very active and very effective.
synods are much too large. South Carolina effectively functions as a separate synod providing services the 5 presbyteries cannot do on their own. Single state synods would work in the southeastern US.
I have no idea of presbyteries' relationship with synods.
Any ministries and projects that comprise the (Biblically mandated) mission of the church, but that are only possible to accomplish at the Synod level (such as support of college student ministry), need to be clarified and promoted. Ancillary and superfluous priorities that are merely "politically correct" but that do nothing to facilitate the 5 great ends of the church need to be abandoned.
Presbyteries and synods should foster good relationships. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that synods should be "phased out" gradually within the next decade.
I think Synods should also reform and Presbyteries voluntarily form under Synods to provide more of a judicatory function.
We try to involve ourselves with the synod, however, we are so far removed from the synod office, and travel is very expensive. However, the Presbytery Exc. is very faithful in attending the meeting that are especially subject to our concerns as a presbytery
Our presbytery is an island...no real partnership with any other presbytery, whether in our synod or not.
Looser ties -- synods are irrelevant to the practice of ministry in local churches.
I am in favor of eliminating synods entirely. I was at one time very active in synod work myself. I feel Presbyteries and G.A. could do the ministry & mission of synods more effectively if money was allocated to them.
Other than the review of presbytery minutes and submitting nominees to the synod, I don't recall any other interactions.
No real contact or support from Synod except for judicial issues or review of minutes.
Not sure. I do not see much of this relationships. The role and functions of the Synod is very unclear to the rank and file members.
Most effective help has been in facilitating inter-presbytery and inter-synod communication and consultations on topics such as new congregation development and in fostering and supporting international partnerships between presbyteries and congregations. Those international partnerships have strengthened and pulled our congregations together. Extremely helpful in those ways. Good connectional knowledge across our synod of people and resources of particular expertise and help. However, I seriously question the need for a middle level of governance and administration. Streamline to focus on connecting and resourcing programs.
I really don't know what a synod does.
Synod has not been worth the amount of funds it takes to run it. Good people, but no vision. For Synod to be useful at all, it needs to take leadership in helping the Presbyteries strategize about regional concerns. Instead, Synod is just a rather ineffective level of bureaucracy.
We have a great relationship with our synod, but I wonder if synod's haven't perhaps outlived their usefulness. The ways synods coordinate presbyteries working together can be valuable. It would seem that presbyteries could do this on their own, but whether they would do it without synod's help is uncertain.
Our synod has been valuable in providing connections & opportunities across presbyteries and also working with other synods. There is at times a disconnect between the presbytery and synod, but overall our synod has been a valuable partner in ministry that is very "value added" and is not just another level of bureaucracy.
Our synod has, in the past, been a great partner in building COM & CPM networks and in leadership development. Only financial constraints have limited that role in recent years. We continue to count on synod's partnership in carrying out our presbytery mission.
Synod of the Pacific did a remarkable job of handling litigation for the presbytery. Truly appreciate the money for mission provided for the Synod of the Pacific savings and loan program.
Still have difficulty understanding the need for synods.
We don't really need synods
Synods must first allow theological presbyteries. Then Synods must find creative ways in which these presbyteries can have meaningful fellowship.
Difficult to get anyone interested in the synod and its activities. Can't find commissioners, and there's little interest in what goes on there...

useless
It is hard to see what additional the Synods provide that the G.A. and Presbyteries don't - at least in our case.
I do not see a real need for Synods
Synod's do not work...Never hear anything out of them and when I do call for help or a question you can never talk to a person and when someone returns your call they have no clue to the answer.
Synods in our part of the world seem increasingly unimportant...The travel distance from one end to the other keeps it from being practical or useful. Smaller synods (say around state lines) make more sense if they are to be kept at all. However economic realities suggest they probably need to go away.
Again, this relationship should be non-geographical in nature and based on a common theology and vision for ministry.
If Synods can support the ministry and vision of presbyteries, then there is a vital role for synods. I see this as the primary task but not the only task of these relationships.
It can be helpful to think regionally and resource and learn from one another across presbyteries but rarely is this done at the synod level.
Why are Synod's necessary?What unique purpose do they fulfill?Why would a local congregation care about a Synod?If a local congregation has no use for the Synod, what use does a Presbytery?
Our Presbytery has received several grants from our Synod, which has been very helpful.
I have been a Presbyterian my whole life and really have had very little connection to the Synod. I do not feel qualified to comment on the role of the Synod within the PCUSA. However, the question does become, if I have made it for 60+ years as a leader within the church and have not had much connection to the Synod, is it necessary?
The Synod currently provides very little in the way of programs, which has resulted in substantial decreases in Presbytery funding to the Synod over the last several years. The Presbytery has taken on the Synod's previous role in a couple of areas.
Presbytery and Synod should continue to work together to coordinate mission on a regional basis.
need a 17th synod
Limited exposure to what goes on, like a brief report at Presbytery meetings. The Synod newsletter is good, but frequency of contacts does not keep my up to date or sustain my interest.
It appears from the "outside" that the major function for this Synod is the work of the PJC.
Our Synod has been a model among others in the country. We have had co-executives until this past summer, and programming for new clergy, interim pastor training, stewardship assistance, synod school were among the best lead programs they provided. Now with one executive, of course the amount of leadership available is less.
This seems to be the weakest link in the chain.
I believe it is time for Synods to be eliminated or downsized to skeletal staff. There just doesn't seem to be a need for an additional middle governing body level. Most presbyteries operate very independently. If anything I think another middle governing body level bogs down the process for change. I think Synods are in a survival mode and not being particularly helpful creating extra work for presbyteries or wanting to take over some of presbytery responsibilities.
I've been in my presbytery for 25 years. Have never felt that the synod was particularly helpful.
I am a member of the Mission to the USA committee, a program the synod funds. The presbyteries could not provide this great program with the synod support.
There is a decreasing need for a synod stucture.
One continues to question the need for the synod governance level
EP forum keeps synod connections better than if it didn't meet. Some of the mission coordination at this level unique and good; not easily assumed by presbytery or GA.
Abolish all synods
Presbyteries need more relationships with synods; otherwise, what are synods for?
Synods probably need to "go away"
most congregations are not award of Synods functions
More interactive projects and programs.
I am no longer sure about the viability of Synods. Fewer and fewer mission projects are being handled by the Synods as their resources decline. Perhaps Synods need to be simply a review body for disciplinary, COM and inter-presbytery issues.

Get rid of synods altogether
Synods should help to facilitate work that presbyteries can't accomplish individually and promoting relationships with pastors that cross the artificial presbytery boundaries we have drawn that often don't make geographic sense.
clarity and purpose
Since my focus is on the life of particular congregations, I have not seen as much need for synods as I do for presbyteries.
Provide specific interpretation of inter-relationships in Mission of Presbytery Committees and congregations with specific ministries of their Synod. Most of the relationships are limited to specific committees of presbyteries with some or all other presbyteries within their synod. Interpret and involve more Presbyterians with their Synod.
We are getting ready to participate in a virtual synod in the very near future and are excited about how that will work.
Because the Synod of Lincoln Trails is so effective and important to the work of my Presbytery (Chicago), I cannot understand the push to devalue, let alone dissolve, Synods. I pray it will not happen in my life-time.
I see very little that synod does for our church or our Presbytery. I see the functioning body of the PCUSA as the presbytery and the local congregation, not the synod.
I think the time has come when the Synod's role in our connectional church needs to be reevaluated and probably restructured.
One of the reasons that my presbytery has a "fair" relationship with the synod is that for the past several years the executive has clearly wanted synods to go away so it did not matter what the synod did or did not do - the synod was always "bad." I know this for a fact because I served as synod Stated Clerk for seven years and saw it first hand in forums and other gatherings of representatives of presbyteries.
What relationships?
Other than loans, not certain what Synods do that is of value to local congregations.
Synod can provide an important and useful role regarding support for clusters of presbyteries. This includes distribution of mission monies for the use by the presbytery groupings. With small membership presbyteries, such as my own, this is vitally important. The cluster, for example, has contracted with an advocate for peace and justice who also arranges opportunities such as visits to the UN for youth. Such activities would probably not be possible without the partnership. As a member of the Synod PJC, I consider the role of the Synod again critical; I cannot imagine every case that comes from presbyteries going directly to the GAPJC.
may very well be time for the too-big regional Synod of the Northeast to move to NY, NJ, and New England Synods with SNE funding allocated to the new/old synods
As communication is more and more broadly available, I think that much of synod's functions can be handled more locally, but that will again require congregations and presbyteries to take on the work of being connectional.
Sporadic. Most relationships occur in PPGs, commissioners to the Synod, and the Executive Presbyter and State Clerk meeting with their peer through auspices of the Synod.
In addition to including options in your survey for no opinion or lack of knowledge, you should have included an option for "don't care." Synods are a waste of money.
we feel good about our Synod -- and especially appreciate their enabling 3 presbyteries cooperation with a Camping Facility
When the synod was smaller there was a closer relationship between the presbytery and synod. No longer the case. Synod seems distant.
Synod of the Northeast is moribund. In general, synods are less essential in this period of declining membership and technological advances in communication and transportation.
Support consultation among presbyteries within the synod going through staff transitions as to shared staff, realignment of boundaries, etc.
Consolidate number of Synods or eliminate them altogether they are a costly and passe element in an antiquated process
I know that our synod has done some good things, however I think it is just another step between the GA and the presbyteries that I cannot justify.
I think this is a level of government that has lived its life.
Our presbytery functions as a synod because of the size (AK) the synod is not much of a benefit to us.

- Q30. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
 c. Presbyteries' relationships with the General Assembly?

Love-hate relationship. With OGA, presbyteries find a source of support and service. With GAMC it is a bit more complicated. Presbyteries and GANC share common interests. But GAMC has long seen presbyteries not as an ally but as a competitor for funding. That is a source of tension and frustration. It is exacerbated when GAMC appeals directly to church members for funds, without ever consulting Sessions or Presbyteries. The result has been a mortal wound to the mission funding system, with nothing to replace it. If the GA wants to ignore presbyteries - the very heart of our system - why don't they go ahead and invent the Southern Baptist Convention all over again. Someone needs to read the polity!
The GA staff is responsive to our needs and in general is amazingly helpful, particularly in offering resources and coming up with items to spark our mission projects, like DVDs, artwork and other media.
There does need to be a way for a wider judicatory to resource congregations and presbyteries. I like having specialized ministries in church development to assist in particular areas of ministry but am frustrated with the lack of cooperation between Racial Ethnic ministries and church development. There are turf issues which continue to plague us all.
If we separate out some of the General Assembly actions and focus on the GAMC and the OGA things are okay. When GA actions are added in, particularly regarding the ordination standards, things are not so good.
I expected this to be a problem when GA went from annual to biannual meetings, however the transition was handled well. My only complaint on the GA level is that we no longer receive annual stewardship resources (other than special offerings). Dropping that is like biting the arm that feeds you.
Get GA people out of the office and into the Presbyteries... how 'bout regional offices for the GA folks?
No comment.
Commissioners attend the General Assembly and report back with enthusiasm
Last time I traveled to Louisville, the travel was murderous.
General Assembly and Long Island Presbytery are largely in accord. That said, both are out of step with an awful lot of congregation and members of congregations. Those with an agenda (liberal or conservative) have tended to be the ones who get involved. The majority of people in the pews are not on board with what GA has been doing of late. Too much money spent, too much staff, too much bureaucracy.
The PCUSA website could use a bit of streamlining. Searches almost always result in thousands of unwanted, confusing results. Google is easier.
Once again, there is a breakdown in communication between GA and the person in the pew: if their sole source of information is the local daily paper, they only hear about the controversial decisions and have no idea of the scope of the work done by the Assembly and its offices.
Hard to work up much enthusiasm there...
The GA is less and less relevant today. The trust level is at an all time low for many of us. It is time to rethink what it means to be Presbyterian.
Top down authority of GA over Presbytery should be reduced. Mandatory funding of per capita should be eliminated.
We give token attention to General Assembly. GA is out of touch with who we are and what we are about. GA is giving poor leadership to the PCUSA. We are trying to exist with as little contact with GA as possible.
<b>HALF OF THE PRESBYTERY DOES NOT TRUST, RESPECT OR WISH TO DEAL WITH GA</b>
Folks relate more directly to various GA offices and committees on a regular basis. E-mail, phone calls, US mail and use of the website has made this possible. GA is more visible in the lives of local congregations as well.
The member in the pew is the top of the "pecking order". G.A. is the bottom and broadest level of support. We feel very left out of the bureaucracy and holier-than-thou attitudes of most G.A. staff.
Follow the rules - work around the rules, you name it!
Most congregational members see the GA as too political
NO [3 leaders made this comment]
General Assembly meetings do more harm than good. As long as there are up/down-win/lose votes, and endless hours that stretch commissioners to the limit, we will lose more than we gain from these meetings. Dial back on all the commercial interruptions. Double the number of committees, so these poor folks can take seriously the items they are asked to deal with.

Excellent
1. Stop making social pronouncements that cause trouble in the local churches. 2. Congregations came first, then presbyteries, then GA. G.A. does not run the church. It exists to support congregations. If it gets in the way of that mission, it should be abolished.
There are many GA programs and services that are useful to Presbyteries and their congregations. Staff seems eager to help but is very hard to contact -- at least from my experience. There are several clerical input errors in the 10 year statistical reports of various congregations that should not have occurred and need to be fixed but aren't attended to.
Presbyteries ought to be represented by rotating delegates instead of allowing special interest groups that dominate some presbyteries to send the same people year after year. Let other voices than the special interest groups be heard and keep them from dominating the GA when most delegates are new and still learning the ropes. Presbyteries need to hold GA accountable for the use of the per capita and ensure there are staff to represent the needs of the congregations who know something about "boots on the ground" ministry and have done it before coming into a leadership position that sets policies directly impacting the local congregation's ministry and mission. In dealing with GA staff the attitude I have most commonly experienced was either ignorance or indifference.
The General Assembly needs to be a key partner with the Presbyteries as the Presbytery assists the local church in its ministry.
Small presbyteries need resourcing from Ga-level (manuals, best practices, legal advice) because they do not have the staff or volunteers to provide them. Get rid of the property trust clause. It is an irritant, and the only properties we get are unsalable cemeteries or decrepit buildings that drain the scarce resources of the presbytery. They are not assets, but liabilities, and the church shouldn't be about greed or money.
Once in a while we need some help from GA, for example, recently we needed to know about CLPs or clergy serving across presbytery lines when it seems useful. We appreciated the reading we received from GA and acted upon it. There may be more going on in this relationship than I am ever aware of.
executives need more of a relationship with GAMC like clerks have with OGA
GA needs to help Presbyteris grow in understanding our joint efforts in universal mission. Many congregations see per capita as tax or forced dues. We need to speak alot to what that \$ buys and why we would want to continue those programs. Many Louisville employees think they have the job because they were the best available. Perhaps it was only availability. (Sorry I know that sounds negative.)
Support for pastoral searches; support for sticky polity/legal issues; support for global mission; support for disaster assistance
GA should be able to communicate directly to the Presbyteries.
Some presbytery functions (e.g., EP, stated clerk, moderators of COM and CPM) involve at least some direct contact with GA folks, but otherwise there is little familiarity with the organization and function of GA. Many perceive GA as an agency that often acts independently of the denomination grassroots (especially with respect to social issues).
Important resource on denominational issues especially.
We encourage GA participation and nominate our members for work on GA committees.
Presbytery staff are often called upon to help congregations track down information, or tell them how to find things themselves. The new GA website is several steps backward on communication and a constant source of frustration.
direct
the leadership needs to include more than staff in this involvement and that means fiscal support sss well as shared information.
I do not think that overtures decided on at General Assembly needs to be passed by a majority vote of presbyteries
Collaboration must be amphasized as opposed to competition. We are all on the same team.
Property ownership. Because of the theological climate in the PC(USA), I don't think that congregations should be held hostage by a theological or scriptural interpretation that they do not agree with. Ordination of a practicing homosexual does not uphold scriptural authority. What happens to congregations (pastors. leaders and members) who will not uphold this practice? There needs to be more freedom with how a congregation associates and is in relationship with presbytery, synod and GA.In our attempt to be inclusive we are excluding some of our strongest, more conservative congregations. This is not right!
Per Capita needs a more creative approach. We tend to lose members because churches do not want to pay per capita for those who are not attending. Some how, some way, we need to be more positive with our approach to those who are not entering our sanctuaries.

What relationship?
Very good. Constitutional services is very helpful. So is Linda Valentine.
GA is becoming irrelevant.
Our presbytery has excellent relations with the GAMC and has submitted overtures with success.
I don't have much to say about that .. we've had members involved at GA levels, and our executive is well known in that arena. The Presbytery functions quite well without a lot of GA input, but it should, shouldn't it? GA Mission Council needs to have a better understanding of what each presbytery is ad its needs.
If the Synods were dissolved, I would imagine that the General Assembly would need to pick up the Permanent Judicial Commission function in some way, either by establishing a larger-than-presbytery regional boundary for PJs. But that seems do-able to me.
Calling Louisville is always very helpful. I appreciate the resources and guidance provided.
From a PW point of view, I really do not have an opinion on the work with the General Assembly since that is not in the area in which I am involved.
Again, there is suspicion that the GA is using "our" money unwisely - the Presbyterian Laymen communicates this suspicion well, with little real impact from the positive messages sent from GA.
Stated Clerk and the Executive Presbyter are closely connected and intertwined with the General Assembly, working closely with them at every opportunity.
Much better sense of presbyteries working with General Assembly than with synods.
Any ministries and projects that comprise the (Biblically mandated) mission of the church, that are only possible to accomplish at the national level (such as support of international missions, disaster relief, hunger relief, humanitarian aid, support for congregations in hostile societies), need to be clarified and emphasized. Ancillary and superfluous priorities that are merely "politically correct" but that do nothing to facilitate the 5 great ends of the church need to be abandoned and publically disavowed. By allowing its focus to be distracted for so many years by the demands of a narrowly focused special interest group, the GA has forced the entire denomination to obsess over a single issue, and shamelessly neglect the mission assigned to the church by Christ before he left. As a result of this dereliction of its duty, the GA has created a profound--possibly irreparable--crisis of credibility with most of the congregations and presbyteries in this denomination.
Not as good as we'd like.
GA is out of touch with our presbytery. We haven't had any genuine interaction on substantive issues with GA for a while.
Simplify and clarify GA mission -- and educate on that mission. We cannot afford, financially or otherwise, to keep trying to have GA do everything for everybody, or have a pronouncement or program on most every topic, or a Sunday given to everything under the sun. FOCUS!!
Primary relationship is with Constitutional services. Corresponded with GAMC but received no response.
This relationship seems to strong with respect to the upward relationships (that is, we send and have commisioners and clergy that are active in this relationship -- but the rank and file member have little, if any, idea what this relationship is all about.
The presbytery staff has a good relationship. The people in the pews, less so.
We have a crisis of membership decline, and the overall impression is, no one is treating it like a crisis. The #1 issue that the General Assembly needs to work on: planting new churches. The #2 issue: Helping our strongest churches grow stronger, so they can then plant new churches. As we grow, then we can be more helpful to a great many other churches. The Staff of the G.A. Evangelism office is filled with evangelicals, who do not speak the language of the mainline churches. Nice people, but they do not connect with the needs our Presbytery has. We need focus and fit so the resources of the church can be mobilized for growth. G.A. is the only group that can help Presbyteries grow in their wisdom and understanding of what needs to happen. It is a time for powerfully articulated vision of growth in language the mainliners can embrace and by which they can be energized.
I think in general we have a fine relationship with GA. Sometimes it would be nice to see more GA people face-to-face than we do now.
They are too top heavy and the website is terrible!!!!!!
The GA is a valuable part of our connectional church, but at times it can feel like the "other" because except for a roughly week period every other year we don't hear much about the "General Assembly." If there was a way for the GA to more present for presbyteries and congregations between the assemblies it would be very valuable.
I hope GA may contact the presbytery to find out able persons for its position.

See the need more than ever of the GA supporting the Presbyteries supporting the congregations rather than the Presbytery supporting the GA.
The GA must first allow theological presbyteries. Then the GA must find creative ways in which those who gather for GA can have meaningful fellowship.
As staff of the Presbytery it sometimes seems that G.A. should consult with Presbyteries before it acts - I think particularly of shifts in funding strategies that seemed to undermine Presbyteries' ability to maintain funding from the churches
General Assembly has lost touch with the people in the pews. If it was more in touch with the people we would have better curriculum in our congregations and not wasting money on all the leaflets and flyers that get sent to us all the time. It is a waste of printing, resources and postage. We spend too much time fighting about things and too much money on a less effective website and complicates finding resources for congregations to use.
There is a growing disconnect between presbyteries and GA though not because there are bad people in Louisville or at the presbytery level. Most I've met have been dedicated servants of the Lord and deeply caring people. Nevertheless people at the presbytery less and less care what GA says or thinks in my experience.
Presbyteries need to have the freedom to choose which Synod to belong.
If the General Assembly Mission Council supports the work of presbyteries as presbyteries support congregations, then the entire PC(USA) is strengthened as we serve the Risen Christ.
General Assembly is most helpful when it strengthens, inspires, and equips presbyteries in their work and mission.
I feel the General Assembly is also necessary, especially with coordination of mission, but wonder if it is as efficient as it could be. The General Assembly in the eyes of most people in our presbytery, is a body that just meets once every two years and stirs the pot of controversy. I know this is not a valid perception, but certainly one that does prevail.
Presbytery should continue to relation our local churches to the broader church.
designated giving is the only viable option
I was a commissioner to the 2010 General Assembly. My orientation to G.A. had to be developed by myself for the most part, and I found that there did not seem to be much interest in learning what occurred at the G.A. meetings. Presbytery does a good job handling G.A. overtures.
This Presbytery is fairly-well represented with General Assembly Committee participation, as well as connection with the OGA and we have a representative on the GAMC.
We have a good relationship. We send commissioners to each GA, we work in conjunction with the GA 6. Our Executive attends various meetings which is helpful to him, I believe. Our Stated Clerk works with her peers and receives help when requested. Same with COM and CPM chairpersons.
I believe presbyteries look to the General Assembly for resources. I see the General Assembly doing a great job of providing opportunities for training and resources. One additional comment...I find the PC USA website very difficult to find resources on. I use it alot but it takes a long time to find what I am looking for.
We have a good relationship with GA and appreciate the resources and staff who are available to us.
Clerk consults and CLC key; could perhaps work better.important conduit of GA to churches; could work better.
Reduce Louisville to the Stated Clerk, a few mission personnel, disaster relief folks and a couple of admin.staff and move to much smaller premises. It will save a ton of money and can be no less efficient and effective that it is presently. Current presbytery relationships with GA are a mingling of bureaucrats and wannabees from both levels. The folks who support their local congregations with involvement, financial commitment and loyalty are not found much or welcomed in GA structures but perhaps they have too much sense to be involved in the pretentious nonsense that goes on there.
If nFog passes, these will need to improve,as presbyteries will need good instructions from GA as to implementation of nFog.
most congregations do not understand the relationship of Presbyteries cith the General Assembly
Sending commissioners
GA's functions have changed over the years, although not everyone admits that, either on the national staff or in the presbyteries. GA no longer is the overseer of and supplier of all resources to Synod and Presbytery, from personnel to CE resources. I think GA needs to be more of a facilitator to Presbyteries and a vision-setter for Presbyteries, and the interrelationships need to be much more flexible.
With the Internet, Facebook, email and all the other forms of communication presbyteries don't need to act as an intermediary. Congregations also rely less on the GA to facilitate and often competitive resources are far more effective compared to our own resources, advice etc.



The General Assembly is the church assembled, but it is hardly representative of the life of particular congregations. This growing rift is sad.
More detailed information in the year between General Assemblies. I learned more about the issues and concerns from Presbyterian Outlook. The Mission & Stewardship Committee of Presbytery needs to receive more specific information throughout the two years between General Assembly Meetings. Promote the Presbyterian Church (USA) website in many more ways to the members of congregations.
We are excited--and have some trepidation--about the possibilities of nFOG. We're going to need help if it passes.
The constant insistence by the GA on sending "fidelity and chastity" requirements every two years for a vote in our presbytery has had an extremely negative effect on our congregation and their willingness to work with our local presbytery.
My presbytery has had a pretty positive relationship with GA, I believe.
getting better as GA seems to be "post-modernizing" in the same themes we have felt
Participation in facebook groups, email groups, mailing lists, web interaction, etc and education of presbytery leaders to participate can continue to improve and expand presbyteries' relationship with General Assembly.
Somewhat more remote. However GA has been very responsive in sending representatives to meet with our leadership and/or committees to advise us on specific matters, e.g., ordination standards, pensions, office management, and managing in a changing environment.
We don't trust them. They don't live by the GA statements (evidence the Washington office, participation in abortion rights, and IPMN), they promote an agenda that is not mine nor that of the average person in the pew. I am offended by the hubris of the Moderator and clerk who issue statements as if they were Bishops on things about which they cannot possibly have sufficient information when they have no official PCUSA voice on anything where GA in session has not spoken. They spend too much money on politics, man-made agendas and things that are not of the kingdom of God.
I have more knowledge of the General Assembly than most pastors in this presbyter, yet it still feels to me as if nothing truly valuable goes in at that level of church life.
After Hosting GA 2010 we're still on a 'high'
Many presbyteries are divided between those who are evangelical and those who are more "progressive", and with the officer standards changing these presbyteries are going to have be true to gospel and the congregations. Too many presbyteries have more ordained personnel voting than ruling elders which makes things a bit lopsided as the lay is not as well represented -- this needs to change. As a ruling elder, I don't always agree with the teaching elders (pastors) at my church and yes, I know that all may vote their conscience. But both GA & presbyteries need to focus more on the congregation & not politics going forward -- if not, more people will leave.
Guidance for small congregation sized, large geographical size presbyteries
Improve the ability of the local congregation to dialog directly with GA offices eliminating the political, "old boy " stifling of communication.
General Assembly is going to take a big hit with the passage of the NFog and the elmination of the language on ordination. It will not be rational but it will be significant.
It seems that program folks from the GA are comming to our Presbytery meetings and doing a good job of communication.

## Your Synod

SQ4. Which of these roles do you currently occupy in your synod? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Consultant for Special Projects
nominating
committee member (new)
member of Personnel Committee
Moderator of Living Waters Committee - the synod mission ministry
Member of two synod committees: Finance & Stewardship and COR
President of Board of Trustees, Moderator's Committee
member budget & finance committee
Commissioner & Search Moderator for PW in Synod of S. Atlantic

Bookkeeper, MHF Coord
Administrative Assistant
Commissioner [2 leaders made this comment]
committee member
Comm. on Mission Partnership
Director, Living Waters for the World
committee vice chair
Korean-American Ministry Co-ordinator
Nominating committee
moderator 2010
PW secretary
Synod Administrative Review Committeede
secretary for PW Synod of Living Waters
Director of Business Services
SDOP
MUSA and Higher Ed committee member
Synod PJC [2 leaders made this comment]
Mission to the U.S.A. Committee member
Commission
Loan Coordinator
Synod commissioner & Director

SQ6. Over the *past* five years, what has been the general trend in your synod when it comes to:  
h. Comments on your responses to SQ6a-g:

There is a noticeable decrease in the connectionalism throughout the Chutrch in this area.
Because of Living Waters for the World, a project of our Synod, we have had to add more staff and more staff hours. This is a project that installs waters systems to purify water where it is needed. It continues to grow.
I have only been with Synod a short while and cannot answer "for the past five years". I do know that our Synod has become a virtual office this past year.
It seems churches are giving to local mission projects more and more, and giving less to unified mission.
For the Synod and for the Presbytery the answers would be the same. I could have checked both Synod and Presbytery for high level of involvement
It seems that the mission mentality has shifted from trusting the people most familiar with the overall picture of mission. Now mission money travels to the most familiar or attractive sites from the local churches. This forces the GAMC to send appeals to individuals and churches, something unheard of in years past. We've lost our connectional system of mission support.
These ansewers are based on reports I have read and conversations i've heard. I have no direct information.
I am only a member of one committee that reports to Synod; I am not involved in the life of the Synod otherwise.
My focus has been on this particular mission of the Synod and for LWW, financial resources and number of mission projects have increased though not all of this giving and work comes solely from within the synod boundaries.
The only source of revenue we recieve from our presbyteries is per capita. All BMS is returned to the presbyteries or GA. Through our financial services (S&L program)we generate enough excess revenue over expenses to return about \$700,000 annually to our presbyteries.
I've been more active in previous years, serving on COM for six years in this presbytery and numerous positions in other presbyteries. I am the moderator-elect for ETP Presbyterian Women.
I am not privileged to know the answer to question g. Also I am answering the questions here in regard to my position as secretary for the Presbyterian Women in the Synod of Living Waters
I am reflecting on the struggle for support for Campus Ministries and for ethnic scholarship funds and that these funds have decreased in the years I have been active in the synod on the Higher Ed committee.

This is my first year of service as secretary for PW Synod of Living Waters.
We're trying to do the same (or more!) with declining financial resources.
There has been a 10 year trend of decreased UNIFIED mission giving. We believe that many congregations (my own among them) now designate a significant portion of their denominational giving to a specific project with then directly reduces the "trickle up" portion for Presbyteries, Synods, and GA.

SQ7. In the *next five years*, what trends do you anticipate in your synod when it comes to:  
g. Comments on your responses to SQ7a-g:

We have become a Presbyterian Church that looks and acts more like a Congregational Chutch.
Again, Living Waters for the World will continue to grow to reach more people. With this growth, more and more members learn about that mission and contribute to it.
e. Some congregations in our presbytery seem to be growing, others decreasing. I think this is true in all Presbyteries. We cannot generalize our congregations and the work of God's Hand.
The line between about the same and decrease can be very close. In the Synod we have lowered our budget, so some of the massive cuts have taken place. As the stock market goes up that may offset a decrease in mission giving from the Presbyteries.
The Synod has invested wisely its considerable endowment and will be able to exist at the present level for a while even with fewer mission dollars. Maybe less than five years, but for a while.
We are currently in the "black" and doing well.
My answers are based on the same conditions of the previous questions./
Again, as my work is specific to LWW and the fact is that our program staff will likely increase. Our financial support - likely to increase - will also not come solely from the synod alone. However the number of synod congregations supporting our work with both human and financial resources has, and will likely continue to grow.
See previous comment. We plan to use our reserves to continue to do what we The Synod of the Trinity are called to do.
Synod of the Pacific is a non-programatic synod. This Synod supports the mission and ministries within its bounds through its presbyteries.
Given the questionable future of synods, this is a difficult question to which to respond.

SQ12. [If "inappropriate" or "very inappropriate,"] Please indicate how you would change the relative distribution of per capita funds. (Assume that the total amount of per capita funds stays the same, but is only being split differently.)  
c. Comments on your responses to SQ12a-b:

No responses

SQ15. What percentage of your synod's current annual budget is expected to come from: h. Other (specify):

Mission Partnership Funds [2 leaders made this comment]
Not sure [2 leaders made this comment]
I have figures and choose not to guess
Presbyterian Women, Prior Year Budget Surplus, Presbytery Matching Grant Monies
Prior year budget surplus
Revenue from S&L Program
I do not have the numbers in front of me as I take this survey.
Fees for service; Transfers from Synod Funds; Contributions; Other income
Synod services (savings & loan and benefits)
Meeting Fees, shared space fees, passthru income from GA
Synod Services
GA Mission Partnership Funds & Synod Reserves

SQ16. Indicate which of the following your synod has done for some or all of its presbyteries in the past year? (Check *all* that apply.) Facilitated other networking between or among presbyteries (specify):

have two presbyteries with shared staff
Held a stewardship event within the Synod and provided scholarships.
Border Issues Conference, Stewardship Conference,
retreat for presbytery and synod staff each year
provided for and planned 3 year 'pastors under 45' in the synod events
pesbyterian men
through LWW and other means
Executive Forum; leadership development workshops;
given grants for presbyteries to work together, held synod consultation with all presbyteries to talk about future, have presbytery sharing time at synod meetings
Facilitated Presbytery conversations about the future
coach training through a Heisermann Grant
Healthy Congregation Trainings
partnership groups
new pastors' support group, CLP training and continuing education, youth retreat
facilitated multi-presbytery conversations about shared mission and staff
Network development is a prime emphasis here. Please see your website <a href="http://syntrinity.org">syntrinity.org</a> for details
Mission Funding Consultation
Presbyterian Executives Forum, Staff Forums, Administrative Personnel Association, Western National Leadership Training, Conflict mediation

SQ16. Indicate which of the following your synod has done for some or all of its presbyteries in the past year? (Check *all* that apply.) Distributed newsletters, e-newsletters, or other forms of communication (specify):

all of the above
synod news
Our Synod has gone from a printed copy of a Newsletter to an e-newsletter
Synod Report, Letters from Interim Stated Clerk
Provides e- newsletter and bulletin inserts after each Synod meeting about the meeting.
Newspaper
e-newsletter [7 leaders made this comment]
Synod website and Newsletter available
email
newsletters, e-newsletters
Bi-weekly communications and Assembly Highlights
e-news on a regular basis
Synod news
synod meeting news, excellent website
web site
we have just printed our last print edition of the 'Presbyterian Voice' and now have an on-line version
through our website we provide a variety of information; summary sheets sent regarding synod meetings held twice a year
PEN
we have a synod website called PMX to foster missinon exchange; e-newsletter, teleconferences
Newsletters [2 leaders made this comment]

Synod Newsletter [3 leaders made this comment]
Bi-weekly Leadership Updates by e-mail
Synow news
serve as newsletter editor for presbytery both emailed and postal
just started an e-newsletter
Synod has excellent eNewsletter that comes out monthly
newsletter, bulletin inserts
We are developing a prototype website for churches of all sites, have a narrative budget, and have regular communications throughout the year
all three

SQ16. Indicate which of the following your synod has done for some or all of its presbyteries in the past year? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

The Synod of the Trinity in 2011 Per Capita helps pay for the people and administrative support (building and supplies) for all levels of the Presbyterian Church (USA). A few of the many ministries, missions, and administrative services made possible by the Per Capita portion to the Synod of the Trinity in 2011 are: - Apply for all our congregations to receive their PA tax exemption - Research and assist with understanding the Decennial Filing. - Sponsor the Annual Summer Conference: a community event of worship, education, spiritual growth, and fellowship - Oversee the administrative review of presbytery records “ similar to the clerks” of session annual review of minutes, only at the presbytery level - Provide Judicial Review (PJC) for situations throughout the Synod and provides training for PJC members at the Presbytery level - Identify and foster networking between Presbyteries for ministries and missions of likeminded people. - Develop a cost effective Church Website prototype that churches of all sizes can utilize to share the good news of the Gospel - Initiate new technology that Presbyteries can use to have virtual meetings, reducing costs and time for meetings. - Research and establish where viable energy consortiums for electricity and gas to help control costs for our congregations. - Provide the management and organization to enable a number of ministries and mission opportunities: o Provide leadership training, either offered to all 16 presbyteries (eg, Child Abuse Reporting training) or upon request (eg, Missional Thinking for Small Churches with Bruce Stevens) o Host Executive Presbyter Forum, a time for all the EPs/GPs to gather and share knowledge and wisdom, quarterly o Partnership for Missional Church (\$18,000 each year for three years “ four of our congregations are taking part. Administered by Per Capita “ but fee paid by Unified Mission/Reserves) o Student & Campus Ministries o Self Development of People (SDOP) o Disaster Relief o Peacemaking and Mission Travel Grants o New Church Development and Church Transformation Grants o New Initiatives Fund
Created Pacific Mission Exchange- a mission giving website
Synod School with over 600 in
there are other initiatives being provided but I'm not aware of details
mobile health fair Mission to the USA—mentioned 3 times
Maintained an active and successful clean water ministry that is used by the Synod Churches and those from across the country
offered low-cost Bible preaching seminars
PJC matters, Wee Kirk

SQ19. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Attended Board of Pensions Consultation
served on a Bd of Pensions committee
Participated in BOP Consultations

SQ20. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the General Assembly Mission Council in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

2 of us left GAMC after 7 yrs. of service
hosted several immigration and cross-cultural events
I am one of two Synod Executives currently serving on GAMC.
I don't what they have done
Help from Presbyterian Disaster Relief
I would assume had done all of above but I don't know this
Met with GA staff to try and get a program of shared mission interpretation for our geography
GAMC Corresponding Member

SQ21. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Office of the General Assembly in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Served on GA support staff in Minneapolis
staff in constant contact G A
I don't know what they have or haven't done
GACOR

SQ22. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Foundation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Not sure about this
Received information about designated gifts previously made to the Synod through the Foundation.
we have had contact with a representative from the Presbyterian Foundation
outside fund management
I don't know
very active treasurer
I don't know what they have or haven't done

SQ23. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check **all** that apply.) Other (specify):

Served on PILP Board
The Synod invests money with PILP to help congregations and Pesbyteries recieve a interest rebate
We have our own S&L Program that serves our churches and presbyteries.
I don't know
Jay Wilkenson very active
Don't know yes or no
worked with PILP to facilitate loans for churches within Synod

SQ24. Has your synod office, executive, clerk, other synod staff, or other leader (e.g., moderator or committee chair) related to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation in any of the following ways in the past two years? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Served on PPC Board
I don't know
Horizons and Mission Book of Prayer
Don't know yes or no

SQ26. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
 a. Synods and their duties and functions?

There is a great variance from one to the next...some are more necessary than others.
Our Synod has a good working relationship with all 12 Presbyteries.
I have not been there long enough to answer many of your questions.
I feel that Synod's are important to the work of the Denomination. They are in a position to be closer to Presbyteries than GA staff.Presbyteries do not related to the Synod in an equal way.Of our 11 Presbyteries usually 10 receive more money from the Synod in mission dollars than they given to the Synod in mission dollars.
We have an excellent synod. Executive Committee works well together. It is the "Connectional Church" in action.
I believe the Pesbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs to continue to have both synods and presbyteries. But I also think it would be better to have more and smaller synods with fewer presbyteries in many of the synods. I believe synods still have a valuable function in resourcing presbyteries and in coordinating and offering mission programs that presbyteries could not do by themselves.
The Synod appears to perform the duties and functions that are saked of it.
I believe that there is still an important role for the synod in the new structure. The Synod of Living Waters has been very supportive and energized by the work of Living Waters for the World. It has been a joy to share much of clean water training methodology with the Synod of the Sun's new Solar School program. In both cases this work is equipping congregations and presbyteries to get involved in mission in a new way.
Synods provide the glue that helps maintain our connectional nature; being in community. Synods are not all the same. We provide different services depending on the needs of our presbyteries and churches. A "one size fits all" model is inappropriate. There needs to be flexibility in the role of synods.
I think there is too much diversity across the board as to the role and function of synods. Some function well, providing wonderful opportunities for new ministers, providing mission funding and fostering relationships across presbytery lines. And yet there are many synods that don't function well at all. I think that providing some guidance on to the role and funtion of MGB might be helpful. I think there is room for syonds to a degree but not if many or most are not functioning as a body that can encourage and foster the ministry of the whole body. I have had a chance to hear a lot about what other churches are doing in ministry through my synod meetings and that is a valuable source of encorugement and information. If there is a way to create more of that opportunity among churches/presbyterys without a synod great, if not I think that there is still a role that they can play.
Synod has provided wonderful opportunities in the southwest to help deal with issues of eccumenicity, race relations, ethnic issues, immigration issues and native american causes. Synod is very important.
Synods are a waste of time, energy and money. I attend Synod meetings as a commissioner, and am deeply disturbed at the cost involved in us doing little or nothing.
Our Synod offers Synod School which is attended by 650 to 850 people every summer. Our staff is very accessible when needed by presbyteries in help with personnel issues or financial issues. Diana Barber has been awesome in educating people on the proposed new form of government. The COM and CPM training is excellent. The Newly Ordained Clergy classes held at Synod School are very beneficial to new pastors. Jay Wilkinson has brought extra income to the Synod by doing the books for other Synods and Presbyteries. I think our Synod is a vital part of the Presbyterian Church USA.
I see Lakes and Prairies providing a model for the church at large...I want the connectional system to be vital in the plans of PCUSA...Eight would be good number....with 5/6/7 states...in each Synod....We have proof that larger geographic areas work just fine...I like F O G very much, but still see Presbyteries Synods and G A as the that the connector process...that MUST remain a strong unit of mission....

We have an active and helpful Synod.
There will never again be such a thing as uniformity for Synods - if there ever were such a thing. If synods are to remain as a governing body, flexibility needs to be encouraged.
Our Synod has responded to serious conflict in one of our Presbyteries, providing a presence, counsel and support
Synods have an important role to play in helping maintain campus ministries but there is almost no funding to do this. The MissionUSA program of the Synod of the Covenant is an excellent program that struggles to find funding and support.
We have been blessed with exceptional staff who provide training, support and resources for our presbyteries that we'd never be able to create or sustain on our own.
The Synod of the Trinity provides service to our 16 Presbyteries - administrative, organizational, and services Presbyteries cannot easily provide on their own (eg campus ministry support and support of our Synod related colleges). The funding model, however, is broken.
Synod of the Pacific is a mission support synod. We provide services to our churches which helps in two ways. 1) reduces cost because our pool is larger for bidding, and 2) the net revenue generated from our services is returned to our presbyteries to support their mission and ministries.
Synods cannot continue to exist as they have. They must adapt and reorient to nurture and support the work of their presbyteries. With the recent changes to the BOO (and the proposed nFOG), Synods are now able to facilitate conversation that will allow for that to occur.
As with most Synods within the Presbyterian Church (USA) we are currently undergoing restructuring, so nothing is very stable right now and we are all trying to deal with a lack of under-structure.

SQ26. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
b. Synods' relationships with the General Assembly?

We historically have had strong relationships, including some that were adversarial but which were resolved reasonably amicably.
synod of the sw has always been very involved in the GA
I have not been there long enough to answer many of your questions.
I have found the GA very helpful. In the last couple of years we have not had as many reports from our Synod representatives on GA Mission Council as we had in the past. A few years ago I attended the Moderator's Conference as the Synod Moderator and found that very helpful
I have not heard of any major differences with General Assembly.
I am most grateful for the improving relationship between LWW and the World Mission office. This is leading to increased collaboration in the world where we are mutually working.
Unfortunately, I would say the majority of synod executives, to greater or lesser degrees depending on the executive, feel that the leadership staff of GAMC ignores them, with the exception of the Director of Middle Governing Body Relations. Most of my EPs frustrations are with GAMC not OGA.
We used to get updates from Manley Olson when he was on the General Assembly Council at Synod meetings. We do not hear about GA as much now. I was a GA commissioner last summer so I feel very connected to GA. I love the Presbyterian Church USA!
SEE ABOVE PROCESS
Again the relationship is very good.
Our Synod cooperates very well with the General Assembly.
Some agencies function as if Synods are not even part of the system; again, if synods are to remain as part of our governance, appropriate ways of relating, sharing information, seeking consultation, etc., need to be developed and encouraged.
Our synod relates as well with GA as they relate to presbyteries and congregations. The staff have strengthened my own sense of connection as a pastor and synod commissioner and trustee.
The Synod of the Trinity would love to be able to do mission interpretation for all levels of the PC(USA).
Synods can be in a position to bridge the work of the presbyteries with the GA. Synods are able to speak to GA about the work and the specific needs of the presbyteries in their geographic areas. Synods can help the GA to understand that "one size fits all" does not function any longer.



**Appendix F  
Individual Survey  
Middle Governing Body Commission  
Spring 2011  
Verbatim Comments**

Q1. Do you currently hold any of these leadership roles in your presbytery or synod? (Check *all* that apply.)  
Other (specify):

chair revisioning team
Mission comm
member of Presbytery and Synod COR
Presbytery Administrator
Member of COM—mentioned 7 times
Member Committee on Preparation for ministry—mentioned 5 times
associate exec
committee vice-chair Border Ministries Task Force
member of presbytery development committee
Finance committee
committee member
Retired Executive Presbyter
Leadership Team of Synod
Elder
COM Northern Region Chair
Vice-Chair of Council
intern
Pastoral Care
Presbyterian Women—co-moderator
Nominating cmt member and task force member
COM, Camp Comm, Nominating
GA commissioner
Commissioner from church
Member of Membership Development
Member H.R.
MEMBER OF 3 COMMITTEES
on Camp Board
Past Moderator, Past Committee Chair
active in presbytery on a presbytery team
Human Resources Chair
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Committee
commissioner to synod, member of com for presbytery
Moderator of Mission Council
Retired stated clerk of 20 years service.
Elder—mentioned 6 times
member personnel
former other staff
Elder 9 yrs., just went off session in January 2011; still serving on committee

Former Chair of Peacemaking Committee, serve on Examinations Committee
member of mission and ministry committee
Retired Clergy Group coordinator
COM member, pastor
Member Stewardship Committee
Honorably retired member of Presbytery
Vice Chair Committee on Representation
choir director—mentioned 2 times
1 year past moderator, vice, and chair of council
Nominations Committee of Synod
Mission Unit member
Nominating
member of outdoor ministry
moderator of COR
HR
Presbytery Council member
serve on personnel committee
Committee member—mentioned 8 times
member of mission partnerships
church member
Elder Commissioner
moderator, early ministry institute
Agency executive
member nominating committee
ppw past moderator
Mission/Outreach Team
Youth Advisory Delegate
MWS, presbytery committee member
Presbytery Life Committee member
pjc
Property Elder
former commissioner to presbytery
member of presbytery
member of church
on a committee & co-coordinate educator group
Member, COM; Chair, Commission to close a church
minister member
resource center director
Commissioner, Member of Finance Committee
Evangelism and New Church Development
Peace Enabler, VC Representation, Stewardship & Mission Com.
vice chair of Examinations, member of presbytery Visioning Team
COM member, local pastor
vice moderator of PW
Elder and treasurer
commissioner

Associate Missional Presbyter
Moderator PJC
immediate past moderator of presbytery session
Clerk of Session—mentioned 6 times
Moderator of Administrative Commission for church in conflict
Clergy
Peacemaking enabler
ncd
Moderator, PW, [deleted] presbytery
Multi-Cultural Task Force Co-Chair
pastor, com member
AC member
Elder-session
Clerk of Session, [deleted]
COM to Synod

Q2. Have you, personally, been involved with your presbytery in the past two years in any of the following ways? (Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

serving as moderator for another church while they are in pastoral transition
General Council member, subcommittee on pastoral support COM
was moderator of PW in Presbytery
Northern Clergy Group and Leadership Book Studies
Big Event highlighting an outreach ministry to Navajo Pres Sister Church
Camp board committee—3 years
Exploratory meeting for environment
I am an inquirer
PDA mission trip to Mississippi
Committee meetings
Helping Hands mission to Iowa
Mod Prsbyt & Mod Msn Cncl
I attended and helped edit minutes of Presbytery meetings for 3 years
Elected as Commissioner to 2010 GA
Ministry Team member
mission trip to TX
attended Retired Clergy luncheon
Recording clerk for presbytery
Exec President of a Presby Ministry 501c3
attended presbytery meetings as an inquirer
commissioner to GA
Voting member, attended meetings
Big Event display
Mission trips with PDA within the US
Led educational seminars
GA commissioner—2010
under care of cpm

served as Moderator
participated in Presbytery worship leadership
Member of Synod Committee Synod School Committee
complaint pastor/session
served on Presb. Council
attended a presbytery meeting, but not as a commissioner
vice moderator and moderator
Received training and assistance with our church's website development
PW events
On staff until [deleted], then served as consultant, through [deleted], completing financial requirements and audit for 2010.
Regularly attend Presbytery meetings

Q15. Have you, personally, been involved with your synod in the past two years in any of the following ways?  
(Check *all* that apply.) Other (specify):

Network support for Camp and Conference Ministries regionally
I consulted synod website
serving on task force
Worked with Living Waters ministries
My family received a medical assistance grant. I have been very involved in the past, but am currently disabled so can not actively participate. We have an amazing Synod
Participated in synod's new pastors program
Student received financial assistance with college
New Church Development Grant
clp training
Was a grader for ord exams as presbytery rep
never been asked in 16 years
Admin. Commission
HLPW conference
moderated Peacemaking committee
was prayed for by the staff of the Synod
PW [2 people reported this involvement]
attended presbytery meeting where synod executive was the main speaker
On staff, stationed in Sacramento until 12/31/2010
Synod had funds invested in PILP which helped us get an interest rebate

Q22. What is your race or origin? (Check *all* that apply.) Some other race (specify):

Do not ever EVER consider me as white!
Native American
European American
Does it matter?
human

Q23. Which of these roles do you have in the PC(USA) or one of its congregations? (Check *all* that apply.)  
Other (specify):

Presbyterian Women in the Synod Administrative Team
Yoked congregation—Methodist supplied clergy
employed consultant
Parish Associate [3 people mentioned this role]
spouse of deceased minister
Other service
Volunteer Asst Pastor
Pastoral Counselor
former Presbytery staff
Synod Ministry partner
Ordained Minister not in active service
Retired Certified DCE
Ordained minister of Word and Sacrament on short term disability
Moderator of Session in 2nd congregation
ordained minister working in church plant with RCA
Attendee of PC(USA) church
Bible Study Teacher
Treasurer
choir director
Retired supply pastor
Continuing member
I am an ordained minister, member-at-large in the presbytery attending a local PC(USA) church (not on staff in any capacity) and in the dissertation phase of my PhD in liturgical studies
mission network coordinator
Have served as Commissioned Lay Pastor within the last two years
agency officer
member of presbytery serving outside the bounds
Retired mission co-worker
Pastoral Administrator
clergy spouse
Certified Christian Educator
active in church; thinking about Seminary or program
Sometime lay preacher, volunteer
choir member and current mission co-worker
New member/new seminarian
attendee
chaplain
Designated Associate Pastor
Church Treasurer
UMC Lay Speaker
elected treasurer of congregation; pianist of congregation

- Q24. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:  
 a. Presbyteries and their duties and functions?

<p>Presbyteries serve a useful function as places where leaders of our diverse congregations and leadership can plan, learn and share with each other. This connection is vital. They can also share ministry resources together. I do believe that mission can be done cooperatively through a Presbytery, but all need to be aware and supportive. I do not believe that Presbyteries are the only way to share resources or ministry/mission amongst congregations and leadership. Many of the programmatic functions of Presbyteries cannot be supported and can be better done in partnership with other entities and organizations such as regional missions or camp and conference centers for children/youth/young adult programming.</p>
<p>Presbytery meetings can be generally described as preacher parties. Elder commissioners are few and far between and when an important vote comes to the floor all the pastors together with all the retired pastors show up to vote. Elder participation seems like an intrusion on the party.</p>
<p>Recognize that there are geographic and other considerations in evaluating and/or assigning responsibilities to presbyteries. Leadership and vision vary and therefore the effectiveness of what a presbytery provides for its pastors and congregations will also vary in both need and effectiveness. Painting with a broad brush, assuming "all presbyteries are created equal" does not seem to be the most effective way of administering and ministering to them.</p>
<p>Since [deleted] has become our Regional Presbyter, our congregation and our rural Cluster of churches have gotten much more help, understanding and attention from Presbytery. I think rural churches tend to lose out in representation especially when there are long geographical distances to cover.</p>
<p>more attention to strategy for small but viable congregations</p>
<p>the diversity issues you ask of Presbytery are rather moot here local should percolate into Presbytery more than the other way around</p>
<p>My presbytery is too small in numbers to do much more than the administrative work called for in the Book of Order. The executive presbyter does a good job in filling vacant pulpits and organizing useful seminars for church leaders. However, the mission budget is abysmal because so much undesignated mission giving is transferred to supporting the administrative function. The Presbytery probably should be disbanded and joined with several adjacent presbyteries that have more resources for both administration and mission</p>
<p>As long as presbyteries allow themselves to be dominated by the issues of big steeple (often conservative) churches and treat Presbyterians of color as ancillary to the larger picture, they will either lack or decrease in vitality</p>
<p>I've generally found presbyteries unhelpful in situations involving conflict between congregations and their clergy.</p>
<p>I have confidence in [deleted] leadership. I frequently read the articles posted on Great River's website.</p>
<p>Presbyteries and Sessions do not have enough informal relationship building contact. Concentrate on presbytery and local relationships. If groupings of sessions, congregations or interested parties develop naturally communicate. Do not impose clusters or area group structure from presbytery level unless the presbytery is willing to build leadership and joint vision for the intrinsic value and not as vehicles for promotion of presbytery programs or as ad hoc representational bodies. Enable digital meeting capabilities.</p>
<p>Presbyteries should be the resource to congregations and ministers</p>
<p>This is where the work is done—critical, local, relational</p>
<p>Clarify roles of church/presbytery/seminary in the care and support of those under care. Will be all the more critical to be sure people are truly called to ordained (vs. vocational) ministry as we move forward.</p>
<p>I had trouble answering the questions because the apathy that exists in congregations in the Northeast also exists on the Presbytery level. Our EP is great. She has a lot of energy, is very responsive, relational and knowledgeable, but she is leaving next year, and without her I'm just not sure how much responsiveness there will be in the Presbytery.</p>
<p>Provide little value for larger churches.</p>
<p>Keep the present constitution! Vote no on the replacement!</p>
<p>Presbyteries should be geographically smaller and of more service to the congregations.</p>
<p>Communicate with retirees; develop and execute more retiree events instead of relying on the BOP; exercise pastoral care for retiree clergy and spouses.</p>
<p>Presbytery meetings are stuffy, old fashioned in how communications are handled, and not really forward thinking. We seem to be stuck in issues of polity and unaware of potential for real ministry.</p>
<p>They really need to be responsive to the needs of the individual churches.</p>
<p>Perhaps presbyteries would be more effective if smaller, more local, and focused on local mission, including ecumenical missions.</p>

we are a small rural presbytery which is working hard to survive and spread the good news with not many members and large area to cover I am proud of my Presbytery and its efforts in MONTANA
NO [14 people made this comment]
Anarchy will prevail if nFog passes.
Most congregation members have little knowledge of Presbytery or its function
While my view may be affected by the fact that I am fairly new in my involvement at a level beyond the congregation, I have a firm view that there is a need for congregations to have an opportunity to regularly interact with other congregations. This may be especially important in rural areas where there are no other congregations within many miles of each other.
I don't think Presbytery's need staff other than administrative...I believe churches should provide the rest of the support needed
I do not know a single person in their 30's or 20's who likes Presbytery. My generation wants to make a difference, and 97% of what we do in Presbytery is small, pointless, and wasting my time. If Presbyteries had a laser focus on developing healthy congregations I would be more excited.
During the process of preparing candidates and inquirers for ministry, and throughout their careers, there should be more training/support for their spouses. The idea would be to help them prepare for a role that is almost as difficult and has almost as many expectations—yet with fewer if any) guidelines and even less preparation.
Require Presbyteries to do a better job of informing congregational members about what is going on within the Presbytery and total church, make this a part of the evaluation of the effectiveness of pastors and elders. Require documented training of persons elected as deacons and elders, possibly with graded and test results following formal instruction by someone other than the installed pastor of the specific church.
Seemingly lack of leadership at all levels and inability to respond to the needs of congregations with constructive help or support. I feel our church has been drowning for years and we have not even seen a life preserver being thrown our way.
Having healthy and effective leaders at this level is critical.
Presbyteries are the heart of mission and ministry resources.
I suppose that the Executives and staff are doing fair with all the new rules from the GA and all the new changes they are supporting. I am so disappointed over the way our churches are going.
The new FOG will cause us to become less Presbyterian and more Baptist in our polity.
I think we could do a lot better job of being more neutral of divisive issues. Example we find issues promoted that do not reflect what is taught in the bible. We find issues not talked about which are instructed in the bible. We things promoted which have not been voted on.
Their duty and function is to protect His children! At a time of crisis within the PC(USA) emphasis must be placed on His Word as revealed in Scripture and not the social influx of worldly desire which is all too often based on selfish demands!
Should be less of a judicial/conflict resolution structure and should be about building up the pastors and congregations. Providing resourcing for daily ministry, training, and mission. Truly work to connect the pastors and congregations. Not just a select few good old boys (gals)!
There should be a financial report (not a budget) each time the presbytery meets. Commissioners should know specifically where the presbytery money is spent. The average person in the pew and the average commissioner has no clue where money is spent but congregations are each year quickly informed about per-capita obligation.
Some of the BOO mandated activities required of Presbytery are very expensive to implement in small Presbyteries that cover a large geographic area; i.e.: Alaska
More focused on the enterprise of the denomination than the mission of the church.
I think while sizes may be 'about right' the configuration could be better done....ours is a long thin thing.
Yes, I believe that my answers related to what the Presbytery does are indicative of that fact that most congregants do not know what the Presbytery does or why it is necessary. At this point my view is that it is an unnecessary governmental body that is eating resources that could be used to otherwise serve the people of God.
Many individuals and congregations in Missouri Union Presbytery willingly and faithfully contribute time, talents and treasure to building up the Church. There is a good hope of this being done more effectively if the entire work of the Presbytery can be open to transformation.
The method of funding used in our presbytery is outdated. Percentage giving does not allow congregations sufficient input into the way presbyteries set their budgets.

<p>The greatest challenge is the effectiveness of COM and how it actively cares for congregations, members and clergy. I have served in 4 Presbyteries (serving on COM in 2) and they have all been ineffective, particularly with the small congregations. Too often, COM does not get involved with a congregation until the fire is out of control. There needs to be better mentoring and accountability for clergy. Most other professions in the "helping" field have required professional development and accountability/supervision. Such a practice would have the potential of decreasing the number of clergy misconduct and the blurring of ethical boundaries. Congregations also need to be better educated on the Presbyterian Call System. Many members come from different backgrounds and have no clue about the Call system until their pastor leaves, and then there is all kinds of misunderstandings and miscommunications. Presbyteries need to help their congregations rediscover and discover anew what it means to be church in today's world.</p>
<p>We are a congregation without a pastor and have had absolutely no contact from our Presbytery office offering assistance. We were assigned a Moderator, but have had little contact with them, except our once every three months Session meeting.</p>
<p>Our church and the presbytery are making slow, but forward progress healing from some "history" of discord. Things are getting better, but there is still a we/them attitude.</p>
<p>Support of same sex marriages and allowing gay/lesbians to be ordained. Get rid of the glass ceiling for women in the ministry and in other organizations of the church. Be more focused on poverty and human rights issues instead of preaching. Treat all people equally. Emphasize simplicity in daily life.</p>
<p>I am in a small presbytery (Lehigh) that is struggling to stay afloat financially, has many churches which have little or no life and ministry but we continue to let them struggle along, 2-3 churches considering leaving our denomination, and staff uncertain about their future employment. At least in the case of this Presbytery, I think our energy, time, and resources need to be focused on discerning the future of the Presbytery long before we can pay much, if any, attention to the work and ministry of the Synod.</p>
<p>I believe that the Presbyterians function very well in terms of their responsibilities. However, presbyteries with growing areas on the edge of the urban centers are very weak about new church development while the PCA runs circles around us. I am highly critical of the 3 presbyteries I know best for not adequately meeting the challenge, Santa Fe, Giddings-Lovejoy and Milwaukee. I'll be this is happening everywhere. There is no imagination how to get these started and a lot of whining about costs. Meanwhile our central cities and close in suburbs in many cities are seeing us close one church after another with declining population. Therefore, the PCA and who knows who else are picking up our members moving to the fringes of the metro area. Now, I think our presbyteries are the right size though I think Missouri River Valley is problematic putting Omaha in a Presbytery with a large area of rural Iowa instead of Nebraska. I think John Knox is also problematic in a sense. There is a great need for borders of presbyteries, as much as possible to follow state lines except when an urban area crosses a state line. I think Presbyteries should be responsible, and often are not, for campus ministry on major university campuses in their bounds EXCEPT that the major state universities are a synod responsibility. Presbyteries need IMGINAATIVE leadership.</p>
<p>Our presbytery has been undergoing extraordinary legal, organizational and theological issues for the last 5 years. We have had leadership crisis and turmoil. As we welcome a new transitional presbyter and settle into the future of no longer being part of a partnership with the presbyteries of [deleted], we anticipate a new future vision being determined and worked toward. In all, we know God has been walking with us.</p>
<p>Think the presbytery must be more intentional in staffing middle governing positions with diversity—people of color—in all positions. The can just talk it but if no persons are deemed 'qualified' then they need to either not staff the position or reevaluate the requirements, they need to put mentoring or development strategy in place to get them qualified. There is no reason for some of the largest metropolitan cities/areas in US not to have ANY person of color on staff and as an ongoing +10years issue.</p>
<p>I love my Presbytery and the way we "do business" and have been organized. I think our Teaching Presbyter, Steve Shussett is a great leader and provides pastoral help to the pastors who need it. I am very proud and pleased to tell people I am from Lehigh Presbytery in Pa.</p>
<p>Spend less time and money in fundraising and more time in nurturing congregations. catechize elders and teach the confessions of the faith rather than mobilizing for the promotion of political agendas forget trying to create diversity and just minister to the people you have in front of you</p>
<p>Our presbytery has less than 40 churches, half of which do not worship with 100 people on Sunday morning and half of those have less than 50. There is not enough money or people to be supportive of any work. Our theological diversity keeps us from being of much use to each other—other than to get together argue and vote. For the folks at my church, presbytery has become a waste of time and energy and until we solve the theological diversity issues it will continue to be. Besides small dying churches take up most of the energy of exec. Rather than figuring out ways to close these doors.</p>



Presbyteries should allow individual churches to transfer to non-geographical Presbyteries if such churches can no longer, in good conscience, agree with the philosophical and theological presumptions being espoused by a large number of their current Presbytery's churches.
I am the one who doesn't know about MGC. Things seem to be going well. I appreciate the people who serve, and their leaders.
The PC(USA) needs to have Theological Presbyteries, or we are in danger of losing all connectivity. Because of the continuing sharp disagreement over Ordination Standards, there needs to be distinct non-geographical groupings of like-minded churches (liberal and conservative), that can share in a more focused mission.
Our presbytery does not help us unless asked and then not very effety. The do not keep us in touch with GA or Synod
I am very supportive of Theological Presbyteries. Our church is very concerned with the removal of Amendment B. If the possibility of joining a Theological Presbytery is not an option our church will leave the denomination.
<b>NO MENTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</b>
When a church needs help they are there to begin with, but then it seems that they just disappear. Letting us know that we haven't been forgotten would be a good thing.
Most are too big, too bureaucratic, and too diverse theologically. Why not move to smaller presbyteries where congregations that are theologically like-minded can actually focus on joint mission instead of theological battles? Most could have part-time staff only.
Would like to see more being done to assist small churches who are losing members rapidly due to demographics, age, and competition.
Our presbytery functions well, using the gifts and resources from a variety of lay persons and clergy throughout the presbytery.
Pastors need pastors/spiritual directors Much more involvement in conflict training look for ways to establish political witness
Too formal and cliquish
I wish that the members of our presbytery would feel inclined to travel to the outskirts to support mission programs and meetings on the borders of the presbytery.
We have too many Presbyteries that are now too costly for the PC(USA).
You are one giant unknown organization with closed meeting except to elder commissioners and pastors.
Revise the requirement that does not allow Interim Pastors to be considered for Permanent Pastor position. Interim Pastors should be allowed to "Throw their hat in the ring" so to speak. In other words, be allowed to compete for the permanent pastor position. Rely on the congregations PNC to determine if the Interim Pastor is indeed qualified to become the Permanent Pastor, Members of the congregation are the best qualified to determine their next Permanent Pastor. Not outsiders from the Presbytery, Synod or General assembly.
Presbytery committees seem to be chronically inept. We need an IQ test before anyone serves on a COM or CPM.
I am against the proposal being put forth by my presbytery, Santa Barbara, regarding the Conjunct Presbytery idea. There are only about 5 or 6 of our churches that disagree with the majority of our presbytery, so it is very difficult to be heard on these issues.
Our [deleted] Presbytery executive is inept. A minister member of our presbytery had multiple sexual liaisons and when he was forced to leave his church, he was taken in to live with our presbytery executive for 6 to 8 months. He is not trustworthy to demonstrate appropriate boundaries. He is seriously damaging congregational support of the presbytery, and by extension the PC(USA).
More activities for revitalization
Need fewer rules and allow more discretion. Being hidebound to a rulebook inhibits creativity.
Regarding Presbytery: our Presbytery offers great resources, including people, but I don't think the average congregant has a clue. Our executive presbyter and stated clerk for the Presbytery have always been extremely helpful and quickly available when needed. Diversity within our Presbytery—or lack thereof—is reflective of the area we live.
Presbytery meetings are cut and dried. Feel as if it is a time to inform us what each committee has done with little opportunity for input. Most discussions are on subjects handed down for approval or disapproval from GA.
Fewer larger presbyteries is vastly preferable to more smaller presbyteries.
Presbytery personnel need to "offer" education, guidance to local churches with visits, not assuming everyone knows about all programs if they read the nsl. Lack of communication is shameful! And the superior attitude of our "local" presbytery personnel is a turnoff.
I believe that the duty which is ignored on every level is talking with members. A bond is created each time we talk

with our membership or Presbytery. It could be defined as being a person to another person with a common interest.
Presbyteries need assistance in getting information concerning the denomination's stands—Book of Order—to the people in the pews. Often people are misled by those in positions of leadership who don't understand what is really written down. This leaves room for strong individuals to convince a congregation that the GA is saying something it really isn't. This leads to infighting and congregations leaving based on incorrect information and fear.
I have very little knowledge of presbytery functions mainly because they are not visible in our church or community. So I do not know if they are doing what they are supposed to do or not. We have very little interaction with our presbytery as far as I know.
More emphasis needs to be focused on evangelism and church growth from a practical stand point to equip congregations with ideas and resources on how to evangelize in the 21st century.
I think Presbyteries should deal with ecclesiastical matters only—not mission. They should be a fairly small group of churches within a close proximity existing for mutual support of the congregations. Focus more on the body and less on the staff.
Presbyteries need to be smaller, more relationship-oriented, and more permission-giving.
I've not been active for the past eight years since my retirement. Health issues for the family and burnout have kept me away from active involvement until recently.
Need to look at alternatives to face to face meetings
I generally know about my presbytery and have been to some meetings of presbytery and events but I would like to know more.
The Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of [deleted] is completely ineffective as the leader of a Presbytery, due to his own selfish need for power and control over pastors and other members of the presbytery. Please, please would SOMEONE step in and find out the truth about the workings of this presbytery???
The PRP acts in an unchristian like fashion when it comes to working with smaller churches. They twist and turn the Book of Order to meet their own personal desires. We have lost quite a few members because of them. Can an administrative commission really take over a church because it did not have a quorum for a nominating committee meeting? They did. What an egregious abuse of power! Shame on them!
Presbyteries only serve to perpetuate Presbyteries. They need to be reimagined as agencies that connect like minded and like missioned congregations. There is no need for an EP and no need for a budget, beyond the money that directly supports mission agencies within the bounds of the Presbytery. But even those monies can go directly from congregations to those agencies.
In our experience, the Presbytery is not vigilant in its examination of candidates for the ministry in confirming that they are in agreement with "The Essential Tenets of the Reformed Faith."
reach out to rural and small town and church areas MORE
Innovate. Experiment. Seek new ways of building the kingdom, even if it is not popular with oga.
I believe in the connectional form of our polity both theologically and practically. The concern, however, is how to implement it in a meaningful way because of 2 factors—budget constraint and human nature. The first, budget, constrains the staff that can be devoted to the task. The second, human nature, makes me wonder if there can be an organized designed to serve others that doesn't become self-serving and self-justifying—an end in and of itself.
The churches are so scattered in [deleted] Presbytery that I do not know many of the minister & elders in 2 1/2 years, except those in my cluster in [deleted] and I'm on several committees. Our cluster has been thinking of making our own presbytery within [deleted]. Too many committees in my estimation.
In our presbytery in particular, because of its size (~170 churches), most of the time and energy of our leaders is spent on emergency room care for congregations in deep conflict, leaving very little resources for preventative care for congregations with slow and steady decline or healthy congregations.
Presbyteries must reflect all views of the member congregations, not just those in line with the Executive Presbyter and the large affluent churches.
I believe Presbyteries need to set some standards across the board for congregations, for example, some criteria for what a "viable congregation" is. Presbyteries need outside consultants to come in and develop a "business plan" to move the presbytery forward, thus determining where limited energy and resources can best strengthen the overall church/presbytery. With no "vision" in place, the "loser" congregations get the attention and the other congregations decline until they become a "loser" and get attention. Unfortunately, the attention is to assist them in closing down. No business would run this way! Why does the church believe no vision is okay?
I'll just post here, as this applies to all three. After taking this survey, I have discovered I am GROSSLY IGNORANT of the roles of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly!

<p>We have too many presbyteries in NJ. We need to have 1-2 for the whole state. There is systemic discriminatory behavior against women in ordained positions in congregations in Monmouth Presbytery, including permitting male HOS to over-run women in ministry in this presbytery. After serving two presbyteries in NJ I see widespread dysfunctional behavior. We need to change the entire structure in order to get entrenched persons and systems of dysfunction to end.</p>
<p>In bad times travel across the Presbytery takes time and money which means we are not represented in our votes by the smaller congregations. Virtual attendance by electronic means using current technology is possible to connect the smallest and largest congregations. The latest vote in our presbytery reflects this bias that money talks and repeating votes on the same issues discourages the denomination at large on issues dear to the heart over the average membership.</p>
<p>Presbyteries are important. Churches should be able to have better communication links.</p>
<p>For a person changing their denominational affiliation, the Presbytery Church is very complex and layered. But, I suppose all denominations are such. I consider myself an intelligent person and am working hard to get an understanding of the complexity of the denomination. It is a very closed system as well.</p>
<p>Not enough care/concern about individual congregations; too much emphasis on mission with little interest by exec. of any other areas</p>
<p>Presbyteries are too large and they not focused on mission instead they focus on polity and committee control and votes. They are spiritually dead meetings, they look like the folks who are about to die from a rest home. The meetings are tedious and boring uninspiring. The E.P. spends all their time putting out fires instead of nurturing what is growing [and delegating the fire fighting] it is a sad waste of resources. The presbytery costs 1 million dollars and accomplishes almost nothing, we celebrate correct minutes more than confessions of faith and new mission. Presbyteries should be gather and sending mission agencies, with the goal of creating larger church networks to impact communities. The functions of voting on amendments etc should take on a much diminished and more infrequent role say once every 5 years. Training should be done in biblical peacemaking related to conflict resolution in churches and communities. We should be people bringing peace instead of constant debates of our agreed differences which is killing the involvement of the 2/3rds world leaders and churches who are abhorred by our constant bickering and sex talk. In order to reach the emerging populations these discussions should be extremely limited and we should be asking our immigrant and racial ethnic churches what their struggles are in the U.S. and how we can partner with them instead of counting bodies on committees of in-consequence.</p>
<p>The closer the governing body (Presbytery) to those governed, the better the relationship.</p>
<p>The large corporate model instituted in the '70's doesn't seem to work anymore. Small is better. We have no ownership in presbytery; "let the professionals do it", seems to be the attitude.</p>
<p>Presbyteries should focus their duties and functions on building up the ministries of its congregations.</p>
<p>spend less time protecting pastors and more time protecting the congregations</p>
<p>There doesn't seem to be enough connection between Presbytery and the individual church or pastor. The staffing is limited and their time is limited as well so needs are dealt with but caring about the individual congregation is so much more involved. Pastors need support in order to meet the needs of the congregation.</p>
<p>Presbyteries seem best at coordinating ministerial and administrative functions of churches in small defined geographical area</p>
<p>I hope there is a way for non-geographical presbyteries around theological issues. When Amendment 10-A passes—this would be a way that would allow people who think alike to have the same ordination standards—pro or con.</p>
<p>Smaller, less paid staff, essential functions only</p>
<p>Should support and strengthen congregations...Too much lip service while USING congregations to fund Presbytery &amp; GA mission goals. Congregations are dying and so will denomination on this course. Ethnic efforts will not save us.</p>
<p>Our Presbytery is a good reflection of what our local churches are—but the leap between our presbytery and our General Assembly are worlds apart.</p>
<p>Follow Biblical scripture rather than what is deemed fashionable in contemporary life style.</p>
<p>There appears to be a big gap between expectations for what a presbytery could be and how it actually functions, seemingly doing so many things that none of them are done with much depth. I think some of this disability may be related to the large number of congregations and pastors. I'm not negative on presbytery so I don't want this to sound like whining, but having been around before the enlargement of presbyteries back in the 1970's, I think presbyteries are considerably less effective now than they were then. Of course we live in a more complex world too, so size is clearly not the only determining factor.</p>
<p>Where is God in all of this?</p>

Allow for non-geographic presbyteries or allow churches to affiliate with theologically compatible presbyteries. It's terrible that a conservative church is stuck in a very liberal presbytery and vice versa.
Serving, not lording over, congregations for their "missional" goals and strategies to achieve those goals for the glory of God.
Please examine the language of any reforms considered and compare to the Word in our Holy Bible, written as the Word of our Lord. Do any changes need to be considered by the general congregation, or are the representatives of each congregation acting as the majority of the congregation, or are the representatives of the congregation acting only as they personally believe is the intention of scripture in policy decisions of the Presbyterian Church?
Create space for the development of smaller "presbyteries" or non-geographic presbyteries made up of Presbyterian ministers and congregations who are committed to upholding "fidelity and chastity" as a standard for church officers even though the PC(USA) has abandoned that position.
In our Synod are two Alaska presbyteries that have a difficult time even existing. It seems something needs to be done to support Presbyterians in those areas without using up resources.
New Form of Government, probably, and vote on changing ordination standards certainly, make presbyteries more influential. An action of a presbytery, if we are a connectional church, affects all others. If we are no longer connectional, then why have ANY higher judicatories?
Too bureaucratic and clickish and this has been the consistent manner of operation for decades, especially with the general presbyters.
Complete and total transparency
Our presbytery has been excellent at communication, particularly electronically. It's made the connection between churches and presbytery stronger.
The connectional nature of the PC(USA) has suffered terribly and become increasingly dysfunctional, beginning just a few years following the 1983 reunion and worsened ever since the 1988 move of the national offices to Louisville.
Quit talking down to the parishioners and try listening to them.
The functions of the presbytery are very removed from the interests of most church members. Mostly, only the serving elders that have been elected as commissioners pay any attention to what goes on at presbytery. The only time the presbytery seems to come into focus is when it votes to approve something such as Amendment 10-A that is wildly NOT in line with the considered position of most of the members.
I think the staffs of presbyteries have been, on the whole, very inadequate. They seem often to be bureaucrats rather than "servants" of Christ and the church. They seem too caught up in politics and turf battles. I think that has been true in our Presbytery for a long time and some other presbyteries with which I am very familiar.
In an age of increasing individualism Presbyteries seek to keep us connected and strengthen the church's witness and mission.
Since the lawsuit, our congregation has had more involvement with the presbytery staff and they have been very helpful.
Be diligent and tolerant
Quality of COM needs to be upgraded, and have a much kinder policy. No more Executives looking down their nose at congregational meetings. Get rid of the petty politics. Pastors in general should respect the laity more.
Someone should consider how in many cases presbytery executives are functioning like bishops. They have far too much power and defy the spirit of what it means to be Presbyterian.
New church development should be a number one priority—and new ways of funding and accomplishing this need to be encouraged

- Q24. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:
- b. Synods and their duties and functions?

I'm not sure of the role of Synods but if they can use resources to coordinate on a regional level and support networks across congregations, Presbyteries and specialized ministries, then they are using shared resources well. A better understanding of the role of and history of Synods would be helpful in deciding the fate of Synods. Who would pick up the essential work of Synods if we did not have them?
Not aware of its duties.
The Interim Synod Executive of the Synod of the Southwest is very creative in getting various committees to coordinate and collaborate together, e.g. Synod COR, Nominating and Hispanic Ministries. There is more sharing and understanding.

The same comments apply to Synods as I have stated in the presbytery duties and functions comment area. Some synods are extremely effective in what they offer—in their support and in their vision. This is especially true in non-metropolitan areas where considerations of both rural and metro populations is significant and necessary. Definitely synods are needed and valued in some areas. In some geographical configurations perhaps they are less effective. Again, painting with a broad brush and assuming that all synods are created equal and are valued accordingly, would be an unfortunate approach.
synod seems far removed from presbytery and its congregations except for grants
Synods are unnecessary and should be abandoned
Well, it isn't what it used to be irrelevant except as funding vehicle
My familiarity with synod activities is mostly through attendance at conferences which it sponsors. These do allow access to noteworthy speakers and seminars. However, the synod is so big that driving takes in many instances half a day to reach the site of such activities.
We have heard reports from our Synod commissioner at presbytery meetings (I don't think there was a check-box for that).
Our synod has been exceptional, not to mention prophetic, in its understanding of the broader mission of the Church especially in terms of Latino membership and emerging congregations. It would be unfortunate if antipathy from conservative churches and presbyteries was allowed to diminish the role and presence of synod in the wider church.
I've found Synods helpful in caring out ministry where mission needs cross presbytery boundaries.
Synods need to be eliminated. Cost savings then applied to mission and evangelism.
Synod functions could be pared down to permanent Judicial commissions and collaboration in regional training events that rotate to differing locales. The deliberative body meetings and staffing should be minimized. Assisting presbyteries in collaborative functions is the only other use I see for synods.
Synods should be the resource to presbyteries
have little to affirm—have been a commissioner to another synod; have participated in synod events in the past—an unnecessary entity in my opinion
My contact with Synod was limited to the Early Ministry Institute which needs to be redesigned in a way that makes it possible to attend shorter closer group continuing ed. sessions.
Streamline and simplify. Educate so people know what those streamlined purposes are.
We need to get rid of the Synods. They are a waste of time, talent and money.
Personally I have benefitted most when I began ministry as a new minister 26 years ago. And then again 3 years ago for Interim ministry training. I did attend 1 synod school, which was enjoyable. I think geography plays a significant if not insurmountable issue in Synod functions. With technology now, travel is less desirable for meetings at long distances. This is very true for lay people who r younger with families.
Redundant. Consider elimination.
Keep the present constitution! Vote no on the replacement!
What does a synod do anymore? I have been a commissioner twice to Synod assembly. Since reunion, synods have gone from an effective co-operative mission entity for the presbyteries to just another layer of bureaucracy. We should either restore their earlier function (supporting missions and agencies) or abolish them.
Communicate more with retired clergy and their spouses.
Synods seem to be the most helpful body when it comes to young adult and college age ministries. Also camp ministries.
They need to be responsive to the needs of the Presbyteries.
Synods have very little apparent function beyond a middle level judicial commission. Perhaps they could be more effective in mission if they were non-geographic, and the judicial functions were taken over by a smaller number of appeals courts.
No [11 people gave this response]
Irrelevant to most churches.
Many congregation members are completely unaware of Synod's existence
I do not believe we need synods. These were not choices in the survey.
THE DENOMINATION HAS MISSED SOMETHING IN HAVING SYNODS TOO LARGE FOR EVERY CHURCH AND MINISTER TO ATTEND ONCE EVERY ONE OR TWO YEARS. THE COLLEGIALITY AND FELLOWSHIP HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM THE LARGER CHURCH.

No opinion, little knowledge.
I have never heard anything from synod as a pastor or as a lifelong member of PC(USA) churches. I know they exist, but they might as well not in my mind.
I see the Synod as a one issue one function body which is Immigration. I am saddened that I am constantly being "informed" about the Synod's actions regarding immigration and that it has become more political than missionary. I do not believe the Synod's actions are representative of the majority of the members of the church and their position has driven members away.
I am unhappy that our Synod no longer does program. We used to have an outstanding mission fair every year. We used to support campus ministry, we used to work ecumenically at this level. These things CAN'T be done as effectively at the Presbytery level.
Unnecessary and should be abolished.
None [2 persons gave this response]
The function and effectiveness of Synods I believe has long ago gone away. I see no reason to continue this part of the Presbyterian structure.
Synods have outlived their usefulness.
I really do not know how much the Synod contributes today to the local churches.
More information that makes a difference for congregation members is needed
I think we could do a lot better job of being more neutral of divisive issues. Example we find issues promoted that do not reflect what is taught in the bible. We find issues not talked about which are instructed in the bible. We things promoted which have not been voted on.
Their duty and function is to protect His children! At a time of crisis within the PC(USA) emphasis must be placed on His Word as revealed in Scripture and not the social influx of worldly desire which is all too often based on selfish demands!
I obviously need to learn more about Synod duties and functions
Synod is an antiquated system and should be removed. With modern communication/travel information is easy to get from GA and Presbyteries are so large that there is enough missions, diversity, and information that Synod just duplicates what goes on locally.
Only "insiders" know what the synods do. If they are a judicial body, what have they done?
No longer helpful or necessary
In years past I have served as commissioner, committee member, etc to Synod from two Presbyteries. It is unclear to me today with instant communication and rapid travel why Synod continues to exist!
See the answer to a.
In my opinion, Synod duties could be absorbed by the presbyteries, which would eliminate a layer of administration.
I believe that the Synod plays an important role in helping Presbyteries and congregations network and share their many resources, not just financial, but leadership training, mission opportunities, stewardship of resources and the list can go on. The synod can also play an objective role in helping mediate conflicts, as well as provide support for the Presbytery leadership. I believe that we need Synods, and have been blessed to be in a very functional and nurturing Synod for over 20 years. Synods need to help their Presbyteries and congregations and pastors rediscover and discover anew what it means to be church in today's world.
Our Synod personnel and their duties and functions have been great. They have been of enormous help in several situations in the past several years.
I know almost nothing of this level.
Synods are crucial to individual presbyteries being able to do together what they can't do separately, or to do what they are all doing more effectively. Keep synods!!!
Would like to see Synods facilitate using media markets to promote PC(USA) congregations.
In this day and age are Synods really needed?
It is time to dissolve Synods
Same as above.
To the average pew sitter, and many elders and pastors, Synods are a huge unknown. This is not due to lack of communication from the Synod, it is more a reality of our times. With limited resources—time, money, talent—and with dying and struggling congregations, the local church is what gets and needs our attention. I believe that the role and need for Synods no longer exists and/or can be accomplished without the existence of Synods.

I am not always clear about the purpose and function of the Synod. I believe the biggest responsibility for this lack lies with me. It has not seemed overly important yet to me.
I believe that synods are very necessary for support and coordination of presbyteries in a given state or region. I believe that they are necessary for support of the campus ministries of state universities, but not necessarily the other state or private schools. For instance, the students may come from the big urban areas but the campus is in the bounds of a rural presbytery. Also, synod needs to be the principal church structure relating to the church's retirement homes. There are other institutions that need to relate mainly to synod, maybe church related colleges, and, in some instances, church camps. We need synods though I think Lakes and Prairies could be divided to 3, Mid-Atlantic and Covenant, could all be divided to 2 Each. In Lakes and Prairies, synod is too distant for folk to sense identification as I recall when I was in Nebraska. Smaller synods could revert to all at the meetings instead of delegated such as was the case in Michigan Synod. We need strong ties between synods and our church related colleges. I'll be the loss of Occidental was due to limited relationships between the school and church.
I believe Synods are a vital link in the exercise of our polity. Like Presbyteries, at this point in time, there may be too many of them and some consolidation is in order, but I would not do away with them wholesale. Fewer, geographically larger Presbyteries and synods are in order.
I'm sad to say I know little of the function of the Synod, but once again I am willing to learn.
Same as my comment on presbyteries.
The workshops of the synod for commissioned lay pastors have been many and helpful, especially the ones that I attended before entering seminary.
Synods have a real PR problem. The only people who have any idea why they exist are those few who have been a Synod delegate. I cannot ever remember hearing a report back to the presbytery from a Synod meeting.
these have become a waste of time—work synods have done in the past are now better done by outside agencies—ours at best fills a bureaucratic function.
I have worked for a PC(USA) church for a very long time and still do not know what Synods do or why they are necessary.
Synods can help in gatherings of the different Presbyteries—both theological and geographical—by finding activities of common ground for fellowship and mission.
I do not know much about synod
Have never believed the Synod was needed. Especially with the financial struggle of our denomination as well as the continuing downturn in membership. I believe that the Synods should be dissolved.
I think synods need to be disbanded and that we no longer need synod staff nor synod offices. Responsibilities specific to synods, such as judicial proceedings could be handled by committees formed from two presbyteries.
<b>NO MENTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</b>
Useless as far as I can tell, unless we go to a 17th Synod model to allow for relief of conscience if 10-A passes. Please, do something that will allow us to at least stay together enough to share Bd of Pensions and the Foundation!
To consider the above at all levels. The grassroot churches are dwindling and we are losing a piece of history every day. It seems no one cares or knows what to do about it. I have often felt as a pastor of two small churches that perhaps we are not seen. (out of sight, out of mind).
Training, the new pastors training, and the joint effort for interim training is good. Restore some political witness
Disband them like the Church of Scotland did decades ago
Synods are unnecessary. Divide their responsibilities between GA and a fewer number of Presbyteries. presbyteries
Shut down a synod and stop eating up money from churches who are struggling.
See above.
Synods have no viable or useful function in the PC(USA). It is time to close them all down.
I believe Synods have outlived their usefulness to the denomination.
synods are superfluous
In interviews I did in working on my D.Min I found that synods do a better job of helping newly ordained pastors than do presbyteries (5 pastors in 5 different presbyteries in 3 different synods). Synods offered retreats and/or support groups, which seemed to be helpful. Presbyteries often said there would be a mentor, but I heard comments like, "we never figured out who mine was" and "she took me to lunch once then I never heard from her again."
Don't know much about synod except from web, which I pursue. Local churches (and Presbytery) keep synod and General Assembly info and activities under wraps. The local parishioner knows nothing because the pastor doesn't think they need to.

It's time to acknowledge the reality that synods are unnecessary.
Synods need to be more connected to the congregations and their needs. For a good example—look at the redesigned Synod of the Trinity.
Presbyteries and synods are varied in organization and function. To lose Synod of the Pacific's savings and loan program would be devastating to churches and mission within its bounds.
More emphasis needs to be focused on evangelism and church growth from a practical stand point to equip congregations with ideas and resources on how to evangelize in the 21st century.
I see no need ecclesiastically for synods.
Seems to me that for many years this body has been unnecessary and an unnecessary expense.
Synods may not need to exist in any way other than mere form.
Thirty years ago I lived and served in an inter-city church. While attending a synod meeting dominated by rural churches, I found little or no understanding of the problems being faced in the 70's. I still feel that Synods should be abolished.
Our synod(Lakes and Prairies) does a very good job of providing assistance and leadership to presbyteries in CPM and COM.
Lakes and Prairies is a good model to follow in terms of program
I have been a member of PC(USA) all of my life and I know nothing about the synod except that it exists.
I have very little understanding of what a synod does or why it's necessary or important.
Synod of Lincoln Trails does an excellent job of training lay pastors. I also participated in 'new clergy' retreats several years ago that were VERY well done.
Synods are applying their own personally held world views rather than interpreting our book of order. This leads to long term dissatisfaction with church governance as the people see that what they want matters not at all.
Synods are useless. They have no purpose and are totally superfluous—a drain of resources.
No reason for geographic synods to exist anymore; but please recommend that GA create a non-geographic synod for those churches and presbyteries who cannot affirm non-marital sexual activity for ordained leaders!
reach out to rural and small town and church areas MORE
Enable, don't restrict. Recognize the world has changed, higher governing bodies are not more expert, and risk everything for the gospel
I do not see either duties or functions, except perhaps judicial, that justify the continued existence of this level of our polity.
Lakes and Prairies have a very good Synod School. Other than this, I would not miss a Synod. The only Synod that I ever saw working well is the Synod of The Trinity in PA, W.VA. & Eastern Ohio. Bruce Stevens, the executive, runs it well and shows up at presbytery meetings. Otherwise, it is rare to see a Synod Exec. at presbytery.
Need more info on structure and relationship and duties of Synod
Without a strong affirmative argument to preserve the synod level, synods should be dissolved and the assets returned to the member presbyteries. There is no reason for the synod layer in the information age.
The Synod can certainly play a role in assisting presbyteries to develop their vision and standards for congregations and "mission". An overall geographic mission ministry linking presbyteries and resources to visible mission would benefit the congregations of the presbyteries.
Without a strong affirmative argument to preserve the synod level, synods should be dissolved and the assets returned to the member presbyteries. There is no reason for the synod layer in the information age.
No longer necessary.
Other than fellowship, I don't see a need for this as a governing body. Ours seems to hold funds to itself. I'm glad they meet only twice a year.
I will be attending my first general synod in May, therefore I have no opinions.
need to be more visible with congregations
Our Synod is corrupt and dysfunctional, it has spent more than 2 million dollars suing local congregations for their property. It mismanaged over 3 million dollars in the sale of a camp only to have another one be shut down for health code violations. They squandered enormous sums and refused to answer any of our session's questions in person or in written form. They are utter chaos. After much prayer we chose not to sue the synod in the church and civil courts for their violation of fiduciary responsibility. As far as we can see the only purpose for a Synod at this point would be for court cases and all others would best be suspended and the resources relocated to better purposes.



What does the Synod do? Specifically, what does the Synod do to assist local congregations in ministering in our communities?
Quite frankly, I am somewhat ignorant of Synods. However, I am a business person and it appears to me that a "Synod" is duplicative to a certain extent and would suggest less emphasis on Synod and more emphasis (financial resources staying at the Presbytery level) on the Presbytery. In other words, reduce level of management and put the resources where they are closest to the congregations and members.
If synods disappeared, I don't know if I would notice.
Synods should serve to building up denominational infrastructure—missionaries to international partners, regional children's homes, seminaries, colleges and ministry to college students.
The days of usefulness of synods is over. Our reticence to simply do away with them is founded primarily on our concern for those who are employed by the synods. In total, if we are to be a responsive church, we need to live into what is already understood by most of us—the place of synod in our governing bodies needs to be officially pronounced dead and its (very minimal) functions devolve back upon the presbyteries.
Be more vocal—get information to the Presbyteries and the local churches, focus on Evangelism for Jesus, not the environment
New Jersey PPG too large geographically. West Jersey Presbytery too secluded from rest
Not needed, unless we move two a two synod federated model
Synods (or equivalent) seem best at coordinating regional mission and educational initiatives
I would hope for a non-geographical synod based on theology.
Synods are outdated in our day of communications
they could be eliminated, I feel they are a useless go between
Swiftly becoming irreverent in the world of Christian core belief and structure.
I've thought for some time that if the synod disappeared tomorrow it might be five years before anyone noticed. I would be in favor of eliminating the synods.
I feel the time for the Synod has passed. With communication as good as it is now, there is no longer a need for this body. The resources could better be used by the Presbyteries who are in the trenches daily with the local churches.
I see no need for synods.
I value synods as part of our system, and would affirm the diversity of the ways synods have developed. All synods should not look the same.
A coordinating, facilitating role for the missions of presbyteries
Same as above.
Either create a non geographic synod for Presbyterians/presbyteries who wish to connect and support ministry from a conservative—evangelical perspective, or phase out synods because a third layer of governance is no longer needed.
Synod used to be a place for justice issues. There are very few places for any of that to happen now with the very small number of people as staff and council.
A synod is a middle sibling, squeezed between the oldest and biggest, and the little ones who get the attention. Either give synod the authority to be more than a "go between," or let them go.
The Synod consistently stays focused on the mission outreach the church ought to be about!
Same
Complete and total transparency
My general remarks above under section "a." have also covered sections "b." and "c." I do, however, have a few additional comments to make re synods. I strongly believe in the need for synods. I know there are many who believe we should abandon this level of our government. I am not among them. Just as there are things that only a strong, well-staffed and adequately funded national office (GA) can do best for the whole church, the SAME is true for our regional, geographic groupings of presbyteries. Synods DO have a place in our structure and there are essential and productive roles to be played by synods in the life and ministry of our church. It is not conceivable to me that ANYONE in Louisville could possibly grasp the day-to-day realities, problems, and challenges of 170+ presbyteries, let alone 10,000 congregations! When there is a hurting congregation, SOMEONE needs to become AWARE of the need and be available to help and support them through the pain and suffering! And when there is a whole presbytery in trouble, SOMEONE needs to KNOW and be readily available with wisdom, resources and strengths! And Louisville is simply TOO FAR AWAY and REMOTE to effectively assist with commutating, training, informing, and guiding the herd of cats we call "Presbyterians."

I've been involved in service to the Synod off and on for 25 years now and am more convinced than ever of its ability to lead in mission and education throughout a large geographic area.
Poorly run at best
Cannot see any reason for this additional layer of bureaucracy in these times of instant communication and tough financial decisions. It seems to be just another layer of paid staff and committee volunteers. The only people who care what people at synod do are those people who work at the synod level in some capacity. No one else cares except when they do something really mean-spirited and ill-considered like banning Arizona from hosting meetings.
Synods have a vital role to fulfill in enabling strong, vibrant, healthily functioning presbyteries. It is an emerging role that doesn't much resemble the Synod of our memories, but vital none the less. Synod staffs have, on the whole, not functioned well for a long time.
Need more contact with the presbyteries and congregations in its area.
Synods form a vital link in our connectional system! They are vital to regional ministries like campus ministries and sharing of resources within a vast area. I believe we need Synods to be fully Presbyterian.
The only contact with the synod I have had is to meet and listen to the synod executive who spoke at a presbytery meeting.
Same as above
Synods should be eliminated
I feel that synods in general have outlived their necessity. With the advent of new technologies, the connectional need no longer exists.
Excessive and outdated bureaucracy. Have no idea why this level of governance is in place. In my 16 years as a pastor I have seen no reason why resources are given to Synods

- Q24. Is there anything else you want to tell the MGB Commission to inform their examination of:
- c. The General Assembly and its agencies and their duties and functions?

Again, there are some things (PDA, Hunger and other ministries) that can be better done together through a national body. Equipping for evangelism and helping congregations connect to a wide array of resources—both explicitly Presbyterian and other, would be a good use of a national body such as the General Assembly mission council. Do we still need an OGA and a GAMC?
No [12 persons made this comment]
Good communication. I miss office being in NYC. Too many events in Louisville rather than here in the Northeast
Irrelevant too many congregations and church members.
My main contacts with the General Assembly are with World Mission. I have found them very helpful in providing information about missionaries who need support and in providing videos and printed matter that explains the work of World Mission. I also know from my spouse's experience as a commissioner to General Assembly and participation on a General Assembly committee that these activities are worthwhile and meaningful.
The more personal contact between GA and its agencies have at the presbytery and synod levels, the better. Such contact gives lie to the attitude that GA is somehow "big brother" or an alien force.
I have really appreciated the email news briefs that I receive from various agencies.
Cease publishing the glossy annual report from Council. It provides little useful information financially or in mission interpretation. Forgo multiple mailings from mission agencies and special offerings. Expand digital capacities.
Provides the global and large operation of mission opportunities and operation of the church at large. Resource to synods, presbyteries and congregations and missionaries
benign, mostly
I have had major participation in OGA and GAMC functions—both are moving in good directions—streamlining—facilitating, equipping—I think we have leadership who are concerned about making the right things happen
We suffer from an us-them mentality that is symptomatic of individualism creeping into the lives of congregation. "They" say we have to pay this, believe that... It's not about US together in mission until we figure out how to show that it is US all together in mission.
This is a mixed bag. It all depends on who you speak to on the phone. Just spoke to a very defensive person from the BOP today, but went to a seminar with Steve Fleming and he is EXCELLENT! I wish I didn't remember the "good ole days" when I totally depended upon and respected the GA staff. Now, a lot of the really gifted people have left. The money crunch has affected everyone. The only way to save this denomination is to get rid of The Layman!

The national church is running like a corporation and not a ministry and I don't like it.
I think our GA is unable to manage change. It is theologically captive to constituents with divisive tactics. It is in a defensive mode from both flanks but largely from evangelicals. It supports too many social justice agendas (some r needed) that it dilutes its efforts and does not provide a clear vision. I think the GA is in a lose-lose situation trying to delay the exit of conservative churches without enough resources to foster new congregations with migrant groups. Unable to build a bridge that can encompass a truly inclusive church, its present latent hostility toward socially and theologically conservative beliefs and values has led those churches to consider departure or form associations. Not to be out done, progressive churches are proposing their own association. I believe, on the other hand, that PC(USA) has a specific calling to the needy and poor. It will someday be a church that includes a rainbow of peoples unlike its European, shite founders. That will be a great accomplishment, if God so wills it. Sadly, I believe that church will diminish the importance of a vetical faith in Christ and the Cross and Resurrection. It will serve and love its neighbor, yet I am not sure whether love and serve Christ. On the other hand, the evangelical side of the church will uphold Orthodox faith and beliefs but will be less engaged in social justice. The Kingdoms of the right and left are tearing the essential shape of the Cross of Christ apart. The Gospel is being divided into spiritual and social dimensions. I wish it were not so and pray one day our unity will be restored and we can work together.
Dominated by clique of long time liberal clergy members.
Keep the present constitution! Vote no on the replacement!
Communicate pastorally.
They need to be responsive to the members at all levels.
Focus on international missions and ecumenical/interfaith relationships.
Thanatos Libido at work
Some congregation members know there is a General assembly. Most don't recognize our connection.
I think it is important for GA, etc. to represent the collective body of PC(USA). I think that, in our increasingly mobile society, people need to be able to assume some common ground between Presbyterian churches—though their worship styles and demographics may differ significantly. I think it is necessary for there to be some central "authority" (for lack of a better word) on "What does it mean to be Presbyterian?"
These offices serve a valuable function in pooling our resources together, our denomination together, and providing support, conferences, voice, etc.
It is an open secret among my pastor friends that the materials created and recommended by the PC(USA) aren't worth much. The VBS material is extra weak. I will say their quality has been on the rise recently, but that's relative to rock bottom.
I feel that the General Assembly has gradually developed too many "chiefs", and let support staff go, and that there isn't enough connection to the lower governing bodies. One example: the Woman's ministry division used to have women to resource the synods. AND that department has been combined and can no longer do the job effectively.
Out of touch with local congregations and is becoming irrelevant to our culture by compromising on the truth of God's Word.
See Above
None [12 persons made this comment]
The General Assembly Office has many helpful services, however the training and advice the GA PJC/Staff has given to Presbytery PJC cases locally has not been helpful as it contradicts the spirit of the Rules of Discipline and creates an environment that is much less fair and respectful of defendants than is our secular criminal justice system.
The General Assembly needs to continue to be the overall resource for mission and ministry resources.
I'm only a little better here!
I am very sad to see people leave our Church, that is Presbyterian churches in general. I do not think that all the changes that the GA is pushing are needed and know that is part of the reason for our loosing members. Maybe we need to search ourselves and return to the deep abiding love for our Heavenly Father and pass it on to our fellow men and women, boys and girls and strive to make our land a better place.
Design a website that is more user friendly. The current website is not intuitive and is more difficult to navigate than the previous website.
I think we could do a lot better job of being more neutral of divisive issues. Example we find issues promoted that do not reflect what is taught in the bible. We find issues not talked about which are instructed in the bible. We things promoted which have not been voted on.
The General Assembly agencies ignore local congregations, and promote their own agendas.

<p>Their duty and function is to protect His children! At a time of crisis within the PC(USA) emphasis must be placed on His Word as revealed in Scripture and not the social influx of worldly desire which is all too often based on selfish demands! To which I would add that using ancient clichés to present items of importance upon which we are required to vote only indicates a lack of a proper theological education on the part of general assembly members!</p>
<p>More focused on the enterprise of the denomination than the mission of the church.</p>
<p>I am sorry to say that my impression of the General Assembly and its agencies is swayed by my sense of their left leaning thinking and leadership.</p>
<p>See the answer to a. Although the GA is probably charged with the guidance and direction of the PC(USA) members. However there are a few amendments to the constitution that demonstrate degradation in the beliefs and teachings of the bible. Specifically the contradiction between the bible teachings and the ordinations of practicing homosexuals, i.e. the unrighteous. 1Cor6:9</p>
<p>Overall, there is heaviness to our bureaucratic system that makes it difficult for churches to move and change and grow with the Spirit. Our infighting is killing us. Pastors are burning out. Congregants are disillusioned, bored, and remain members out of obligation more than joy. These are not easy problems to tackle, and many do not have "governing body" solutions to them. I don't have answers, and I confess to not really knowing what "effective" is supposed to mean in most of these questions. The big questions are ones of identity. Who do we really want to be? How can we better serve God in the particulars? What can we allow to die so that new seeds can sprout forth from the stump? I may be preaching to the choir here. The PC(USA) boat is rocking and like the disciples, we are terrified. We can reach out to the peace Christ offers, but it's scary to be losing what we've known when we don't know what to reach for next. Keep searching. Keep wondering. Keep following. Don't let what's "safe" be the ultimate deciding factor in what we do. Glad to talk further if you like. Surveys are a rough medium. [deleted]</p>
<p>I personally feel distant from the General Assembly, its agencies and its functional effectiveness. There does not always seem to be a clear focus or direction. I am thankful that we are not a hierarchical denomination, but it is clear to me that our congregations, ministers, Presbyteries and Synods need clear guidance and support from the General Assembly and its agencies. I hear GA commissioners share what an amazing experience it was to serve, and be very complimentary of the process at GA, but somehow, this process never finds its way to the Presbytery or congregational level. GA needs to lead. GA needs to help all the governing bodies rediscover and discover anew what it means to be church in today's world.</p>
<p>Save as above</p>
<p>I find G.A. and the agencies to be doing what we need. It is too bad that some parts of its ministries have been limited by finances, and that goes back to the 1950s. I give thanks that I was not around for the 1924 G.A. reorganization. We have had too many during the time of my ministry to today. We expend far too much time, money and energy in drawing lines on paper, reorganizing, jumping on board a proposal by one person, and having one study committee after another at great cost. I suppose it may partly be due to having 1st time commissioners at the meetings of G.A. Forget re-organization. Keep our synods and presbyteries and let's engage in effective ministry at home and abroad and meet the challenge of the PCA and EPC forcefully.</p>
<p>I have attended several GAs, though not in the last 12 years. What we know of GA is mostly tied up in the votes we take. In the last 2 years we have been more aware of the PDA and have helped there.</p>
<p>How can the GA become more focused and supportive of the local church to make them viable witnesses to Christ in the 21st century and culture?</p>
<p>Trimming and consolidation might be in order.</p>
<p>I know little of the function of this group.</p>
<p>You are trying to destroy my church</p>
<p>I know a great deal about GA, but not from our presbytery.</p>
<p>We often criticize the decisions of the General Assembly, but the GA is us. Unfortunately the agencies that run the church between GAs have a tremendous influence on the direction of the denomination and too often they respond to the actions of the most recent GA without consideration for the hundreds of years of history which ought to direct our course. So we congregants have a sort of whiplash and at the congregational level there is VERY little sense of respect for those at the top leadership in our denomination. In some cases there is a real sense of anger and betrayal that our denomination has abandoned the core values of our faith and is leading us into apostasy. Glitzy promo videos and brochures will not build trust. It is time for top level staff to visit a few sessions and get back in touch with those it seeks to lead.</p>
<p>It often appears that General Assembly, because of its bureaucratic processes, inhibits rather than grows God's church in this country. Although it is a governing body, it seems to have lost touch with the desires of the local church.</p>

Recent work done at the mission agency has been good, though probably a little to late. GA, which I have been two twice as a commissioner (once as a vice committee chair) does not enable good discussion or the ability to do good work: committees are to large, too much politics, and the actions of the assembly to not represent to opinions of those in my pews.
The GA can help bring oversight to both theological and geographical groupings, by offering different tracks of ministry and mission. This is the only way we will stay together.
Not particularly impressed. Our church does not have a strong trust with the leadership and the lobbying at the GA level. We have continued to pay our per capita but that will stop with the change in our constitution. After each General Assembly we are horrified with many of the decisions and of course the news coverage. I believe in many of the Mission outreaches of our denomination, but that ministry is often overshadowed by the poor decisions of GA.
I think holding the general assembly every other year is a step in the right direction and think that we should move to every 3 or 4 years. We should have fewer delegates and fewer advisory participants. I also think we should not allow the assembly to mandate action that is not budgeted.
<b>NO MENTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</b>
The GA is too divided to accomplish any ministry they just bicker over doctrine.
It appears to me that the process just approved for the 2012 GA is a further move toward allowing the organizers of GA to feed the 'party line' to commissioners (through Riverside Conversations, where the leadership gives 1-sided presentations on major issues, and through less time to actually read committee reports). Another huge concern is the serious underrepresentation of conservatives/evangelicals at both the presbytery and GA level. Major problem!
We need clear criteria and guidelines on grading ordination exams.
They all live in ivory towers
Stay out of politics and concentrate on determining why we lose 40,000 members each year and put us back on track as a Church that represents a loving God.
Downsize, push mission down to the congregations—GA as network, not hub.
Discontinue the advocacy of polarizing political and social rules and commentary. Stay mainstream in theology and Christ focused rather than taking on fringe issues that direct your focus away from most of our core beliefs.
Please improve the "search" function on the PC(USA) website, and have someone answer the phones in Louisville. It is so hard to help members of churches see the value of our connectional system when they can't easily do simple things like renew subscriptions to publications or order bulletin inserts.
The GA should not permit honorably retired persons to serve as voting commissioners—only as advisory members. Commissioners are too old, and new ideas at GA are blocked. Agencies should focus on providing grants and \$ aid to local and worldwide mission programs instead of spending money on centrally administered programs.
GA is primarily responsible for the colossal failure of our denomination to fulfill is God given charge to make disciples of all nations. We need to tear GA down and start over.
I find the GA interesting, and when I was younger, was hoping to be able to go. Don't know anything from Presbytery or our pastor. I get my information on the web and newspaper. Generally, in my opinion, the local church member is asked for pledges and to work (both okay) but is excluded in any further-reaching information about the workings of these bodies. What a shame. I'm leaving my P church, after being there 30+ years and being elder, deacon, clerk, PNC moderator, sometime preacher, etc. to be a Methodist or UCC. All because of failing corrective relationships with our church and our Presbytery. One-third of our congregation is no longer worshipping with us because of the pastor, and we have received no constructive help with the relationship from our Presbytery. Typical.
The more opportunities the people in our congregations have to meet in the flesh—in their own community—a person from the GA—the better. When a face is put on the GA—it has tremendous impact. People need to know you to trust you—and not be afraid the denomination is heading away from God.
More emphasis needs to be focused on evangelism and church growth from a practical stand point to equip congregations with ideas and resources on how to evangelize in the 21st century.
Cut all programs and just be an administrative body. Facilitate discussions about issues but stop voting a position on every issue that comes up in the world. A few hours of debate in a GA committee by people who know very little about the topics is a pathetic way to provide witness.
I worked with the Mission of the church and interpreted Mission in three different Presbyteries. Involvement with the Sister Church Program was exciting and opened many new doors for people in the pew to experience real life in other parts of the world.
Unfortunately social justice ministries seem to be diminishing in size and impact. There are few resources in Louisville to assist presbyteries and congregations in those areas and the synod has none.

GAMC has been decimating social justice ministries
I generally know about the General Assembly. What I know about it is what I am able to read about it on the PC(USA).org website.
Seems to be more interested and involved in social engineering issues rather than in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.
The General Assembly is overwhelmingly attended by very liberal members who are not representative of their congregations and who are led by the even more liberal staff of PC(USA).
The GA has to change its mindset from the Fordist mentality (manufacturer out to dealership where dealership pays fees to be part of the network) to one of uniting congregations for mission. Presbyterianism is not meant to be top-down but rather bottom-up. This is not how it works practically, however, and needs to change.
The only way to prevent the departure of many evangelical congregations will be to allow them to join a non-geographic synod and form new presbyteries that do not recognize the ordination of practicing homosexuals or heterosexuals engaging in sex outside of marriage.
reach out to rural and small town and church areas MORE
Enable, don't restrict
Again, I understand the connectional nature of our polity and the need for a denominational center. I wonder, however, if a shift of most resources from the national office to the presbyteries wouldn't better serve the church.
I hate to say, it but there is no close connection with our church or with what I'm doing. The best activity that I ever saw was the Stated Clerk and the Director of the GA Council visiting presbyteries. Having visiting co-workers is a good program. Presbytel is good.
Continue to develop pilot programs and target involving two congregations in each presbytery with the pilot. Let the two then interpret for the rest of the presbytery. Show the difference the General Assembly Mission Council's staff and resourcing can do! Also, the General Assembly needs to bring its excellent social witness policies guiding its mission to the presbyteries and congregations. This type of strategic "social witness"—both hands-on opportunities and witness in the public square—is just what the youth of our presbytery appreciated most at Triennium. Look at the REACH Work Camp programs that bring together youth in building relationships with the poor, disabled and elderly as they build renovating homes. There is no reason why the GA can't pull together such opportunities and "have it pay for itself"!!! Youth and congregations love to earn resources/provide resources for the youth to have these meaningful opportunities. Why does a para-church group do what the church might well do on its own? Our fear of limited "cash" resources/people feeling the church should offer everything free, keep us from providing opportunities that can develop the next generation of leadership.
Need more info on structure and relationship and duties of Synod
We must strengthen the social action policy implementation of the GA!
I would like some help to attend seminary financially. Can that be arranged?
I strongly dislike the repeated voting on issues that have been rejected time after time by Presbyteries with vague wording and meanings that do not reflect Biblical truths. Can't these bodies see the impact on our denomination from these actions?
It seems that the size and strength of GA is getting smaller. Meeting every two years is a good idea. The agencies are important and I would not like to see them disappear.
too political too distant no concern for individual congregations
Power that strays from Biblical, explicit doctrine corrupts. It represents a doomed falsehood generated from the eyes of sinful man who thinks he can fashion as comfortable the rewritten Bible to his interpretation. Turning from traditional Christian teaching is sin regardless of its current acceptance, even at the highest level of organized religious denominations.
Does the GA understand that local congregations are the heart of the denomination, and supporting congregations in the mission of Christ is its primary reason for existence?
General Assembly should focus on relations with and in support of international denominations, and on building common ground for mission by congregations and groups of congregations.
Let's focus on evangelism, our commission, the Bible, and reaching out, developing programs the local church can incorporate and are proud to do so. Let's be the church focused on worship repentance and acceptance to a new life in Jesus, not on psychology.
For the most part too liberal, too top heavy, too worried about preserving itself and not worried enough with honoring the lord

<p>The general assembly is largely a redundant force that serves a 20% minority of liberal church members who have 90% representation in Louisville. The programs and products they produce are for a by-gone era, the other producers of curriculum in the market place offer more diverse and utilized products. The social witness function is a biased boondoggle ignored by even those politicians who agree with their policies. The members of the PC(USA) should be surveyed as to their specific interests and needs that can only be addressed by our particular denomination and ranked for our future as was done years ago, and the ones highly rated should be accountable for showing a benefit and contributing to the growth of the PC(USA), the rest should be put to rest. Each ministry area should raise their own funds for the next 10 years as we sort this out, and unified budgets should be abandoned as they tempt those in power to fund their interests and commissioners are loathe to 'be the bad guy. 'We need less printing and more active web communication. The social witness policy is so biased it should be eliminated for at least 4 years before considering how to reengage in a way that does not silence the majority in our churches and produce documents and statements of ever increasing irrelevance. The world has changed, I get updates from the Synod of the Nile from my friends there in Egypt by the time I hear anything from Kentucky the news is old, watered down and irrelevant. This is a time when we need conduits of information not editors of information. Our structures staff around the realities of the civil rights movement of the 1960's, its 50 years later! The emerging church needs resources of education and real local church partners who will engage in actual economic development with trained business professionals who occupy our pews not random communist who infest our pulpits and G.A. offices with their bizarre hatred for free markets. The church in Africa is exploding we need to bring those leaders here to train us in evangelism and welcoming the poor. We need relationships of mutuality and time to learn from each other not a bunch of experts with alphabet titles running bygone institutions ASCWP, COGA, et. al. [deleted]</p>
<p>There should be even less bureaucracy at the national level. We have little national influence, little national curriculum or missions. It makes no sense to continue the paper tiger of a huge GA staff and presence. We have had tremendous layoffs—but we are still trying to maintain old fashion structures with fewer people. We need a major overhaul.</p>
<p>They think that they ARE the church. Those in the pews are dummies. The ruling elite are the real church. Voted down???? Just keep trying, you know you're right.</p>
<p>They basically need to clean house—not sure how they got to where they are, but maybe it is time for some really new blood.</p>
<p>The perception is that GA and its agencies are too large and too beaucroatic.</p>
<p>Same as above. I am very disturbed by the recent language changes made regarding what is accepted as sanctioned "alternative living styles" of church leaders. Does not the Bible clearly indicate that relations between same sex persons are strictly forbidden?</p>
<p>Humbly speak out less on issues where there is not strong majority support among Presbyterians.</p>
<p>I have been on two GA committees and at the time I felt we were doing things in isolation e.g. writing studies that were probably never used by other bodies. I hope that justice issues are kept at the GA level because they are disappearing at the other levels.</p>
<p>National and international vision for the Kingdom</p>
<p>G.A. shapes things, for good or ill, in our denomination. G.A. meetings are more politics and procedure than prayer. The national judicatory is not "them," but it is often, not all that in touch with "us."</p>
<p>Complete and total transparency</p>
<p>My sense of the GA is that it's suffered so many cutbacks that there isn't much direct help available. But that's just my perception.</p>
<p>Really good talks have been presented by representatives of the General Assembly at presbytery meetings. The criticism here is that this information reaches such a limited audience. These talks should be available to rent, buy, download, something, so that they can be shared at the congregation level. How to get a copy of the talk should be clearly spelled out on the GA website. It should be part of the duties and functions to reach a wide audience. In these days of instant communication there is no excuse for not making information available.</p>
<p>Poorly run and administered.</p>
<p>The church is well served by General Assembly staff across the Board.</p>
<p>GA offers the connections I have mentioned above.</p>
<p>My impression of the General Assembly is that they are determined to change the PC(USA) into an extreme liberal mishmash of nothing. The people who want a church with no guidelines should start their own instead of attacking one that adheres to what the Bible says. These liberals will win by attrition—they will cause those who still believe what the Bible says to leave the church as it has become.</p>
<p>Come closer</p>

Again, many of my remarks above in sections "a" and "b" speak to issues concerning the GA and its agencies. For 13 years of my ministry career I served as a [deleted] to one of the GA programs. My duties carried me from coast to coast and border to border across the whole U.S. In that capacity I became acquainted with a great many of the staff there at the Center and their program responsibilities. During the time, I witnessed the great expectations and promise of the 1988-89 merging of the two national staffs from the former PCUS and UPC(USA). There was an all too brief few years of remarkable energy and vision in evidence, as the best of the two former congregations finally were empowered to function as one. Then came the semi-annual rounds of staff reductions and reorganizations as the funding began to dry up and disappear. Many congregations had begun to withhold their contributions in order to express their disagreement with the GA Policy positions they disliked. Bound to us by the "Property" provisions and structure of the Board of Pensions programs, these dissatisfied presbyters (I use that word loosely!) took it upon themselves to punish and destroy that which they could not dominate. With the passage of Amendment 10-A, we'll probably experience another ghastly round of the same behaviors. We MUST find a way to remember our ordination vows and honor them!— Someday I also hope we stop trying to run this church as if it were a BUSINESS! We are a CHURCH, not a Fortune 500 Corporation! What possible understanding of what it means to be a "CHURCH" would prompt us to do a "reduction in force" following the secular practices of having a uniformed guard stand by to ensure that the employee receiving the pink slip would gather his or her few personal possessions, place them in a cardboard box, and be marched out of the building and forbidden to return? That is the most disturbing image I have witnessed at the Center. But the "Corporate" model is a BAD fit! Yes, we need good policies and administrative direction for effective management of the Center staff and their functions, but it ought to FEEL like "Church," not just another "business." — IF we have the courage and wisdom to invest an appropriate amount of our earthly treasure in our GA staff and programs, the whole church would be blessed by the possibilities! It's been so long ago I can't remember just when it all but disappeared, but excellent resources (curriculum, etc.) used to be available to congregations at reasonable, affordable cost to them. I know that many of our "congregational" model churches have abandoned the use of ANYTHING produced by the PC(USA), but surrendering to their irregular actions has hurt the WHOLE church, and especially the smaller congregations struggling to persevere as "Presbyterians." —It's past time to bring these remarks to a close. I am 80 years old, legally blind. I apologize for spelling mistakes above. This system does not permit spell-checking and even review is quite difficult for me. I hope at least some of the things I have said above will prove useful in some way. I love my church! Thank you for the opportunity to share these reflections and observations. Your servant, [deleted]

Too liberal. One member told me that my and his church has been "hijacked". It is a greedy, out of control "Not for profit"

GA needs to represent the entire denomination not just the liberal side—they talk about unity in diversity, but I see little diversity among staff and leadership and they are very vocal about their liberal positions



**General Assembly Middle Governing Body Commission  
Focus Groups with Various Constituencies  
Analysis and Summary**

April 29, 2011



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## Introduction and Research Strategy

The General Assembly Middle Governing Body Commission asked the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services staff to help the commission consult with Presbyterians as it reimagines presbyteries and synods. Research Services staff conducted one-hour telephone focus group discussions with representatives of 11 PC(USA) constituencies. The staff drafted focus group questions (with input from a research subcommittee of the commission), sampled and recruited focus group participants, moderated the discussions, and summarized and analyzed the discussions. Operating mainly in pairs, commission members opened and closed the focus groups and listened to the discussions. The focus groups took place during the second and third weeks of April 2011. Each focus group involved between six and nine participants, in addition to the commission members and researchers, and lasted for one hour.<sup>1</sup>

The focus groups gathered people in the following constituencies:

- Executives of large presbyteries<sup>2</sup>
- Executives of small presbyteries<sup>2</sup>
- Moderators of large presbyteries<sup>2</sup>
- Moderators of small presbyteries<sup>2</sup>
- Stated clerks of presbyteries
- Pastors who are younger than 45 years old
- African American Presbyterian leaders and leaders in African American ministries
- Asian American, non-Korean Presbyterian leaders and leaders in Asian American, non-Korean ministries
- Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian leaders and leaders in Hispanic/Latino ministries
- Middle Eastern American Presbyterian leaders and leaders in Middle Eastern American ministries
- Native American Presbyterian leaders and leaders in Native American ministries

The names of the individuals who participated in the focus groups are included in the summary of each group (see Appendices A-K). The summaries include the questions that were asked, all of which had been shared with participants in advance.

## Findings

### Introduction

For the most part, the discussions in the focus groups with racial-ethnic leaders and leaders in racial-ethnic ministries were different from discussions in the other focus groups. Most of the participants in the focus groups that were not with racial-ethnic constituencies were presbytery leaders. These participants are very involved in their presbyteries, whereas racial-ethnic constituency leaders tend to be more involved in their congregation or in their PC(USA) racial-ethnic caucus than with their presbytery. Thus, the discussions among these two groups of participants will be analyzed separately.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about telephone focus groups, see: [http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rkrueger/focus\\_tfg.html](http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rkrueger/focus_tfg.html).

<sup>2</sup> Criteria for presbytery size were number of congregations and total number of members in those congregations.

## Issues for Presbytery Leaders

**Small vs. large presbyteries.** Leaders of small presbyteries generally like being in small presbyteries, particularly because they appreciate the intimacy, accountability, and relationships that develop. When one participant talked about moving from a larger to a smaller presbytery, s/he expressed surprise that pastors called him/her in advance if they could not make it to a presbytery meeting. S/he said pastors would not have made such calls in the larger presbytery. This participant realized that it was because, in the smaller presbytery, people noticed when others were absent, and they cared.

On the other hand, leaders of small presbyteries conceded that some such presbyteries run low on resources. Some of these presbyteries have reduced staff—sometimes exclusively because of financial woes, sometimes for other reasons also—and may need help sustaining presbytery initiatives and taking care of presbytery business. Some small presbytery leaders decried the large number of committees the *Book of Order* apparently mandates, while others noted that their presbyteries have simply eliminated many committees. Some small presbytery leaders like that their presbyteries have small administrative staffs. In fact, a few said that presbyteries should have no staff.

The comments of leaders of large presbyteries generally were similar to those of their small-presbytery counterparts, only in reverse. Large-presbytery leaders like having adequate resources and large numbers of people available to serve on committees. They are troubled by the loss of intimacy and relationship-building that being in a large presbytery may bring.

**Multiple criteria for size.** When recruiting focus group participants, Research Services defined presbytery size by the number of congregations and the number of church members. Leaders of presbyteries identified a third dimension of size: physical size. Presbyteries that have large geographic areas within their boundaries (whether they are small or large in church membership or number of congregations) struggle with specific challenges, including the need for many of those participating in presbytery activities to take significant amounts of time to participate due to travel time. However they are drawn, presbytery lines are also somewhat arbitrary, and Presbyterians who live and work on the far end of one presbytery might be able to forge closer ties with Presbyterians in an adjoining presbytery.

**Synods: for or against?** Presbytery leaders expressed mixed feelings about presbyteries working together on their own initiative (without their synods) or working through or with their synods. Some presbyteries have recently withdrawn from cross-presbytery partnerships, while others are starting limited new ones, sharing financial management, camps, or even executives.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, synods have been providing cross-presbytery services—for example, financial management—while in other cases synods facilitate cross-presbytery networking. In the focus groups presbytery leaders engaged in a lively debate about the future of synods. Some presbytery leaders identified themselves as long-time proponents of eliminating synods. Others said synods used to do important work, but now are weak and do little. Others said the connectional functions that synods serve would be better accomplished if presbyteries created associations on their own. A few also said having a three-layered denominational judiciary is too much, and some suggested eliminating one of the layers. However, others were skeptical that getting people from across presbyteries together would actually take place in the absence of synods. The most vocal proponents of synods were those in three synods that have least one specialized ministry: Living Waters (Living Waters for the World water purification mission project), Pacific (loan fund), and Sun (Solar Under the Sun solar power mission project).

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<sup>3</sup> The *Book of Order* appears to prohibit some cross-presbytery partnerships.

**General Assembly and GA agencies.** Like they did about synods, presbytery leaders conveyed diverse views about the General Assembly and working with General Assembly agencies. On the one hand, some focus group participants said that some church members become upset when General Assembly and GA agency leaders wade into areas that the church members would just as soon not have to hear about, or have to explain to their neighbors, year after year. On the other hand, many Presbyterians know hardly anything about General Assembly and the GA national agencies, and this can provide a different challenge for leaders trying to interpret GA mission. Finally, presbytery leaders lauded some national agency staff and ministries as particularly helpful. These included Laurie Griffith, Doska Ross (who recently left her position), and Mark Tammen (who will leave his position in May) in the Office of the General Assembly's Constitutional Services office (particularly with judicial process issues); Julia Thorne in the Office of the General Assembly's Immigration office (particularly with immigration status issues); and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (for disaster relief and recovery assistance in individual presbyteries).

### **Issues for Racial-Ethnic Constituents**

**Ignorance and resistance?** Participants in the racial-ethnic constituency focus groups, like their counterparts in the other focus groups, expressed mixed feelings about the denomination and its governing body structure. On the one hand, except for some African American Presbyterian leaders and leaders in African American ministries, most participants in these groups believe that the rest of the denomination marginalizes, ignores, and in some cases discriminates against them and against ministries among their racial-ethnic constituents. A participant recalled that other Presbyterians often ask him/her where s/he is from, incorrectly assuming that s/he is a recent immigrant. Some racial-ethnic Presbyterian leaders said they are asked to serve on too many committees, while others said they are never asked to serve on committees, even when they try to volunteer. Asian American and Hispanic leaders said that others in the denomination generally do not appreciate the diversity within their racial-ethnic communities. These communities include not only first-generation immigrants, some of whom do not speak English, but also second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation immigrants, many of whom speak English only. The families of a portion of these latter individuals have been in the United States for many generations. Some Presbyterians from racial-ethnic communities worship in Anglo majority congregations. Several racial-ethnic constituents said that there is no clear, coherent strategy for Presbyterian involvement in mission and ministry with racial-ethnic groups and that efforts to develop such strategies have sometimes failed to involve these constituencies in their development. The absence of such a strategy with the fast-growing Hispanic and Asian American populations is particularly glaring, participants said.<sup>4</sup>

**Support from the governing body structure.** Participants in focus groups with leaders in racial-ethnic ministries expressed satisfaction with the support they have received from some parts of the governing body structure. Several Middle Eastern American constituents, whose fellowships or congregations are often linked with or embedded in non-Middle Eastern PC(USA) congregations, were pleased with the support many of them receive from these partner congregations. Several Asian American constituents praised the support they receive from their presbyteries. Many racial-ethnic constituents who find very few people of their own race-

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<sup>4</sup> Racial-ethnic constituents also pointed to PC(USA)-related seminaries as a place where some leadership training of both ministers of the Word and Sacrament and other congregational leaders should take place, but at times has not taken place. Often, neither seminaries nor presbyteries are able to help train non-English speakers, and seminaries don't always do a good job of preparing students for the real world of pastoral ministry, which can include part-time pastoral positions and challenging urban or rural environments.

ethnicity within their presbytery find a much larger number of such individuals in their synod. Many synods have at one time financed networking and ministries with different racial-ethnic constituencies within the synod (although this financial support is apparently waning). African American constituents, who were the most consistently positive among racial-ethnic constituents about the support their ministries have received from the PC(USA) governing body structure, conceded that some of that support has likely derived from long-term personal relationships with presbytery leaders. Focus group participants from several racial-ethnic constituencies expressed gratitude for the support they have received from the staff of the Racial Ethnic/Women's Ministries' congregational support program.

Financial support also raised complex issues for the racial-ethnic focus group participants. On the one hand, racial-ethnic constituents appreciate receiving financial support from presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly agencies, although some complained that they have not received any or not enough. On the other hand, some constituents said that Anglo Presbyterians who offer money can be condescending in return, and that racial-ethnic Presbyterians have not always learned how to be more self-reliant and to resource their ministries from within their own communities.

**Communication breakdown.** Finally, racial-ethnic constituents conceded that racial-ethnic Presbyterians have not always been very interested in what goes on in the rest of the church. For immigrant Presbyterians, language can be a barrier, in that many events and resources are English-only.<sup>5</sup> Many racial-ethnic Presbyterians also have day jobs with inflexible schedules (witness, for example, the inability of the moderator of the National Asian Presbyterian Caucus to participate in the focus group). Typical Anglo Presbyterian decision-making processes can seem alien to some racial-ethnic Presbyterians, and the kinds of issues discussed at PC(USA) events can seem irrelevant or inappropriate to racial-ethnic Presbyterians (as they do to some other Presbyterians, presbytery leaders said).

## Shared Issues

**Developing leaders and congregations.** Issues on which both presbytery leaders and racial-ethnic constituents focused were: leadership development and congregational development. The denomination's ministerial ordination and pastoral search processes (which some participants described as rigid) ensure that many Anglo majority congregations and racial-ethnic congregations and fellowships go without installed pastors.<sup>6</sup>

**Changing responsibilities.** Participants from all groups (including the younger pastors) painted a picture of a changing denomination and a changing world. Many Americans are abandoning church; congregations are shrinking; and congregations, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly agencies are all facing financial challenges. Loyalty to organizations, including denominations, has subsided, and impatience with bureaucratic regulation is at an all-time high, participants suggested. Interest in spiritual development has eclipsed interest in policy-making and administration. The number-one responsibility of presbyteries, synods, the General Assembly, and GA agencies, many participants said, should be supporting and resourcing congregations and pastors. Challenging congregations and holding pastors accountable (perhaps a different kind of support) are also important. It is crucial to give people from

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<sup>5</sup> Asian American constituents praised the denomination for translating the *Book of Order* into Mandarin.

<sup>6</sup> PC(USA) policies also separate chartered congregations from fellowships, and many local racial-ethnic Presbyterian communities are fellowships rather than congregations. With few installed pastors and few chartered congregations, many racial-ethnic Presbyterian groups (except for African Americans) have little voice in the denomination, a number of racial-ethnic constituents said.

different congregations and presbyteries, from different parts of the country, and from different ethnicities, cultures, and theological orientations a chance to interact, something that presbyteries, synods, and GA can help bring about. Among the presbytery responsibilities that some focus group participants identified as least important were mounting presbytery-wide mission projects, sustaining committees, and holding meetings.

**Alternative communities.** Many affinity groups of pastors and congregations—across both presbytery and denominational lines—have already developed, based on theological orientation and racial-ethnic constituency, among others. A few younger pastors wondered about going the next step and developing non-geographic presbyteries along some of these lines. Younger pastors, however, laughed at the idea that the success of their careers as PC(USA) pastors and ministry leaders would depend on the way PC(USA) middle governing bodies are structured.

Some participants anticipated a possible change in the denomination's ordination standards (based on presbytery voting), making it easier for congregations and presbyteries to ordain non-celibate homosexual Presbyterians as deacons, elders, and ministers. Others anticipated possible changes to the governing body structure that the Form of Government proposal, if it passes, would effect.

## Conclusions

Many focus group participants suggested that PC(USA) governing bodies should support congregations and pastors, stress intimacy and accountability among congregations and pastors, and cooperate across congregations and presbyteries when that makes sense. Participants also suggested improved communication across different parts of the denomination. Racial-ethnic group participants encouraged the denomination as a whole to emphasize racial-ethnic ministries and respect racial-ethnic constituencies.

Focus group participants did not agree on whether or not synods should be eliminated or on what role, if any, synods should play in cross-presbytery cooperation. Participants from most racial-ethnic communities were critical of parts of the PC(USA) governing body structure for their lack of support for racial-ethnic and immigrant ministries.

## **Appendix A: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission**

### **Executives of Large Presbyteries**

Participants: Rev. Dr. Nancy Dawson, general presbyter, Presbytery of the Peaks; Rev. Wilson Gunn, general presbyter, National Capital Presbytery; Jeannie Harsh, acting executive presbyter, Presbytery of Scioto Valley; Rev. Jeff Hutcheson, transitional executive presbyter, Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois; Rev. Chaz Ruark, executive presbyter, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area; Rev. Dr. David Walker, general presbyter and stated clerk, Presbytery of Coastal Carolina

From the Commission: Roger Lee, elder, Woodland Park Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, and immediate past moderator of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest; William (Bill) Stafford, elder, Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee, WI

#### **Q1. Let's begin by discussing what presbyteries do. In your opinion, of the various functions that presbyteries are responsible for: Which ones are the most important? And which ones are the least important?**

Participants agreed that presbyteries should work to support congregations. For one participant, this meant resourcing and supporting congregations connectionally (facilitating connections among congregations, as well as between congregations and the larger church). Another participant listed a three-pronged approach presbyteries can use to support congregations: acknowledge, respect, and take seriously the work of each congregation; practically and effectively help congregations with problems; and ensure that congregations have a vision for their futures. Still another participant noted that it's important to support congregations during transitions in pastoral leadership, which can often be disorienting and traumatizing. One participant also noted that presbyteries should challenge congregations to update their ministry strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

One participant said that it is important for the presbytery to create a safe, kind, and collegial atmosphere among its minister members, considering this fellowship with one another to be the minister members' church and the body of Christ. This participant noted that the atmosphere can be less than collegial when disagreements exist.

Participants noted that the least important functions of presbyteries include property management and keeping up-to-date on CPM forms for ministry candidates (which, one participant noted, requires significant time and seems like a largely ineffective process).

#### **Q2. Of the various functions that presbyteries are expected to carry out, which ones, if any: Could be effectively carried out in a shared way by two or three presbyteries working together? Could only be carried out effectively by each presbytery working on its own?**

Participants thought that a few presbyteries could share one Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). This would be especially beneficial if a presbytery with an exceedingly large number of candidates could share their CPM work with presbyteries with fewer candidates.

Participants also thought that presbyteries could share in leadership development (for example, training and best practices). One participant thought it would be important to share this leadership development across presbyteries because some leaders are at the far ends of their presbytery, closer in distance to people from other presbyteries. Enabling these leaders to meet with leaders in nearby presbyteries could foster deep,



enriching, and supportive relationships that these leaders wouldn't be able to experience in their own presbyteries. One participant mentioned the possibility of sharing regional leadership development opportunities with other denominations as well (for example, Lutherans and Episcopalians).

A participant noted the importance of sharing immigrant ministries across presbyteries. In the participant's personal experience, immigrants living near presbytery borders do not care about presbytery boundaries and may choose to be involved in more than one presbytery.

One participant noted that presbyteries could share resource centers (especially instead of trying to recreate ones that had become outdated). There is the ability to share resources with other denominations as well. Also, presbyteries could share conference centers, specialized staff (for example, treasurer or stated clerk), educator resources, or a congregational consultant for strategic planning.

Participants said that presbyteries could not share Committees on Ministry, disciplinary activities, or issues pertaining to the *Book of Order*, Chapter VIII (likely referring to the Form of Government chapter on "The Church and Its Property"). There was a disagreement over whether Company of Pastors fellowship should be shared across presbyteries. One participant said it would be important to share this fellowship across presbyteries because some pastors would have to travel less to meet with pastors in another presbytery than they would to meet with pastors in their own presbytery, and being closer in distance could facilitate better connections. Another participant said that this fellowship should be kept within presbytery boundaries. A third participant said that the decision about whether or not to share Company of Pastors fellowships across presbytery boundaries could be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the population density of the presbyteries in question.

One participant noted that, as presbyteries are each restructuring/reimagining themselves, there are fewer similarities between presbyteries. This would seem to make it more difficult for presbyteries to share functions.

**Q3. How do you think the size of your presbytery affects its ability to do mission? What are some advantages of being a large presbytery when it comes to doing mission? What are some disadvantages of being a large presbytery when it comes to doing mission?**

**Q4. What other advantages or disadvantages are there to being a large presbytery? Is there anything else you'd like the MGB Commission to know about what it's like to be a large presbytery? [Questions 3 and 4 both answered below]**

Participants indicated that advantages to being a large presbytery include having excellent committees (for example, CPM and COM), especially because there is such a large group of people in these presbyteries—and thus a larger group of qualified and talented people—to choose from and work with. Also, in this same way larger presbyteries can have excellent staff resources as well. The ability to guarantee loans to congregations is another benefit to being a large presbytery.

One disadvantage to being a large presbytery is that the presbytery can be very spread out and/or have a large number of congregations, making it difficult for presbytery leaders to take an active and personal role in each congregation. One participant reports that his/her presbytery is working on creating smaller groupings of congregations within the presbytery to help combat this difficulty. Also, there can be a lot of cultural and theological diversity within large presbyteries, which can make it hard to unify people around a common sense of mission. Yet there is also a vibrancy and strength in this diversity.

A couple of participants commented on the way that Presbyterians can currently associate with other believers along non-geographic lines. For example, people can be closer to the Presbyterians for Renewal group than to their own presbyteries. Presbyterian evangelicals, Presbyterian progressives, African American Presbyterians, and Hispanic Presbyterians can connect with similar believers across presbytery and denominational boundaries.

**Q5. In what ways does your synod assist your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything your synod could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Participants report that synods assist presbyteries practically by providing low-cost bookkeepers for presbyteries to use, organizing synod collegiums (where presbytery executives meet, network, and obtain resources), providing leadership development (for example, interim ministry training and CLP training), and promoting personal development among the leaders within their care.

Many participants seemed to desire synods that are formed/informed by presbytery collaboration. One participant felt that her/his synod was unnecessary, while another spoke of how synods become inflexible structures. Both preferred a more natural formation of synod-like structures through genuine relationships among presbyteries. Another participant said that his/her synod has been shaped by presbytery-level connections (instead of by top-down decisions). One participant noted that the synod staff determine whether the synod operates through presbytery-level initiatives (when staff come from the presbyteries) or through the synod itself (when staff come from synod leadership).

One participant thought that the presbyteries within her/his synod would not work together as effectively without the synod, and said that a synod executive can coordinate executive presbyter forums better than an executive presbyter can. Another participant noted that in his/her synod, the executive presbyters themselves coordinate their forums, and said s/he likes the flexibility involved in this presbytery-centered approach.

**Q6. In what ways have General Assembly agencies been assisting your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything the General Assembly could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Participants noted that GA staff have been great to work with (specifically Julia Thorne, manager of immigration issues; Mark Tammen, Laurie Griffith, and Doska Ross, Department of Constitutional Services; other staff). One participant said that GA also does a great job with disaster response.

One participant said s/he really liked the per capita brochure that GA just produced and distributed to the churches, and would like to see the GAMC produce a resource like that to inform others about the great work that the church is doing.

A couple of participants noted that the Big Tent event is a great benefit, as it shares speakers and resources in ways that may only be possible on a national scale. One of these participants also voiced disappointment that the upcoming Big Tent, scheduled for summer 2011, has faced some problems and confusion. S/he noted that some of the groups that were going to participate in Big Tent are now planning conferences independent of Big Tent.

**Miscellaneous Comments**

One participant voiced unhappiness over the current three-tiered judicial system within the PC(USA). This participant talked of wanting to simplify the judicial process by taking out the synod-level tier.

## **Appendix B: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission**

### **Executives of Small Presbyteries**

Participants: Rev. Ed Albright, consulting general presbyter of Glacier Presbytery; Rev. Edward Dunn, presbytery executive of the Presbytery of Boise; Fred Feth, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Wyoming; James Kennedy, Sr., stated clerk and presbytery administrator of Kendall Presbytery; Rev. Wayne Parrish, general presbyter of Boston Presbytery; Rev. Marianne Rhebergen, transitional presbyter of Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery

From the Commission: Rev. Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo, associate presbyter of Salem Presbytery; Jane Smith, elder, First Presbyterian Church in San Bernardino, CA, and moderator of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii

**Introductory question: Could you tell us a sentence or two about a conversation you recently had with someone in your presbytery who doesn't work on the presbytery staff?**

In these conversations, participants and others in their presbyteries discussed merging presbyteries, dividing presbyteries, and the desire to move a presbytery in a new direction in the midst of obstacles. Two participants said that their conversations centered on what the passage/expected passage of the Form of Government proposal and/or Amendment 10A (which would change PC(USA) ordination standards) might do to ministers, elders, and/or church ministry. One participant had a conversation with an elder who would like to see his church close.

**Q1. Let's begin by discussing what presbyteries do. In your opinion, of the various functions that presbyteries are responsible for: Which ones are the most important? And which ones are the least important?**

Presbyteries' most important functions, according to respondents, are to support congregations (including ones that are struggling), support pastors (including with pastoral care), keep clergy accountable (in terms of professional behavior and productivity), foster relationships, and deal with problems. The presbyteries' least important functions include developing stand-alone mission programs, facilitating new church development, holding meetings, and sustaining committees. Also, someone noted that presbyteries could be assisted with the judicial process, which can be costly, especially to smaller presbyteries, and can cause divisions within the presbytery.

**Q2. Of the various functions that presbyteries are expected to carry out, which ones, if any: Could be effectively carried out in a shared way by two or three presbyteries working together? Could only be carried out effectively by each presbytery working on its own?**

Participants thought that presbyteries could share camps, resource centers, judicial commissions, Committees on Representation, sexual misconduct response teams, training, fellowship, relationship building, and a part-time paid Committee on Ministry support person. One participant thought that presbyteries would be able to share staff, but not functions; "a presbytery that shares its functions with others is less than fully a presbytery." Important issues participants said must be considered are what constitutes a presbytery and how things can be shared between presbyteries without forcing a presbytery to lose its identity as such.

The moderator asked if it seems better to collaborate with other presbyteries on specific functions, rather than to be yoked with one or two other presbyteries. Some agreed with this idea, and one noted the importance of distinguishing between sharing programs with other presbyteries and sharing functions (which s/he believed

essentially can't be shared between presbyteries). Another didn't see an important distinction between sharing staff and sharing functions between presbyteries. Instead, this participant advocated for determining what presbyteries share on a case-by-case basis.

A question was asked of participants: Could the synod take some of the responsibilities where you're imagining presbyteries might cooperate? One participant thought that presbytery-to-presbytery cooperation was more appropriate, instead of having to rely on the synod to schedule meetings and give approval, which would take more time. Others argued for presbytery cooperation, as opposed to synod responsibility, if the synod geography/location doesn't easily support synod responsibility in this way.

**Q3. How do you think the size of your presbytery affects its ability to do mission? What are some advantages of being a small presbytery when it comes to doing mission? What are some disadvantages of being a small presbytery when it comes to doing mission?**

Most participants were quick to share the merits of small presbyteries. They found these presbyteries to be familial and collegial, and felt that they promoted accountability among those involved in presbytery business.

Drawbacks to small presbyteries include relational dysfunction (similar to a family's dysfunction) and fewer resources, in terms of both money and people (for example, fewer people available to serve on committees). Also, some smaller presbyteries are spread out across large geographical areas, which can make travel around the presbytery difficult and expensive.

**Q4. What other advantages or disadvantages are there to being a small presbytery? Is there anything else you'd like the MGB Commission to know about what it's like to be a small presbytery?**

A couple of respondents discussed how smaller presbyteries shouldn't need to have much executive staff, if any. The idea of executive staff is a product of corporate culture, not of the Bible or theology, and has been a recent development in the PC(USA).

Also, one participant called others to remember that the original intent of presbyteries was to foster relationships among small clusters of congregations. If, in creating smaller presbyteries, there are fewer resources to devote to presbytery programs and committees, so be it.

**Q5. In what ways does your synod assist your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything your synod could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Some felt that their synods were very helpful. In particular, the Synod of the Pacific provides a personnel service, custodial fund, and loan fund (essentially a bank). Also, this synod serves as a conduit, providing GA mission funds to presbyteries.

Other participants did not see the support of their synods to be as far-reaching or essential. One participant noted that his/her synod didn't do much except provide funds. Another said that the synod facilitates executive collegiums and stated clerk meetings, which are things the presbyteries could plan on their own. The synod has a program to support new ministers, but this support could be found through other organizations (for example, the Alban Institute). One synod is decreasing its scope, no longer providing the same levels of support, assistance, or guidance. While it once served as a clearinghouse for different funds, this role is being transferred to presbyteries. One participant thought that the PC(USA) needs to get rid of synods and assumed that a specific GA agency, or some other agency, could handle the Synod of the Pacific's loan program. However,

another participant responded by saying that synods can generate more resources than they use, serving a beneficial purpose, and argued that neither the GA nor another agency could handle the Synod of the Pacific's loan program.

**Q6. In what ways have General Assembly agencies been assisting your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything the General Assembly could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Participants noted that the GA agencies are very responsive and provide information and resources to the presbyteries. One participant said that it would not occur to half of the congregations in the presbytery to ask a GA office for resources—instead, they may seek resources from other presbyteries or other congregations within the presbytery. However, the participant said that some congregations in the presbytery are federated and united ecumenical congregations.

Participants voiced interest in GA support for older pastors (around ages 50 to 55) who are preparing to transition out of ministry. This support could be offered by the Board of Pensions and could take the form of outplacement services and opportunities to get counseling. Also, one participant suggested that the Board of Pension's CREDO conference, which encourages pastors to "embrace wellness and to prayerfully discern the direction of their personal and professional lives," could invite participation from pastors who are transitioning out of ministry. The CREDO program could support these pastors in their transition out of ministry and encourage them to identify their skill sets (or ones that they could develop) to use in this transition.

## Appendix C: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### Moderators of Large Presbyteries

Participants: Rev. Jerry Cannon, moderator of the Presbytery of Charlotte and pastor of C.N. Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC; Kris Girling, elder and moderator of Donegal Presbytery; Rev. Chris Keating, moderator of the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy and pastor of Woodlawn Chapel Presbyterian Church in Baldwin, MO; Rev. Jermaine McKinley, moderator of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Rev. Robert Millspaugh, moderator of Muskingum Valley Presbytery; Rev. Rick Neese, moderator of Presbytery of the Cascades and pastor of Chapel by the Sea Presbyterian Church in Lincoln City, OR; Rev. J. Perry Wootten, moderator of the Presbytery of New York City and pastor of Eastchester Presbyterian Church in Bronx, NY

From the Commission: Barbara Ranta, elder, First Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, and associated stated clerk of Seattle Presbytery; William (Bill) L. Stafford, elder, Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee, WI

#### **Q1. Let's begin by discussing what presbyteries do. In your opinion, of the various functions that presbyteries are responsible for: Which ones are the most important? And which ones are the least important?**

Participants said that presbyteries are most helpful when they provide congregational and leadership support (including the Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on the Preparation for Ministry (CPM)), assist with the fulfillment of the *Book of Order* requirements, connect congregations with one another (promoting fellowship, sharing, and ministry collaboration through presbytery meetings/gatherings), and provide resources. One participant's presbytery is very involved in college ministry.

Participants were least concerned with presbytery functions that do not support congregational ministry. One participant agrees that congregational support is most important, but in reality the presbytery is most focused on maintaining peace and order in the midst of judicial cases and congregations wanting to be dismissed from the denomination. This participant would rather have the presbytery focus on mission and training, instead of conflict. Another participant said that presbyteries may soon shift from an emphasis on programming to a focus on coordinating missions among congregations. One participant said that s/he does not feel particularly confident in how the presbytery as a whole functions as an organization.

#### **Q2. Of the various functions that presbyteries are expected to carry out, which ones, if any: Could be effectively carried out in a shared way by two or three presbyteries working together? Could only be carried out effectively by each presbytery working on its own?**

Participants thought that presbyteries could share commissioned lay pastor (CLP) training; administrative duties; and training in coaching, stewardship, and education.

Participants did not think that presbyteries could share functions that require contact with congregations, like the COM or CPM. One participant noted that it would be especially difficult to share these committees if the new Form of Government proposal passes. It would enable each presbytery to set its own standards and guidelines for these committees (although presbyteries could potentially agree on synod-wide standards). This participant noted that, in general, it is hard to talk about which functions presbyteries can share, since the denomination is currently voting on the new Form of Government proposal. Another participant noted that the congregations will exhibit less trust in governing bodies with larger spheres of influence. Participants said that some neighboring presbyteries are geographically so spread out already that sharing functions would be

difficult. Another participant said that it would be important to see whether presbyteries have a similar focus (business-oriented or more spiritually-focused) before trying to share functions. Slightly in contrast, a participant thought that a benefit to connecting a few presbyteries would be the presence of theological diversity in the midst of corporate worship and spiritual formation.

A couple of participants stressed that differences between presbyteries (size, location) make a one-size-fits-all approach to presbytery ministry unreasonable.

**Q3. How do you think the size of your presbytery affects its ability to do mission? What are some advantages of being a large presbytery when it comes to doing mission? What are some disadvantages of being a large presbytery when it comes to doing mission?**

**Q4. What other advantages or disadvantages are there to being a large presbytery? Is there anything else you'd like the MGB Commission to know about what it's like to be a large presbytery? [Questions 3 and 4 both answered below]**

Participants said that large presbyteries are able to provide more resources (funds and people) to use in supporting congregations. However, it was noted that, when presbyteries have been used to having sufficient funds, they may have a more difficult time than other presbyteries when financial hardships come and their funds are depleted. Also, according to participants, large presbyteries can offer more programs, more diversity (urban/suburban/rural settings, race, theology, gender), and more opportunities for connections and networking.

However, participants said that large presbyteries have less ability to engage in presbytery-wide fellowship or spiritual development, offer less intimate relationships, and allow for proportionally fewer leadership roles. One participant's presbytery is actually made up of a few presbyteries that merged into one presbytery. The sense of community that had developed in each of the former presbyteries has led to cliquishness within these groupings even after the merge into one presbytery. Another participant said that if membership decreases in the presbytery but staffing levels stay the same, large presbyteries can end up spending too much money on staffing. Also, one participant from a large presbytery in a small geographic location has noticed that people do not stay for entire presbytery meetings, since their homes are not far away.

**Q5. In what ways does your synod assist your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything your synod could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

**Q6. In what ways have General Assembly (GA) agencies been assisting your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything the General Assembly could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing? [Questions 5 and 6 both answered below]**

Participants said that synods provide banking services; work with presbyteries to provide educational resources for training (including Board of Pensions); offer training, coaching, and/or support (for new ministers and conflict mediators, for example); and act as a higher authority to assist people who are discontented with the way a presbytery may be functioning.

Participants noted that GA staff/leaders have visited presbyteries (for example, for COM retreats) and that the GA assists presbyteries with new church developments. One participant said that, with the lower availability of GA resources in the past few years, the GA may not be as good a source of resources in the future.

Participants reported that both synods and the GA host conferences to help Presbyterians network, connect, and share ideas with one another, and that both also provide assistance with strategic planning and visioning. One participant noted that both are also able to speak about congregational ministry with more weight than a pastor or elder might be able to; another participant said that the synod and the GA are a source of wisdom.

One participant said that his/her synod is in a process of re-evaluating its role.



## Appendix D: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### Moderators of Small Presbyteries

Participants: Rev. Paul Fandl, moderator of Stockton Presbytery and pastor of Community Presbyterian Church in Delhi, CA; Rev. Deborah Hollifield, moderator of Cimarron Presbytery and pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Guymon, OK; Rev. Douglas Horne, moderator of the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley and pastor of Otego Presbyterian Church in Bainbridge, NY; Rev. Jean Hurst, moderator of the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon and pastor of Pioneer Presbyterian Church in Burns, OR; Editha McKay, elder, moderator of Yellowstone Presbytery and commissioned lay pastor for two congregations; Tom Taylor, elder, moderator of the Presbytery of Southern New England

From the Commission: Viola Hickson-Lee, elder, commissioned lay pastor at Faith/Fe Presbyterian Church in Lockhart, TX, and former moderator of New Hope Presbytery; Rev. John Vest, associate pastor for youth ministry at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL

#### **Q1. Let's begin by discussing what presbyteries do. In your opinion, of the various functions that presbyteries are responsible for: Which ones are the most important? And which ones are the least important?**

Most participants said that the most important functions of the presbytery are the Committee on Ministry (COM) and the financial administration of the presbytery. One participant said that, with ordained ministers, commissioned lay pastors (CLPs), and lay leaders serving in her/his presbytery's small- to medium-sized congregations, in some way the entire presbytery (including the general presbyter) participates in the work of the COM. Another participant said that the presbytery's Committee on Vocations has taken an active role in training elders to be CLPs. One participant noted that, although the COM plays an important part in his/her presbytery, at times the COM has been too heavy-handed.

Other important presbytery functions that were mentioned were: nurturing pastors within the presbytery, especially since in small presbyteries pastors take on a lot of responsibilities within the presbytery; the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM); general presbyters having a personal connection to each congregation in the presbytery; and supporting congregations.

One participant talked about a former mission support staff position for a now-defunct three-presbytery partnership. The person in this staff position was paid \$80,000 per year to do a job that the participant thought the chair of a presbytery committee (perhaps the mission committee) could have done; this position was considered unnecessary and frivolous. One participant said that his/her presbytery is in such bad financial shape, the management of presbytery finances is least important; similarly, this presbytery doesn't receive a lot of mission funding from congregations, so the mission work is seen as less important (because the presbytery doesn't have many resources to pursue mission).

A participant said that the *Book of Order* lists some committee requirements (for example, a certain number of people on committees) that are unreasonable for small presbyteries, and that meeting these requirements can waste presbytery resources. For example, small presbyteries may not need as many members on committees as the *Book of Order* specifies. Another participant's presbytery has just moved from forming committees to forming task forces, which are given a lot more independence and less oversight than committees. This has solved the problem of needing a specific number of people on each committee, but it has caused more work for the pastors who serve as "go-to people."

**Q2. Of the various functions that presbyteries are expected to carry out, which ones, if any: Could be effectively carried out in a shared way by two or three presbyteries working together? Could only be carried out effectively by each presbytery working on its own?**

Participants said that presbyteries could share administrative functions (for example, bookkeeping, presbyter), programs (CLP training), and events/gatherings such as youth events and pastoral support/continuing education events (since these can require musicians and speakers—resources that are in short supply). One participant said that the three presbyteries in her/his area are far enough away to make it difficult to collaborate, although the presbyteries still try to cooperate—especially in sharing resources.

One participant said that people are afraid of merging presbyteries because the resulting larger geographical areas would make it more difficult to foster congregational connections. Also, presbytery duties requiring personal connection (for example, COM, nurturing small congregations, assisting pastors in transition) would be difficult to share among presbyteries.

**Q3. How do you think the size of your presbytery affects its ability to do mission? What are some advantages of being a small presbytery when it comes to doing mission? What are some disadvantages of being a small presbytery when it comes to doing mission?**

**Q4. What other advantages or disadvantages are there to being a small presbytery? Is there anything else you'd like the MGB Commission to know about what it's like to be a small presbytery? [Questions 3 and 4 both answered below]**

Advantages to small presbyteries mentioned by participants include their “focus on small local missions,” the intimate care they give to each presbytery’s pastors and congregations, and the close relationships within the presbytery.

One disadvantage to being a small presbytery that was mentioned is that the presbytery has fewer funds for mission. Larger churches within the presbytery, with more funds to give to presbytery mission, will use most of these funds for their own mission interests instead. Also, there are fewer people to assist with presbytery mission or serve on committees—and the small group of people who do help with these things take on too many responsibilities, become overwhelmed, and may stop helping as a result.

**Q5. In what ways does your synod assist your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything your synod could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Synods provide helpful resources (first-call pastor support retreats, officer training, youth workshops, continuing education) and financial support (including banking services and loans).

However, participants accused synods of failing to keep them informed. For one participant, this is a new development, due to budget cuts and subsequent staff cuts in the synod; another attributed it to the large number of presbyteries in his/her synod. One participant was also somewhat disappointed in her/his synod’s loans.

Participants believe the future of synods is unsure. One participant recently attended a synod meeting where the synod was seeking to define its importance in years to come, and the synod decided it would basically be a clearinghouse and resource for mission. Another participant serving on his/her synod’s Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) described the synod as a clearinghouse in its relationship with presbyteries and the General

Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. One participant's synod has broken into clusters of presbyteries that foster connections between presbyteries better than an entire synod can.

**Q6. In what ways have General Assembly agencies been assisting your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything the General Assembly (GA) could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

Participants spoke highly of the Board of Pensions (educational conferences, annual presentations at presbytery meetings, good contact/outreach, strong mission, skilled implementation, supportive, helpful). Also, one participant has been pleased to have GA staff like Hector Rodriguez (associate for Hispanic congregational enhancement) and Philip Lotspeich (coordinator for Church Growth and Transformation) speak at his/her presbytery. Another participant has seen speakers from the GA share information with committees on various topics.

Participants would like to see the GA offer reasonably-priced or free online Christian education materials for congregations (one participant said that other denominations offer these types of materials), create high-quality national commercials/ad campaigns to promote the PC(USA), and provide more communication about GA news (but not too much information—summaries with links to further information would be ideal). One participant did not feel that her/his presbytery was connected to the GA in any significant way, and also noted a feeling of distrust within the presbytery toward the GA.

#### **Miscellaneous Comments**

A participant talked about how CPIP (Covenant Presbyterian Insurance Company) disbanded last year, leaving the presbyteries to find a new way to insure their churches. The participant initially thought the synod was to blame for this, but later wondered if the problem was beyond the synod level.

## **Appendix E: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission**

### **Presbytery Stated Clerks**

Participants: Rev. Philip Barrett, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Des Moines; Anne Bond, elder and stated clerk of the Presbytery of Denver; Rev. Susan Krummel, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Great Rivers; Rev. George Pasley, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Alaska and pastor of Ketchikan Presbyterian Church in Ketchikan, AK; H. Daniel Rogers, elder and stated clerk of the Presbytery of Albany; Rev. Melana Scruggs, stated clerk of the Presbytery of John Calvin and pastor of Crane Presbyterian Church in Crane, MO; Rev. Cathy Ulrich, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas and pastor of Central Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith, AR

From the Commission: Barbara Ranta, elder at First Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, and associated stated clerk of Seattle Presbytery; Warren B. Cooper, elder, Philadelphia Presbytery

**Q1. Let's begin by discussing what presbyteries do. In your opinion, of the various functions that presbyteries are responsible for: Which ones are the most important? And which ones are the least important?**

Participants said that it is important for presbyteries to oversee and support churches (through the work of the Committee on Ministry, for example), provide pastoral care (including creating a community of pastors that feels like a supportive church for these pastors), keep records, settle differences, train elders to lead congregations in the absence of pastors, and engage in and support mission.

One participant said that it was not too important for presbyteries to elect examination readers from among its ministers and elders (G11.0103m). Another participant noted that his/her presbytery cut its programmatic activities (especially those that were also carried out by session committees). One participant said that, in the midst of a presbytery restructuring, the presbytery's resource center was cut, and the presbytery is less likely to maintain programming staff.

**Q2. Of the various functions that presbyteries are expected to carry out, which ones, if any: Could be effectively carried out in a shared way by two or three presbyteries working together? Could only be carried out effectively by each presbytery working on its own?**

Participants said that presbyteries could share programs (camps, Hispanic ministry), the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), leadership/staff positions (for example, stated clerk, Committee on Ministry staff), training/educational events and programs, and the judicial process. Due to the large geographic area covered in one participant's presbytery, s/he said that it can be easier to foster community between people of two different presbyteries who are closer in distance to one another than they are to their respective other presbytery members.

A couple of participants talked about sharing resource centers (among presbyteries or ecumenically). Another participant said that his/her presbytery's resource center was so underutilized that it was cut. This participant also stated that, with the advent of technology, resource centers are no longer necessary.

**Q3. What challenges does your presbytery face? Do any of these challenges threaten the presbytery's ability to carry out key functions? How has the presbytery tried to confront or manage challenges?**

Many participants spoke of a lack of finances within their presbytery. One participant said that her/his presbytery is facing declining finances and membership and, as a way to mediate the effects of these negative changes, the presbytery has put its camp up for sale. Two participants talked about their presbyteries cutting lots of staff positions, with one of the presbyteries planning to put more of the workload on committees, and another already doing so. This latter presbytery has also cut unnecessary committees. In the midst of funding cuts within the presbytery over the next few years, one participant's presbytery is seeking to figure out how to continue promoting ministry (particularly urban and immigrant ministries). One participant linked the lack of finances in the presbytery to people's unwillingness to give financially to the presbytery and, more broadly, to their lack of faith in God's future for the church and God's ability to provide for the church as it carries out God's ministry.

One participant spoke about the absence of ministers of the Word and Sacrament at half of the presbytery's churches. The people who lead these congregations are not always active in the presbytery, which hinders the presbytery-congregation connection in a way that should be remedied. Half of the congregations at another participant's presbytery do not have pastors. This presbytery has congregations that are quite distant from one another, and the presbytery has created groupings of congregations that support and resource one another, a system that has worked fairly well overall.

**Q4. The General Assembly (GA) and most presbyteries and synods support their church government functions by assessing congregations and presbyteries a charge based on their number of members, an amount usually referred to as "per capita apportionment." What is your opinion about the per capita funding system? Are there alternative ways of supporting the carrying out of these functions?**

One participant asked if the others would mind sharing their presbytery's per capita figures (both the total per capita amount and the per capita amount for presbyteries). Most participants reported these figures, which ranged from \$21 to \$50 for total per capita, and from \$12 to \$40-something for presbytery per capita.

One participant described the per capita system as "theologically and philosophically a marvelous idea . . . inclusive and fair . . ." This participant said that the per capita system allows for equal participation in the life of the denomination by those interested. Other participants agreed that the per capita system is fair and also said it is relatively inexpensive.

One participant noted that it can be difficult for presbyteries to collect the per capita apportionment from their congregations. A few participants talked about how congregations can have a difficult time giving money over to the General Assembly. One of these participants talked about a specific congregation within her/his presbytery that has recently been withholding its total per capita as a way to state its disagreement with the denomination. The presbytery has been paying this church's total per capita to the denomination out of other funds within the presbytery, but the church is sending the council an overture to ask that the presbytery refrain from paying its per capita. Another participant found that some people have a hard time giving control over their money to groups outside of their families or the session. One participant said that it could help Presbyterians if the per capita system was more skillfully interpreted—couching it in the larger story of the PC(USA)'s form of government, mission, and connectional system.

**Q5. In what ways does your synod assist your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything your synod could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing?**

**Q6. In what ways have General Assembly agencies been assisting your presbytery with its ministries? How has that changed in the past five years? Is there anything the General Assembly could do to help your presbytery that it is not currently doing? [Questions 5 and 6 both answered below]**

One participant spoke highly of her/his presbytery's interim synod executive, who has made the synod much more hands-on; the synod has also facilitated the coaching/training of pastors in ways that have increased collaboration among presbyteries within the synod. One participant's synod hosts an annual Committee on Ministry/Committee on Preparation for Ministry training event, which provides networking opportunities and resources; assists with personnel staffing issues; and provides bookkeeping services for the presbyteries. Another participant's synod has clustered smaller groups of presbyteries together to work on ministry. One participant's synod has taken steps to give itself less power, and will perhaps transition to a virtual office and stop its annual leadership development program due to lack of staff and support. This synod has found itself being simply an intermediary in the transfer of funds among other governing bodies (presbytery, GA).

Participants noted that the GA provides stated clerk training, constitutional advice (although one participant sounded concerned about the merits of the staff transition—presumably with Doska Ross leaving), excellent staff (Julia Thorne, manager of immigration issues; Marcia Myers, director of the Office of Vocation; other Office of Vocation staff, as well as this office's Church Leadership Connection program), emergency support from the Board of Pensions, and help from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance after a church fire. One participant talked about very strong connections between his/her presbytery and General Assembly entities (Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Foundation), and a potential future connection with the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. This participant thought that this presbytery's stronger connection with GA than with the synod could be due to the fact that a recent GA took place in the region. One participant reported that the Immigrant Group Ministries office has supported the presbytery's Sudanese ministry both with personal and monetary assistance.

One participant reported that the GA doesn't have much of a presence within the presbytery, unless it is to complicate things for pastors (investment policies; ordination standards). Another participant opined that pastors could transfer to the United Church of Christ—with a more congregational governance structure—if they don't like the Presbyterian system of government.

## **Appendix F: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission**

### **Pastors Younger Than 45 Years of Age**

Participants: Rev. Robert Bohnsack, pastor, First Presbyterian Church in Fort Walton Beach, FL; Rev. Eric Owens Ledermann, associate pastor, First Presbyterian Church in San Bernardino, CA; Rev. James Hickson Lee, pastor, New Covenant Fellowship of Austin in Austin, TX; Rev. Hanna Peterson, pastor, First Presbyterian Church in Kelso, WA; Rev. Matthew Schramm, pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Bay City, MI; Rev. Pete Ullmann, pastor, Calhoun First Presbyterian Church in Calhoun, GA; Rev. Shannon McBride Weisenfels, pastor of Christian nurture and family ministry, First Presbyterian Church in Midland, TX

From the Commission: Miriam Dolin, elder, Mission Bay Community Church in San Francisco, CA; Rev. John Vest, associate pastor for youth ministry, Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do in and through your congregation, beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* your ministry? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* your ministry?**

Participants have found that presbyteries can foster connectionalism and collegiality with other ministers and elders, bring chances to partner with other churches in ministry, offer training events that benefit personal ministry, and provide opportunities to serve on committees that serve good purposes and can enrich the committee members' lives.

Presbyteries have also frustrated participants. Comparing the presbytery to a family, one participant noted that not everyone associated with the presbytery is nice, and it can be challenging to work with some of these people. By participating in presbytery meetings, pastors spend less time fulfilling their pastoral duties. When presbyteries cover a large geographical area, it can take a long time to travel to presbytery meetings. Also, presbyteries can demand a lot of time from these young pastors, who have other demands on their time (for example, job and family). One participant found the presbytery to be distant unless a problem arises, in which case it comes in with a prescriptive solution. This participant wished that the presbytery would be more loving and caring at all times. However, another participant thought the presbytery staff served as a great listening ear and source of counsel. Although presbyteries are expected to support churches, one participant thought that presbyteries actually ask the churches to support the presbyteries' goals and objectives. Another participant commented that presbyteries don't show their value through their actions, but instead talk about how valuable they are. One pastor found it hard to gather elders to participate in the presbytery, since lots of the issues that the denomination is arguing over are unimportant to them.

**Q2. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* your ministry? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* your ministry?**

Participants' opinions of synods varied. Some were neutral toward synods. Others had good experiences with synods. In particular, they noted the Living Waters for the World and Solar Under the Sun mission projects that have unified presbyteries in the Synod of Living Waters and the Synod of the Sun, respectively, in common mission. Also, the Synod of the Sun has developed a dynamic relationship with the Synod of Puerto Rico. Synods have been a champion for racial-ethnic congregations. One participant wanted to make sure that minority or immigrant congregations would continue to receive the oversight that synods currently provide

them, since at this point presbyteries aren't offering support and it could be difficult for GA to provide this support.

Some participants questioned whether synods currently play an important role in the PC(USA). As commissioner to the synod, one participant thought that his/her presence at the first synod meeting accomplished little or nothing. Another said that her/his synod was very active a few years ago, but shrank the scope of its functions and now simply disperses money. The synod may be currently having an identity crisis, searching for its function within the PC(USA), the participant suggested. This doesn't mean that synods need to disappear, but it does indicate that they if they continue to survive they should find a significant role within the denomination. One participant argued that synods were created for a time when travel was difficult and a lack of technology impeded quick communication across the country. According to this participant, synods are no longer necessary. They disperse money, but the GA could do this, and eliminating synods would free up money for presbyteries to use.

**Q3. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly: In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) helped your ministry? And how has being part of the General Assembly hindered your ministry?**

When people discussed the General Assembly, they talked about both the GA meetings every two years and the GA agencies. Participants found that GA facilitates connectionalism and cooperation in mission, and provides oversight. Also, people mentioned that GA agencies are helpful and offer resources (with specific praise for Presbyterian Publishing Corporation publications and Board of Pension resources). Participants wanted to make sure that these resources were—and would continue to be—available to all who wanted to use them. One participant thought that people often didn't realize all the resources that GA agencies offer and thought this could be attributed to the many intermediaries currently delivering these resources from GA to congregations (for example, presbyteries).

Participants also noted that GA discusses issues, like sexuality, which often capture media attention and define the PC(USA) to those outside the denomination. They find that members do not want their friends and neighbors defining their faith in terms of these issues, or members do not want to keep talking about these issues within their own congregations, and would like the GA to stop focusing on them. One participant suggested creating a non-geographic presbytery for More Light congregations, which could then develop their own ordination standards, so that these debates in the denomination could come to an end.

**Q4. What sort of ministries do you see emerging now and in the next few years? What kind of presbytery is needed to support these ministries? What kind of synod is needed to support these ministries? What kind of General Assembly is needed to support these ministries?**

Participants encouraged creativity in ministry (including taking risks in ministry) and contextual ministry. One participant suggested that the development of smaller presbyteries, in terms of both staff and geographic size, would curtail bureaucracy and allow people to develop relationships and share resources. Another thought that presbyteries or synods could hire an IT consultant to help small congregations create an internet presence.

Participants advocated for a less institutional focus within the PC(USA) and would like to see presbyteries, synods, and GA support the ministry of local congregations. Participants also advocated for less conflict over the *Book of Order*. Another participant thought that people should see the *Book of Order* as a book that gives permission to do great ministry, instead of a book that limits ministry. To unite Presbyterians, one participant encouraged the denomination to keep holding events that bring members together (GA meetings, Youth



Triennium, Big Tent) and to talk less about issues that will never reach a consensus among a diverse body of believers like Presbyterians.

**Q5. Beyond what you've already said, what needs to change in the governing body structure, if anything, for you to have a long and fulfilling career as a pastor and leader in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?**

One participant felt positively about GA, but wasn't sure that synods need to exist. This participant said that presbyteries are important to hang on to, less because of their meetings and more because people cooperate and discern together—something that sets Presbyterians apart from many other religious traditions. Another participant found this question to be misguided, because the fulfillment of this pastor's personal ministry will not hinge on the structure of the PC(USA). Lastly, a participant requested the development of a church leadership dating connection.

## Appendix G: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### African American Leaders

Participants: Rev. Gregory Bentley, president of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus and pastor of Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa, AL; Rev. Alvin Bridges, pastor of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL; Rev. Dr. Karen Brown, vice president of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. Arthur Canada, Sr., treasurer of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus and pastor of McClintock Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC; Rev. Patrick Daymond, pastor of Sixth-Grace Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL; Rev. Leon Fanniel, director of chapter and region development of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. Betty Griffith, pastor of Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, IN; Mark Jones, Sr., West representative of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. Michael Wilson, Northeast representative of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus and pastor of Capital Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, PA

From the Commission: Viola Hickson-Lee, elder, commissioned lay pastor at Faith/Fe Presbyterian Church in Lockhart, TX, and former moderator of New Hope Presbytery; Rev. Sam Roberson, general presbyter and stated clerk, Presbytery of Charlotte

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do among African Americans beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* ministry among African Americans? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* ministry among African Americans?**

Overall, most participants had a generally positive view of presbyteries' effects on African American ministry. Participants reported that presbyteries have helped ministry among African Americans by providing presbytery staff support to a congregation dealing with an outside conflict; offering financial resources that enabled African American congregations to meet for fellowship and worship; providing human resources (e.g., workshop facilitators); and showing respect, acceptance, and tangible support for African American congregations (their needs/concerns/ministry style) and local chapters of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus. One participant noted that when funding for some congregations was cut, lots of the African American churches became self-supporting, with half-time pastors. This was a positive change, as these congregations felt more independent and yet still connected to the presbytery.

Some participants thought that, to an extent, garnering presbytery support for African American congregations depended on knowing how to reach presbytery leaders, being represented within the presbytery administration, and/or having an executive leader who is a racial-ethnic or African American ministry advocate. One participant found it important to promote a broader sense of concern in presbyteries for African American church vitality (e.g., new church developments and redevelopments).

One participant reported that presbyteries hinder African American ministry when they act condescendingly toward African American congregations because they are financially supporting these congregations. Also, when the presbytery does not address these congregations' concerns because they say the congregations are not active in the presbytery, this frustrates these congregations' efforts and squelches their interest in participating in the life of the presbytery. Another participant noted that some presbyteries do not promote African American ministry. With one presbytery significantly cutting back its expenditures, its African American congregations with old buildings are not given adequate resources.

**Q2. What kind of presbytery would you need in order to grow the Presbyterian witness among African Americans in your area? What would you change? What would you keep the same? [Not asked during the focus group]**

**Q3. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* ministry among African Americans? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* ministry among African Americans?**

Participants noted that synods have a positive effect upon African American ministry. One participant thought that synods are better advocates for African American ministry than presbyteries are, since they are more knowledgeable about the needs of African American congregations and more helpful in meeting these needs. Also, synods bring many Presbyterians together, and within this setting Presbyterians who are passionate about African American ministry can alert presbyteries with growing African American populations about opportunities for evangelism with this group. One participant mentioned that her/his synod provides funds for the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC).

One participant said that with the reorganization of synods two years ago (and the subsequent shift in the relationship between synods and caucuses), her/his synod no longer serves as the main supporter of racial-ethnic ministries. This has hindered racial-ethnic ministry in the synod, especially among presbyteries that are uncommitted or apathetic toward African American ministry. In this synod and its related presbyteries, the NBPC is now the primary means of engaging support for African American congregations, but this support is weaker than when the synod was the main champion for African American ministry.

One participant thought that the support African American ministry receives from the synod can depend on how well one knows how to get needs met within the system, as well as the level of support offered by synod leadership.

**Q4. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly: In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *helped* ministry among African Americans? And how has being part of the General Assembly *hindered* ministry among African Americans?**

One participant was a minister-commissioner to last year's General Assembly meeting, and thought that this position fostered a sense of connection with his/her congregation and the GA. Another participant thought that the offices of the GA are willing to address issues and concerns among African Americans within the church, but warns that this can take a while, requires one to speak to the right leaders within the GA, and might not produce an encouraging response. However, this participant had hope that GA's willingness to support African American ministry would grow stronger, as was indicated by the decision to hold this focus group. One participant noted that the GAMC supported his/her synod's request for funding for a new church development and for African American clergy leadership development. This participant noted that success with the GA depends on knowing the right process to use and the right people to speak with to get your needs met.

A couple of participants discussed the PC(USA)'s hierarchical governing structure. One participant thought that the denomination needs to begin considering the congregation as the primary means of engaging in mission. The governing structure doesn't need to be overhauled, but the focus across all levels of PC(USA) governance needs to shift toward supporting and resourcing congregations. Another participant thought that this shift toward a congregational focus has already begun, but that its operationalization hasn't been successful yet. Instead of resources moving from GA to middle governing bodies to congregations, resources aren't moving from any one governing body to another—and this has caused trouble for congregations that need resources but don't know how to get them.

**Q5. Where in the governing body structure would you say you receive *the most support* for your ministry among African Americans? [Not asked during the focus group]**

**Q6. What opportunities are we missing among African Americans that governing bodies might help you address?**

A few participants mentioned issues regarding seminary training. One participant wanted to know what the denomination is doing to encourage African American people (and people of other racial-ethnic minorities) to attend seminary and become PC(USA) leaders. Another participant wanted to see a reimagining of theological education within PC(USA) seminaries, which would train people more fully for urban ministry (for example, community organizing training) and church planting. This participant believes that seminaries give incoming students a sense that they will have no problem getting a position as a full-time pastor after seminary, while in reality that is probably not going to happen. If students are trained to create jobs for themselves after seminary (by planting churches and creating ministries), the PC(USA) would lose fewer potential leaders after seminary due to a lack of pastoral positions. Another participant added that seminaries should also promote and prepare students for a bivocational lifestyle, as the ministry situation today could require pastors to live bivocationally.

Other participants mentioned leadership issues within African American ministry. One participant suggested that the presbytery could help develop alternative means of pastoral support other than full-time pastors (for example, sharing pastoral leadership among congregations). Two other participants wanted to see African American leadership development (in general, and particularly for urban congregations that will fail without effective leadership). This general African American leadership development could also address bivocationalism.

One participant noted that, according to the 2010 census, over half of African Americans live in the South, and this percentage is expected to increase in the next years. This means that the South holds great promise for mission and evangelism—something that the PC(USA) should engage in.

#### **Additional Comments**

One participant talked about how essential it is for the Office of African American Congregational Support to be able to meet the needs of African American ministry in the PC(USA). S/he said that this office (along with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns) is the essential link between African American ministry and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and advocates for African American ministry. If this office lost some of its power and resources, support for African American ministry would be jeopardized.

A participant in an urban presbytery discussed how changes in housing stock, etc., were opening up opportunities for multi-racial congregations. This participant noted that presbytery, synod, and GA support and resources are needed to provide leadership for multi-racial congregations, which s/he believes would grow the church.

## Appendix H: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### Asian American, Non-Korean Leaders

Participants: Koonkeo Chanthorn, lay pastor of Lao Presbyterian Fellowship in Fort Smith, AR; Pastor Philip E. Chiang, Grace Taiwan Presbyterian Church in Houston, TX; Rev. Sam Fabila, pastor of Biyaya Community Church [Filipino] in Missouri City, TX; Rev. Kerry Kaino, pastor of Japanese Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA; Patricia Hew Lee, elder and former moderator of the National Asian Presbyterian Council and the National Chinese Presbyterian Council; Alice Okazaki, member of the National Asian Presbyterian Council; Samson Tso, elder and vice moderator of the National Asian Presbyterian Council

From the Commission: Rev. Terry Newland, synod executive of the Synod of Living Waters

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do among Asian Americans, beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* ministry among Asian Americans? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* ministry among Asian Americans?**

Overall, participants said that their presbytery is very supportive of Asian ministry, especially when presbyteries have Asian American staff. One participant said that the presbytery communicates excellent Presbyterian theology in a way that her/his Asian American congregation can understand. Another participant said that the presbytery taught the congregation about Presbyterian polity and the congregation's place in the denomination. This presbytery is helping the congregation start a new ministry (which includes a building project). One participant's presbytery has awarded ministry and leadership development grants to Asian American ministry.

Participants would also like to see Asian Americans become more involved in the life of the presbytery (and the synod and the denomination), and the presbytery to be more involved in Asian American ministry (as well as the ministries of other ethnic groups) as a way to better understand the problems these ministries are facing and to support these ministries (including financially). Yet they said that there is a definite language barrier hindering ministry cooperation between Asian Americans and presbyteries, and it can be hard to find an answer to this problem (translation during meetings may not work well in large meetings). One participant noted that Asian American immigrant ministry can take up time that leaders could otherwise devote to PC(USA) committee involvement, while another said s/he wants to see demographic representation on presbytery committees. One participant reported that Asian American ministry has a decidedly different focus and vision; participants talked about how Asian Americans feel that the issues the larger church deals with are not particularly relevant to them, and as a result they may not choose to engage with the larger church or may simply feel less connected to others within the presbytery. One participant expressed frustration that Anglos within the denomination can tend to focus on international issues, instead of caring about the issues facing Asians within the United States. One participant said that the presbytery can place "too many rules, regulations, and structures" on ministry.

**Q2. What kind of presbytery would you need in order to grow the Presbyterian witness in your area among Asian Americans? What would you change? What would you keep the same?**

One participant said that there are a few things s/he would change to make presbyteries more effective in ministry to Asian Americans: focus on supporting ministry and community, instead of power and politics; take the needs and opinions of Asian American ministry leaders seriously (instead of considering them "token" participants); increase ministry among Asian Americans, since the Asian American population will continue to

grow; create an Asian American ministry council for support and visioning for Asian American ministry; and increase the number of Asian American leaders (create different ordination standards for first generation Asian Americans, and encourage later-generation, younger Asian Americans to pursue ministry careers).

This participant said that s/he would like to see presbyteries continue to draw people together as the larger church (through committees and councils, for example) and support ministry through the Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM).

**Q3. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* ministry among Asian Americans? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* ministry among Asian Americans?**

Participants said that synods give loans and grants that support Asian American ministry and also that they help develop Asian American immigrant ministries. Other participants said that they are not too involved with the synod or don't see the synod providing much support to Asian American ministry.

Some participants said that they find the structure of the synod to be more conducive to racial-ethnic ministry support (including Asian American ministry) than the presbytery, since it has a larger influence. However, with presbyteries seeking more control, and the synods receiving less funding, participants said that synods are less able to provide support. Participants also noted that strong support for Asian American ministry within one governing body can also strengthen support in other governing bodies (strong presbytery support can facilitate better relationships between Asian American ministries and synods; synod support can open doors for national ministry support). One participant said s/he would like to see more Asian Americans serving in synod leadership positions, as well as in other leadership positions within the various governing bodies.

**Q4. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly (GA): In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *helped* ministry among Asian Americans? And how has being part of the General Assembly *hindered* ministry among Asian Americans?**

One participant mentioned receiving assistance from the office of immigration services (staffed by Julia Thorne). Another participant noted that the GA helps link Asian American ministries to the larger church; provides Asian American networking opportunities through the National Asian Presbyterian Council (NAPC); provides new church development grants for Asian American ministries; and supports efforts to recruit Asian American seminary students and ministry leaders. One of the participants recently served as a GA commissioner and was happy with the experience; however, this participant expressed regret that s/he hadn't been more familiar with the presbytery goings-on at the time, as this hindered his/her participation on the commission. This participant also called for a deeper connection between Asian churches and other Presbyterian churches.

Some participants said they feel that the GA doesn't show true concern for Asian American ministry—treating Asian Americans as a “token” presence in the GA, laying off many Asian American staff during the GA downsizing, providing insufficient funding for Asian American ministry, and assuming that all Asian Americans are immigrants (while some Asian American families have been in the United States for generations). Participants noted that the Asian presence in the PC(USA) is thriving in spite of overall declines in the PC(USA), and wondered why the church doesn't invest more resources in these successful ministries. Also, one participant said that Asian American churches are forced to deal with some GA issues that are of no real concern to them and that the official PC(USA) positions on some issues have caused Asian American worshipers to leave the PC(USA) for non-denominational congregations. One participant had not communicated with the GA.

**Q5. Where in the governing body structure would you say you receive *the most support* for your ministry among Asian Americans?**

Participants often found the presbytery (including the staff, COM, and CPM) and/or the GA (including the Asian Congregational Support program and Angel Suarez-Valera, associate for Immigrant Group Ministries) to be the most supportive of Asian American ministry. One participant said that the local church is the most supportive, with little/no support received from the presbytery or synod. Also, this participant said that the NAPC does not receive adequate support from the denomination, even as Asian American ministry is more successful than other ministries within the PC(USA).

**Q6. What opportunities are we missing among Asian Americans that governing bodies might help you address?**

One participant said that the major powers within the denomination need to make sure that minority groups' views are heard and respected within the denomination (including Asian Americans' views), especially in light of current debates over a new Form of Government. Also, due to the ever-growing Asian immigrant population in the United States (including many non-Christian Asians), this participant argued that it's key for the PC(USA) to reach out to Asian Americans at all levels (local congregations, presbytery, synod, and GA).

**Additional Comments**

Some participants talked about how helpful and important it was for the GA to fund the NAPC's translation of the *Book of Order* into Mandarin. One participant also thought it would be helpful to provide mentors for new immigrant churches, as these churches learn how to be Presbyterian congregations.

## Appendix I: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### Hispanic Leaders

Participants: Rev. César Carhuachin, the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic representative of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus and a Presbytery of Charlotte staff person; Rev. Mauricio Chacon, moderator of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. Daniel Damiani, the Synod of the Northeast representative of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. José G. Gonzalez-Colon, pastor of First Spanish Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, NY; Rev. Amy Mendez, the Synod of the Rocky Mountains representative of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus; Rev. Jonier Orozco, vice moderator of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus and pastor of College Park Presbyterian Church in College Park, GA; Rev. José Luis Torres-Milan, pastor of Tercera Iglesia Presbiteriana in Aguadilla, PR

From the Commission: Rev. José Olagues, associate executive for congregational resourcing for Grand Canyon Presbytery

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do among Hispanics beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* ministry among Hispanics? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* ministry among Hispanics?**

One participant said that presbyteries can assist with Hispanic ministry by fostering connectionalism among congregations, promoting the sharing of resources and ideas for ministry, providing opportunities to connect with other religious leaders and agencies beyond the presbytery, and offering benefits of association with the presbytery (for example, renting space, obtaining liability insurance). Also, one participant noted that being a Hispanic person in a presbytery leadership position gives voice to Hispanic interests, which in turn can create change.

However, participants said that Hispanics are under-represented in presbytery leadership positions and other leadership positions within the PC(USA). Related to this, participants also said that presbyteries do not minister to Hispanics nearly enough. For instance, there are 15 Hispanic PC(USA) congregations and 2.5 million Hispanic people in New York City.

Participants also expressed concern that the approach to Hispanic ministry should be multi-dimensional but that this hasn't always been the reality. Participants noted that first- and second-generation Hispanic worshipers will respond best to ministries of presence; younger, English-dominant Latinos will respond better to a different form of ministry; and the interests of Hispanic worshipers who do not identify themselves as Hispanic, and instead worship at Anglo churches, need to be considered as well.

Participants talked about how they do not appreciate the condescension in PC(USA) ministry toward the Hispanic population. One participant noted that PC(USA) leaders have been known to direct Hispanic ministries without consulting the Hispanic worshipers themselves; instead of working *with* Hispanic communities, these leaders are working *for* Hispanic communities. Also, Hispanic worshipers aren't consulted when Hispanic ministry leaders are being chosen. One participant reported that PC(USA) white and African American congregations are called "churches," but PC(USA) Hispanic congregations are called "missions." Hispanic ministry is not highly valued within presbyteries or the PC(USA), participants believed. One participant noted that some people within her/his presbytery are not particularly supportive of Latino ministry, which has limited



this ministry (especially in terms of its budget). Another concern is that, when Hispanic ministry is funded entirely by a presbytery, the presbytery's poor financial situation will negatively affect the Hispanic ministry. One participant would like to see a Latino hired by his/her presbytery, but notes that the presbytery's financial situation makes it unable to do so.

Also, one participant noted that presbytery standards about hiring ordained ministers (for example, pastor salary minimums) can make it difficult for Hispanic ministries in their hiring procedures.

**Q2. What kind of presbytery would you need in order to grow the Presbyterian witness among Hispanics in your area? What would you change? What would you keep the same?**

One participant said that s/he would like to see presbyteries budget for a Latino ministries coordinator, Latino ministry programs, and pastors for new ministries, as well as amass more clergy and laity who advocate for Latino ministries.

**Q3. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* ministry among Hispanics? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* ministry among Hispanics?**

Participants report that synods are not supportive of Hispanic ministry, or not functional at all (including in terms of Hispanic ministry), or that they used to be supportive of Hispanic ministry, but that downsizing and staffing changes have significantly decreased support for this ministry. One participant noted that the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii used to be very supportive of Hispanic ministry, but in that environment the Hispanic ministry didn't learn how to drum up support for itself. A participant noted that the synod has the potential to be very supportive of Hispanic ministry (in terms of funding, events, the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus), while another said her/his synod already is supportive in these ways. One participant mentioned the way his/her synod facilitated the development of the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus, and developed and supports the Eastern Tri-Synod Latino Leadership Initiative.

One participant said that in Puerto Rico the transition from having only one presbytery to having three presbyteries within one synod has hindered the connection among the congregations there. This participant also stressed the importance of gathering together with other pastors/members of the Presbyterian Hispanic community within the presbytery or synod.

A couple of participants engaged in a conversation about the value of the support offered by synods. One synod provides money, but no hands-on support, to Hispanic ministry; yet the Hispanic ministry starts programs and trains leaders with these funds, as a way to multiply the funds' effects. The participant from this synod expressed her/his gratefulness for the support the Hispanic ministry receives. However, another participant argued that the ministry receives a very small amount of money, much less than the level of actual support that the synod could be giving (in terms of both monetary and hands-on support).

**Q4. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly (GA): In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *helped* ministry among Hispanics? And how has being part of the General Assembly *hindered* ministry among Hispanics?**

Participants said that GA has assisted Hispanic ministries by providing funding for new church developments; offering funding, resources, and/or support through Hector Rodriguez's office (Hispanic Congregational Enhancement), Marissa Galvan's office (Theology Worship and Education), and the work of Julia Thorne in the immigration office; respectfully interacting with Hispanics who are in contact with the GA; providing

opportunities to network with other Hispanic pastors at an annual event; offering the chance to connect with various offices (like the Ecumenical, Immigrant, and Multicultural offices) to get ideas for Hispanic ministries; and providing information about the Board of Pensions in Spanish. One participant mentioned that his/her connection with the GA Committee on Representation has helped connect her/him to other levels of the PC(USA), and another mentioned involvement with consultation committees.

Participants talked a great deal about the need for GA to intentionally pursue ministry with the growing Hispanic population in the United States, as the Catholic Church is doing—especially as PC(USA) membership is declining. The denomination needs to train Hispanics as pastors and as seminary professors, keep Hispanics on GA staff instead of laying them off during staff cuts, and involve more Hispanics on committees. One participant also called GA to take a more public stand in its support of immigrants, instead of conducting a largely unpublicized effort to support immigrants. Another participant noted that some differences in theological beliefs between Hispanic and non-Hispanic members of the PC(USA) can hinder open dialogue between the groups.

**Q5. Where in the governing body structure would you say you receive *the most support* for your ministry among Hispanics?**

One participant noted that s/he gets support from all three levels of the governing body structure, with the highest level of support coming from the presbytery (since it is a daily form of support).

**Q6. What opportunities are we missing among Hispanics that governing bodies might help you address?**

One participant would like to see the governing bodies provide training to regional Hispanic leaders; offer regional models for successful Latino ministries; employ Hispanic lay pastors and clergy in presbyteries and local congregations; and promote fellowship, networking, and partnership among presbyteries' Hispanic ministries coordinators and/or associates.

**Miscellaneous Comments**

One participant noted that Hispanic pastors are invited to serve on many committees, but when these pastors can't attend committee meetings because of other responsibilities (like their local ministries) others assume that the Hispanic pastors don't want to be involved.

## Appendix J: Focus Group Summary Middle Governing Body Commission

### Middle Eastern American Leaders

Participants: Rev. Fahed Abu-Akel, moderator of the National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus; Wesley Lasu, lay leader of the Sudanese fellowship at Beechmont Presbyterian Church in Louisville, KY; Rev. Hisham Kamel, pastor of Arabic Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Arcadia, CA; Rev. Moufid Khoury, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Allentown, PA; Rev. Mouris Yousef, pastor of Arabic Christian Fellowship of Moorestown, hosted by First Presbyterian Church in Moorestown, NJ; Rev. Raafat Zaki, secretary of the National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus

From the Commission: Roger Lee, elder of Woodland Park Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, and immediate past moderator of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest; Jane Smith, elder of First Presbyterian Church in San Bernardino, CA, and moderator of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do among Middle Eastern Americans, beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans?**

Participants indicated that their involvement with presbyteries often seemed to hinder their ministries, rather than helping them. One participant said that a small number of presbyteries have been supportive in establishing fellowships/congregations for Middle Eastern worshipers, but that most have not been supportive of this goal. Another explained that the presbytery was initially very supportive of the congregation's ministry, but is less so now. This participant attributed the lower level of support to the fact that he himself has gotten busier and has devoted less time to the PC(USA); yet years ago the PC(USA) hadn't reached out to involve him either (even though he had expressed interest in serving on presbytery committees). Another participant initially had trouble with a presbyter who was unsupportive of Middle Eastern ministry. Although the current presbyter isn't antagonistic toward such ministry, the presbytery's lack of funds hinders its support of Middle Eastern ministry.

Participants noted difficulties in partnering with presbyteries to create immigrant fellowships or new congregations. One participant reported that the *Book of Order* gives vague instructions about how to create PC(USA) immigrant fellowships. When a group of immigrant worshipers seeks to become an immigrant fellowship, the stated clerks are able to interpret the *Book of Order* in ways that hinder the formation of these immigrant fellowships. This participant called for the development of a clear policy to encourage the formation of Middle Eastern fellowships in the PC(USA). Also, participants noted that GA's new church development rules do not transfer well to Middle Eastern culture. For instance, the denomination suggests that new church developments conduct a demographic analysis of the area. Participants thought this wasn't an effective or natural way to start a Middle Eastern congregation and reported that these rules kept viable Middle Eastern ministries from developing.

A couple of the participants are involved in Middle Eastern ministries that have relatively weak connections with their presbyteries. For example, one participant is a member of a presbytery, but the fellowship he leads is linked with an already-existing Presbyterian congregation, instead of being a stand-alone Presbyterian fellowship. This participant found it difficult to become an official member of the presbytery himself, and sensed that it would be hard for the fellowship to become a chartered PC(USA) congregation, too. Another

participant's fellowship is only connected to the Presbyterian Church through the pastor at the PC(USA) congregation hosting this fellowship. When this fellowship has requested help from the presbytery (by way of the pastor), the presbytery has at times responded that, since the church is not part of the PC(USA), it can't receive much assistance from the presbytery.

One participant reported that local congregations are the best champions of Middle Eastern ministry. There has to be a staff person in a presbytery who advocates for Middle Eastern ministry in order for the presbytery to engage in this ministry. Local congregations that are passionate about Middle Eastern people have stepped up to engage in and support Middle Eastern ministry, instead of presbyteries and synods.

**Q2. What kind of presbytery would you need in order to grow the Presbyterian witness in your area among Middle Eastern Americans? What would you change? What would you keep the same? [Not asked during the focus group]**

**Q3. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans?**

Overall, participants indicated that synods aren't very helpful to Middle Eastern ministry. One participant found some synods to be supportive and others to be unsupportive of racial-ethnic and Middle Eastern ministry. Another participant said that one synod is swimming in money, but doesn't know what to use it for. This synod is constantly changing its direction, management, etc., and is considered ineffective by churches and racial-ethnic ministries under its care. One participant felt that synods are more removed from Middle Eastern ministry than presbyteries are.

**Q4. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly: In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *helped* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans? And how has being part of the General Assembly *hindered* ministry among Middle Eastern Americans?**

One participant mentioned how supportive Amgad Beblawi (formerly of the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries Middle Eastern office, now with World Mission) had been toward Middle Eastern fellowships. Another participant reported that the GA is more supportive of Middle Eastern ministry than presbyteries and synods. He traced this support back to the work of Victor Makari and missionaries in the Middle East who helped draw attention to populations of Middle Easterners in the United States. This support has culminated in the National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus (NMEPC). However, this participant also noted that—no matter how supportive the GA has been—local congregational support has enabled his Middle Eastern ministry to survive. Another participant also mentioned that GA's creation of NMEPC and the Office of Middle Eastern Congregational Support has been very important for Middle Eastern ministry. This participant noted that these two entities have been forces in new church development and the mobilization of Middle Eastern Presbyterians. Although the PC(USA) organizes itself from the bottom-up (churches form, are chartered by presbyteries, and become associated with the PC(USA)), this participant said that there aren't enough worshipers in most Middle Eastern congregations to begin this process of joining the denomination—which is why GA support and resources are essential for successful Middle Eastern ministries.

Participants said that, thanks to the 2010 GA in Minneapolis, Middle Eastern Presbyterians are gaining a larger voice within the denomination. One participant noted that, before this GA meeting, the PC(USA) defined Middle Eastern people as White (consistent with the U.S. Census). Thanks to the efforts of the NMEPC and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), and through the decision of the last GA, this

participant reported that the PC(USA) is seeking to consciously incorporate Middle Eastern Presbyterians on committees, staff, etc.

**[Added during focus group] What are ways in which working with an individual local congregation has *helped* or *hindered* you in your ministries?**

Participants noted that they currently share positive and supportive relationships with their host Presbyterian churches. There are different levels of integration between the host church and the Middle Eastern ministry: sometimes the ministry acts quite independently of the host church, but is still supported and accepted by the host church; at other times, the host church and Middle Eastern ministry are more unified. For example, one participant is very integrated into the life of his Presbyterian church. He is a pastor at this church, with all the same benefits as the other pastors (secretary, office, etc.). He mainly focuses on Arab ministry, but also serves the larger church by preaching at English-speaking services, conducting hospital visits, etc. Participants noted that their relationships with their host churches have facilitated their ministries' growth.

Although relationships with host churches can be beneficial, they can also bring problems or conflict. One Middle Eastern congregation has had to move locations several times (for instance, when a new pastor has been called by the hosting church); this Middle Eastern congregation has now bought land to build its own church. In another Middle Eastern fellowship, the hosting church wanted the fellowship to hold its services solely at the church—but the fellowship didn't feel like this would be most conducive to its worshipers, who came from many different areas. This conflict was resolved, and the hosting church now gives the fellowship much more freedom.

**Q5. Where in the governing body structure would you say you receive *the most support* for your ministry among Middle Eastern Americans?**

Although this question was not formally asked during the focus group, participants' responses indicate that they find local congregations and the GA to be most supportive of Middle Eastern ministry.

**Q6. What opportunities are we missing among Middle Eastern Americans that governing bodies might help you address?**

A couple of participants talked about ways that local congregations can support racial-ethnic ministry. Local congregations, presbyteries, and synods can choose to generously support racial-ethnic ministry through the creative use of their resources (even if they have few resources), and to resource and encourage racial-ethnic ministries to engage in evangelism and outreach. One participant considered it important for local congregations to have a mission focus, telling of times when local congregations (with synod and presbytery support) hosted a racial-ethnic ministry which then turned into a new church development. Another participant felt that presbyteries can be so focused on administration that they miss the opportunity to think missionally.

**Closing comments**

It was noted that PC(USA) governing bodies are resourced and capable enough to reach out and support racial-ethnic ministry (including Middle Eastern ministry), but that many presbyteries and synods do not take this initiative.

**Appendix K: Focus Group Summary  
Middle Governing Body Commission**

**Native American Leaders and Leaders in Native American Ministries**

Participants: Rev. Phil Campbell, pastor of Northern Light United Church in Juneau, AK; Rev. John Chambers, supply pastor of Utkeagvik Presbyterian Church in Barrow, AK; Rev. Irvin Porter, moderator of the Native American Consulting Committee and pastor of Church of the Indian Fellowship in Puyallup, WA; Janis Quinn, elder and vice moderator of the Native American Consulting Committee; Myra Schouten, intern at Papago United Presbyterian Church in Sells, AZ; Corbett Wheeler, elder and member of the Native American Consulting Committee

From the Commission: Roger Lee, elder of Woodland Park Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, and immediate past moderator of the Synod of Alaska-Northwest; Rev. José Olagues, associate executive for congregational resourcing for Grand Canyon Presbytery

**Q1. Let's talk about the effect that being part of the governing body structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has on the ministry you do among Native Americans beginning with presbyteries: In your experience, how has being part of a presbytery *helped* ministry among Native Americans? And how has being part of a presbytery *hindered* ministry among Native Americans?**

Participants said that presbyteries provide payroll assistance to congregations without staff, financially support Native American ministries (including through mission grants and endorsements), offer supplies and lay ministry training through the presbytery resource center, provide opportunities for Native Americans to become involved with the presbytery (through presbytery meetings, etc.), and provide continuing education and leadership development opportunities (sometimes with a Native American ministry component to this training).

A couple of participants noted that the PC(USA) pastoral search process does not fit well with Native American culture, especially the mission study component that can take years to complete.

Another participant noted Native Americans' dual image of the presbytery in her/his area of the country, where the presbytery is well-regarded because of its history of ministry to Native Americans, yet also remembered for its disregard of native culture. This participant reported that it is a struggle to figure out how to mend the rocky parts of the relationship between the native culture and the presbytery.

A couple of participants noted the differences in leadership styles between white culture and native culture. In their experience, Native Americans do not want others to take control for them, but that no one within native culture is quick to take the leadership role either. Another participant noted that every native culture is different—one has to enter their culture and work with their ways of making decisions. This participant said that people may treat Native Americans paternalistically, but Native Americans are capable of doing things on their own.

**Q2. What kind of presbytery would you need in order to grow the Presbyterian witness among Native Americans in your area? What would you change? What would you keep the same?**

One participant said s/he wants to see the presbytery budget money specifically for Native American ministry and make sure Native American ministry has a place in a restructured presbytery system.

**Q3. Next, let's talk about synods: In your experience, how has being part of a synod *helped* ministry among Native Americans? And how has being part of a synod *hindered* ministry among Native Americans?**

Participants said that synods provide funding for Native American ministries, but some participants don't receive synod funding for their ministries or have contact with the synod. Another participant mentioned having a synod executive who is an advocate for Native American ministries. One participant noted that historically the synod used to provide more support for Native American ministry than the presbytery. A few participants mentioned that geographical separation from the synod office and/or meetings and transitions in synod staff are hindrances. Participants report that in various areas of the country people are wondering if (or thinking that) the synod will cease to exist.

One participant spoke positively of her/his work with the Native American Consulting Committee, a group that helps support Native American congregations. Another participant expressed the opinion that the synod and national structures guiding the Native American Consulting Committee are outdated, that some people on the committee are getting too old to participate, and that there are a few people involved in the committee who end up doing a lot of work. One participant said that it's important to look at the past and present before plotting a future course for the Native American Consulting Committee's national structure.

**Q4. Next, let's talk about the General Assembly (GA): In your experience, how has being part of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *helped* ministry among Native Americans? And how has being part of the General Assembly *hindered* ministry among Native Americans?**

Participants said that the GA provides pension funds, manages the mission funds (for example, One Great Hour of Sharing funds), and helps facilitate meetings among Presbyterians involved in Native American ministry by holding national gatherings (GA, Big Tent) where they can come together without added expenses.

One participant said that, overall, GA isn't very connected to Native American ministry. This participant wanted to see the GA make the process of calling a new minister more flexible for ethnicities/cultures in which the current process doesn't work well. This participant also wanted to see the GA work to recruit pastors through seminaries for remote congregations and ministries, and mentioned the possibility of having one person travel across the nation recruiting for Native American congregations.

Another participant mentioned the Comprehensive Strategy for Ministries with Native Americans, which was passed by GA in 2000. This participant wondered if this strategy is periodically reviewed by the church, since s/he thought it is important to allow policies like this to be shaped and adjusted throughout the years.

Participants mentioned what they see as a weakened relationship between GA and Native American ministry. The GA, they said, now considers Native American ministry to be a racial-ethnic caucus, instead of the consulting committee it once was. Participants noted that this shift in GA perception makes Native American ministry feel downgraded in importance, power, and influence within the GA. One participant wanted to see GA consult the Native American Consulting Committee when hiring GA staff who will work with Native American ministry (which didn't happen when Sallie Cuaresma, former associate for Native American congregational support, retired and was recently replaced by Martha Sadongei, church specialist for Native American congregational support, the participant said). This participant also wanted to get more passionate people on the Native American Consulting Committee and have the GA realize that Native American ministry is different from other racial ethnic ministries.

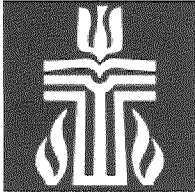
**Q5. Where in the governing body structure would you say you receive *the most support* for your ministry among Native Americans? [This question was not asked.]**

**Q6. What opportunities are we missing among Native Americans that governing bodies might help you address? [This question was not asked.]**

#### **Miscellaneous Comments**

One participant said that people are dropping out of Native American congregations because they find these congregations to be outdated.





# Cherokee Presbytery

RECEIVED MAR 5 - REC'D

183 West Main Street, Suite A, Cartersville, GA 30120  
Phone: 770-382-6280, Toll Free: 888-384-6554, Web: [www.cherokeepresbytery.org](http://www.cherokeepresbytery.org)  
Rev. Rebecca M. Blackwell, Mission Coordinator and Stated Clerk

Rev. Dr. Heahwan Rim  
Transitional Synod Executive/Stated Clerk  
Synod of South Atlantic  
118 E. Monroe Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202-3214

February 29, 2012

Dear Rev. Rim;

At its stated meeting yesterday (February 28, 2012), Cherokee Presbytery approved the following actions with respect to Bethany Presbyterian Church and its pastors, Rev. Byeongho Choi and Rev. Peter Lim:

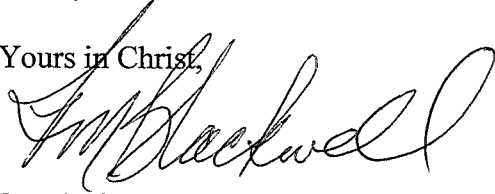
- That the request of the Session of Bethany Presbyterian Church to be dismissed to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery be approved, subject to the following:
  - That Bethany and The Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery continue to abide by the covenant between Bethany and Ray Thomas Memorial, including the following provision as outlined in the minutes of the Bethany-RTM Administrative Commission meeting of September 27, 2007:
    - ... restrictions or encumbrances of the Bethany church to sell the property at some time in the future and that Cherokee Presbytery must approve such and so must RTM as long as the later exists and if not, that such approval of authority would revert to the (Cherokee) Presbytery.
  - That the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery and Cherokee Presbytery be invited and encouraged to become partners in the covenant relationship between Ray Thomas Memorial and Bethany Presbyterian Churches.
- That pending approval of Cherokee presbytery, the Synod of South Atlantic and the General Assembly, that Revs. Choi and Lim be dismissed to a non-geographic Korean Language Presbytery with the Bethany congregation.
- Cherokee Presbytery commends the transfer of Bethany Presbyterian Church to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery and urges the Synod of the South Atlantic to add its support to this overture and recommend its approval by the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

A word of explanation so that you will understand the caveats embedded in this overture (related to Ray Thomas Memorial Presbyterian Church): In 2005, Bethany and Ray Thomas Memorial entered into a covenant whereby they both share one facility and are working together to develop a multi-cultural congregation for the future. With the transfer of one of the covenant partners (Bethany) to another

Presbytery and Synod, Cherokee Presbytery wishes to ensure that any property or strategic decisions include Ray Thomas Memorial and/or Cherokee Presbytery.

Therefore, with this letter, I hereby request that the Synod of South Atlantic consider these matters and vote in the affirmative to send this request to the 220<sup>th</sup> meeting of the General Assembly. Please contact me if you need further information.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Rebecca M. Blackwell  
Mission Coordinator and Stated Clerk

cc; Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of PC(USA)  
Rev. Choi (Pastor, Bethany Presbyterian Church)  
Elder Charlie Chong (Clerk, Bethany Presbyterian Church)  
Rev. Carrie Scott (Pastor, Ray Thomas Memorial Presbyterian Church)  
Elder Marx Borges (Clerk, Ray Thomas Memorial Presbyterian Church)



# Flint River Presbytery

826 Liberty Expressway, S.E.  
Albany, GA 31705  
[www.flintriverpresbytery.org](http://www.flintriverpresbytery.org)

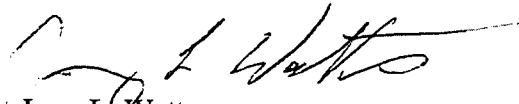
March 5, 2012

Synod of South Atlantic

Flint River Presbytery approved the attached request at its February 25, 2012 meeting contingent on approval by the Synod of South Atlantic and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Please add this request as a motion to be considered at the March 7 Synod meeting.

Yours in Christ,



Jerry L. Watts  
Stated Clerk

**Paul E. Luthman**  
Executive Presbyter

**Debra T. Bibler**  
Associate Executive  
Presbyter

**Jerry L. Watts**  
Stated Clerk

**Connie J. Fritz**  
Children & Youth  
Coordinator

**S. June Denney**  
Officer Manager

**Robin Dunn**  
Financial Services

229-435-9726  
800-411-8029  
229-883-6440 (fax)





*First Korean Presbyterian Church*

**발도스타 한인장로교회**

4725 Bemiss Road Valdosta, GA 31605, [TEL] 229) 333-0179

February 12, 2012

Dear Flint River Presbytery COM,

The First Korean Presbyterian Church of Valdosta respectfully requests to transfer membership to the Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery.

After meeting with our congregation (12/25/11), we believe that a transfer is a good decision for our church.

We are not asking to leave the denomination, and we know and are grateful to the Flint River Presbytery because it has been helping and supporting Korean churches for a long time.

Our church wants to be involved in the future ministry of mission and have different outreach viewpoints, and while we believe that we can have a more active ministry with the Korean-American Presbytery, we will still help with other projects with the Flint River Presbytery.

We are sure our church and the Flint River Presbytery can maintain a good relationship and cooperate for our denomination.

We would like to formally request to transfer membership and make it an agenda at the next presbytery meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup> 2012..

We sincerely hope the presbytery will approve and permit us to transfer our membership to the Atlantic Korean-American presbytery.

God Bless you and your ministry.

Very respectfully yours,

Rev. Se Joon Kim  
Pastor

Elder Sumi Williams  
Session Clerk

Dear Heahwan, here is our request about Jesus Hope from before in case you need for your files. D

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Donna Wells <dwells@atlpcusa.org>

Date: Thu, Feb 16, 2012 at 10:24 AM

Subject: another Korean Church request

To: Kerri Nichols <kerrinichols@synodofsouthatlantic.org>

Dear Kerri,

Please have the Synod act upon the request for the Jesus Hope church to be transferred to the Atlantic Korean Presbytery. Not such when GA deadline is for Synod overtures. It may be March 2 when all constitutional changes are needed...sorry to through this at you. Hopefully the last. the request didn't come to us until our Feb 11 meeting. D

Donna E. Wells

Stated Clerk

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

678-638-1463

# SAVANNAH PRESBYTERY

“SERVANT OF THE CHURCHES”



February 18, 2012

To: Synod of South Atlantic  
From: Stated Clerk, Savannah Presbytery  
Re: Allow Savannah Korean PC to move to the Atlantic Korean American Non-geographic Presbytery

At its Winter Stated Meeting on February 17, 2012, Savannah Presbytery unanimously voted to dismiss Savannah Korean Presbyterian Church to the above mentioned non-geographic presbytery. This action of Savannah Presbytery is contingent upon affirmative vote of both the Synod of South Atlantic and the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Please include this item on your docket at the upcoming Stated Meeting of the Synod.

Russell B. Gladding, Jr.  
Stated Clerk

## Item 06-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-01. See p. 26.]

*On Amending F-1.01, God's Mission—From the Presbytery of Utah.*

The Presbytery of Utah overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall F-1.01 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“F-1.01 GOD’S MISSION

~~“The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people. This one living God, the Scriptures say, liberated the people of Israel from oppression and covenanted to be their God. By the power of the Spirit, this one living God is incarnate in Jesus Christ, who came to live in the world, die for the world, and be raised again to new life. The Gospel of Jesus Christ announces the nearness of God’s kingdom, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, sight to all who are blind, freedom to all who are oppressed, and proclaiming the Lord’s favor upon all creation.”~~

*“The mission of the Church is given form by the activity of the triune God in the world as told in the Bible and understood by faith.*

“F-1.0101

“a. *God’s Activity*

*“God created the heavens and the earth and made human beings in God’s image, charging them to care for all that lives; God made men and women to live in community, responding to their Creator with grateful obedience. Even when the human race broke community with its Maker and with one another, God did not forsake it, but out of grace chose one family for the sake of all, to be pilgrims of promise, God’s own Israel.*

“b. *God’s Covenant*

*“God liberated the people of Israel from oppression; God covenanted with Israel to be their God and they to be God’s people, that they might do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with the Lord; God confronted Israel with the responsibilities of this covenant, judging the people for their unfaithfulness while sustaining them by divine grace.*

“F-1.0102 *God in Christ*

*“God was incarnate in Jesus Christ, who announced good news to the poor, proclaimed release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, let the broken victims go free, and proclaimed the year of the Lord’s favor. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; in his life and death for others God’s redeeming love for all people was made visible; and in the resurrection of Jesus Christ there is the assurance of God’s victory over sin and death and the promise of God’s continuing presence in the world.*

“F-1.0103 *The Holy Spirit*

*“God’s redeeming and reconciling activity in the world continues through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who confronts individuals and societies with Christ’s Lordship of life and calls them to repentance and to obedience to the will of God.*

“F-1.0104 *The Church*

*“The mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God’s mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God’s mission.”*

***Rationale***

There are two main reasons to support this change to our *Book of Order*.

1. The “new” language of the amendment better captures and explains who the God we worship is, who we are and why the church does what it does.

The current language of F-1.01 does an adequate job of giving a brief overview of who the God we worship is. However, the language from the 2009–2011 *Book of Order* (G-3.0100–3.0103; “The Church and Its Mission”) and used nearly verbatim here as the amended language, does a more thorough job explaining how God has interacted with humanity throughout history and up to the present. It walks through the description of God’s work in Scripture. The Church universal has an important part to play in the communication of God with creation. The amended language here better explains why the Church is called to love others wholeheartedly, show deep mercy, and strongly advocate for justice in our communities and throughout the world.

2. The “new” amended language brings this section of the *Book of Order* into better concordance with *The Book of Confessions*.

Our *Book of Confessions* exists to help us frame our reading and understanding of Scripture within the bounds of reformed theology. Likewise, this amendment helps us keep the foundational section of the *Book or Order* in connection with our unique and historical understanding of Scripture.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-01**

*Advice on Item 06-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-01.

***Rationale***

The overture proposes to edit the text of F-1.01 in the following ways:

1. Deleting the first paragraph of the section in toto;
2. Inserting a text substantially identical to that of G-3.0100 from the 2011 text of the Form of Government, now to be numbered F-1.0101a and b, F-1.0102, and F-1.0103; and
3. Renumbering the current second paragraph of F-1.01 as F-1.0104.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that provisions of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity are concise statements derived from the church’s faithful scholarly work. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity lay the groundwork for the polity of the church and are not confessional documents. Even so, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that the Foundations should not be amended without broadly demonstrated need, and then only after provision for study and discourse within the church.

The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is that the existing F-1.01 sufficiently and succinctly states the theological substance of the former G-3.0100. The current two paragraphs of F-1.01, which concern God’s mission, together reflect the Reformed understanding of the Trinity in *The Book of Confessions* and are foundational for the polity provided in the Form of Government.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 06-01 would provide unnecessary amendment of F-1.

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**Item 06-02**

**[In response to Item 06-02, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See p. <sup>26</sup>.]**

*On Amending D-10.0101–.0102 to Clarify the Duties of an Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Detroit.*

The Presbytery of Detroit overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall D-10.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

“Procedure preliminary to a disciplinary case is initiated by submitting to the clerk of session or the stated clerk of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the member (D-3.0101) a written statement of an alleged offense, together with any



supporting information. The statement shall give a clear narrative and allege facts ~~that, if proven true, would likely result in disciplinary action.~~ Such allegations shall be referred to an investigating committee. (D-10.0201)

2. Shall the first paragraph of D-10.0202 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The investigating committee shall *review the statement alleging a violation to determine whether it alleges any facts that, if true, constitute an offense defined in D-2.0203b. If no violation is alleged, it shall end its inquiry and report that to the clerk of the body. If a violation of the Constitution is alleged, it shall proceed to the steps below.*”

**In response to Item 06-02, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following recommendation:**

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Shall D-10.0202 be amended by adding a new section “a.” and re-lettering current “a.”–“k.” as “b.”–“l.” The new section is to read as follows:**

**“[a. review the statement of alleged offense to determine whether it alleges any facts that, if true, constitute an offense as defined in D-2.0203b. If no offense as defined in D-2.0203b is alleged, the investigating committee shall end its inquiry and report that to the clerk of the body. If an offense as defined in D-2.0203 is alleged, it shall proceed to the steps below.]”**

#### *Rationale*

The wording of D-10.0101 states that the clerk of the body receiving the statement of allegations shall make an initial inquiry: whether “if proven true, would likely result in disciplinary action.” The function of such a provision is to provide a way to screen out claims that may be true, but which are not violations of the Constitution. It is similar to a grand jury or preliminary hearing in criminal law, and is comparable to the initial consideration of remedial complaints found in D-6.0305.

When a statement is referred to the investigating committee, its first duty, after providing a copy to the accused, informing the accuser of the procedures, and determining whether the allegations have been made before (D-10.0202 a–c), is to “make a thorough inquiry into the facts and circumstances of the alleged offense” D-10.0202d. (“An offense is any act or omission by a member or officer of the church that is contrary to the Scriptures or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”) This means that the investigating committee must proceed to an investigation of the facts.

In 1991, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission ruled in *Hoy and McGlamery, Jr. v. Pby of Tropical Florida, Remedial Case 203-1*, that “a stated clerk has no constitutional authority to refuse to transmit to a permanent judicial commission a filing which on its face purports to be a complaint” (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 173). This means that a clerk receiving a statement containing allegations must refer it to an investigating committee whether or not a violation of the Constitution is alleged. Section D-10.0202d requires that investigating committee to investigate the facts, even if there is nothing alleged that could go to trial.

The Office of Constitutional Services, of the Office of the General Assembly, has recognized the problem in its *Constitutional Musing 3*. In a footnote to this musing, it notes that paragraph g states the investigating shall “determine, in accordance with G-3.0102 and D-2.0203b, whether there are probable grounds or cause to believe that an offense was committed by the accused,” suggesting that this can be an initial step. The problem is that a Constitutional Musing has no authority behind it, and the notion of *probable cause* in this sequence of events is something that must be determined after thorough inquiry. Moreover, there may be some clerks of session of presbytery that have not read the Constitutional Musings of the Office of the General Assembly.

Because of the *Hoy and McGlamery* decision, the initial intent of the Rules of Discipline that allegations against members be screened by the clerk to ensure that the allegations against a member are in fact violations has been removed, and no other provision has been made for this initial step. The result is that a person can write allegations against another Presbyterian that cannot be tried even if true, but nonetheless an investigating committee must conduct a thorough inquiry into the facts. This amendment allows an investigating committee to review the allegations as a first item of business, and, if the allegations even if true do not constitute a violation, can close the investigation.

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-02**

*Advice on Item 06-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-02 raises issues the assembly should consider.

#### *Rationale*

1. *Amendment of D-10.0101*

The overture would amend D-10.0101 by striking the phrase, “that, if proven true, would likely result in disciplinary action.”

The rationale of this overture points out an apparent conflict between the language of D-10.0101 and the General Assembly PJC decision in *Hoy and McGlamery v. Presbytery of Tropical Florida* (Minutes, 1991, Part I, Case No 203-1). This assessment, however, appears to misunderstand the context of the case in question. *Hoy and McGlamery* addresses the procedure in a remedial case, while D-10.0101 concerns the preliminary procedure in a disciplinary case. If there is to be an analogy to disciplinary cases, *Hoy and McGlamery* would address the refusal of a clerk to transmit to a permanent judicial commission a filing by an investigating committee that on its face purports to be charges.

Section D-10.0101 is silent concerning the matter of who is empowered to make the assessment of whether the alleged offense rises to the level of likely disciplinary action. However, D-10.0103 would appear to resolve the question: “Upon receipt of a written statement of an alleged offense, the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the council only that an offense has been alleged ....” The proposed amendment, while consistent with Constitution, is unnecessary.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that it should disapprove the section of the overture dealing with amending D-10.0101.

## 2. *Amendment of D-10.0202*

The overture would add a new section “a” to D-10.0202, Investigating Committee Responsibilities,” requiring that an investigating committee review a statement of allegation to determine whether the facts alleged, if proven true, constitute an offense as defined in D-2.0203b. This amendment has the effect of duplicating the similarly-worded requirement of D-10.0101, and clarifying that it is a responsibility of the investigating committee.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the insertion of this provision clarifies the responsibility for assessment of whether an offense is alleged by specifically assigning it to the investigating committee. Neither D-10.0101 nor D-10.0103 are clear about ownership of this responsibility; D-10.0101 simply provides information concerning the required threshold of the contents of a statement of alleged offense, and D-10.0103 is clear that making further inquiry beyond receipt of the statement lies outside the purview of the clerk of session or stated clerk.

The advisory committee notes, however, that the language proposed in the overture could be improved in at least two respects. First, the use of the term “violation” introduces into the Rules of Discipline a term not otherwise found, and for which the Rules of Discipline have other standard vocabulary. The Rules of Discipline employ the phrase “offense against the Constitution,” or simply “offense” to describe matters that may eventuate in disciplinary action.

Second, the committee notes that as the initial subparagraph in D-10.0202, there is no antecedent for the pronoun “it.” This antecedent serves not only the subsequent occurrence of the pronoun in the proposed addition, but also the occurrence of the pronoun in subsection i.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that, if it agrees with the intent of the overture, the language of the section proposing amendment of D-10.0202 could be made clearer and more consistent with the Constitution by inserting a new section “a.” to read as follows:

*“a. review the statement of alleged offense to determine whether it alleges any facts that, if true, constitute an offense as defined in D-2.0203b. If no offense as defined in D-2.0203b is alleged, the investigating committee shall end its inquiry and report that to the clerk of the body. If an offense as defined in D-2.0203 is alleged, it shall proceed to the steps below.”*

## Item 06-03

[The assembly answered Item 06-03 by the action taken on Item 06-09. See p. 26.]

*On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of National Capital.*

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall D-10.0106, regarding administrative leave, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]

~~“When a written statement of an alleged offense of sexual abuse toward any person under the age of eighteen, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent, has been received against a teaching elder, the stated clerk receiving the allegation shall immediately communicate the allegation to the permanent judicial commission. [The rest of the paragraph remains unchanged.]”~~

2. Shall G-2.0904 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“The presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it. *The presbytery may amend the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister and the session, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.*”

### ***Rationale***

Sexual abuse is devastating to a congregation. Past PC(USA) conversations in this regard have demonstrated the tension between the protections afforded the accused, that they are innocent until proven guilty, and the protection of a congregation, the putative victims, and potential victims from additional abuse.

Presently the Rules of Discipline provides three ways the teaching elder may be placed on administrative leave:

- the accused teaching elder may volunteer for a leave of absence;
- one of the victim/ survivors of the alleged sexual abuse is under the age of eighteen;
- or it is alleged that the victim lacked the mental capacity to consent.

The conditions currently found in D-10.0401c.(1) are included in D-10.0106. The conditions cited in D-10.0401c.(2) are not included in D-10.0106. This amendment proposes to include those conditions as well. Essentially mandatory administrative leave would be able to be imposed upon any teaching elder if sufficient evidence of sexual abuse as defined in D-10.0401c exists as judged by the two persons appointed by the permanent judicial commission (PJC) chair.

Another change in the *Book of Order* is also necessary to provide the possibility to impose mandatory administrative leave in the presence of sufficient evidence. The proposed amendment to G-2.0904 makes this possible. A pastoral call is a contract between pastor, presbytery, and a congregation. Attempts to place a teaching elder accused of sexual abuse on administrative leave have been complicated in the past due to the fact that the congregation has not voted upon the leave of absence being imposed by the presbytery. The proposed amendment to G-2.0904 would provide for a course of action that could be imposed upon a teaching elder if evidence is sufficient to merit such. The presbytery could amend the terms of call to require teaching elders to abide by a presbytery’s administrative leave policies without the approval of the congregation itself. Due process as described in D-10.0106 related to administrative leave would remain the same. While the session and the teaching elder would be consulted, the lack of congregational action in this regard would no longer be an impediment to placing a teaching elder on administrative leave by a presbytery.

If this change is not made, even with evidence of sexual abuse by a teaching elder of someone with the alleged mental capacity to consent and who is over eighteen, the presbytery has little recourse other than to threaten removal from office based upon the judgment that “the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it” (G-2.0904). This threat is sometimes employed to persuade an accused teaching elder to voluntarily accept administrative leave. This is often a lengthy process following some weeks of negotiation with a presbytery ministry committee. This negotiation and delay is at the additional emotional, spiritual, and psychological expense of the putative victim(s) and trauma to the congregation. The proposed changes provide a means by which this administrative leave can be appropriately and expeditiously imposed in the context of existing due process. The proposed changes also provide for a course of action available to a presbytery that is short of removal from office when a teaching elder will not voluntarily agree to administrative leave.

### **Summary**

The proposed changes preserve the existing rights of the accused and extend protection to the congregation, the putative victim(s), and potential victims by expanding the range of consideration to all persons, not just those who are under eighteen or who, it is alleged, lacked the mental capacity to consent. These changes make it possible to impose a leave of absence on any teaching elder accused of sexual abuse with any other person based upon the evidence available at that time. These changes leave intact the current process of consideration as defined in D-10.0106. It does not automatically impose the administrative leave but continues to leave it to the judgment of the two persons appointed by the chair of the permanent judicial commission to consider the evidence of sexual abuse.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-03**

*Advice on Item 06-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-03.

### ***Rationale***

This item and Item 06-09 (from Baltimore) propose similar amendments to two sections of the *Book of Order* aimed at expanding and facilitating the use of administrative leave when allegations of sexual abuse have been filed against a teaching elder.

Both items have provisions that would permit the presbytery to amend the terms of call of a teaching elder without consultation with the congregation when the church's ministry under the Word imperatively demands it. Dissolution of a call after finding that the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it is an extraordinary step that does not require the congregation's agreement to the dissolution, but it does require, at the very least, a consultation with the congregation. Amending a call without the congregation's agreement would similarly be an extraordinary step, and at the very least the congregation should have the right to be consulted even if its expressed wishes are not followed.

The right of the congregation to be consulted prior to dissolution of a pastoral relationship was explicitly added to the Form of Government in 2007. Prior to that amendment, the 1990 decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Baumann and Griffiths v. Session of Bellefield Presbyterian Church (Remedial Case 202-1)* affirmed the rights of the congregation. Part of that case involved a "Confidential Statement on Reconciliation of the Relationship Between the Session, on Behalf of the Congregation, and the Senior Pastor." Relevant statements in that decision include:

The "Confidential Statement" made by the session was admittedly in the name of and for the congregation, and it was not appropriate to withhold this statement from the congregation. In addition, since the statement could be interpreted as changing the terms of call for the pastor, it would be a matter requiring approval by the congregation.

The major problem identified by the complainants in this case was a failure to inform the congregation in an adequate manner of matters affecting the life of the congregation. The recommendation a presbytery commission to the presbytery to sever a pastoral relationship is a matter seriously affecting the spiritual life of the congregation, and it is irregular to withhold this information from them. The government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is representative (*Book of Order*, G-6.0107)<sup>1</sup>. A session should keep the congregation advised of its actions insofar as reasonably possible.

The congregation is a necessary party to the call of a teaching elder to a pastoral position. Terms of call are not determined by sessions, but by congregations (see *Book of Order*, G-1.0503c and G-2.0804.) The terms of call for an existing pastoral relationship are first approved by the congregation before being sent to the presbytery for approval; if those terms are to be changed by the presbytery, the congregation is entitled to being consulted. When a congregation originally had agreed to pay a stated monthly sum to a teaching elder so that the teaching elder would provide pastoral services, it would be unfair for the presbytery, without even consulting with the congregation, to amend the terms of call so that the congregation would be obligated to continue paying the same when the elected teaching elder is not providing those same pastoral services.

Item 06-09 is almost identical to this item. The significant difference is its amendment to G-2.0904 would limit the presbytery's authority further with the phrase "In the case of alleged sexual abuse having been received by the stated clerk against any teaching elder." The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that even with this limitation the same concerns for consultation with the congregation remain.

Amending the constitution to take away the requirement of consultation with the congregation would represent a significant departure from our understanding of the pastoral call.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that presbyteries that have adopted an adequate administrative leave policy and that have required an explicit agreement of compliance with that policy as part of the minimum terms of call to be agreed upon by the teaching elder and the congregation do have the authority to institute administrative leave in the situations envisioned in these items. An adequate administrative leave policy would address the following six issues (identified by the ACC in 2004) in the face of alleged misconduct:

1. What process is due the accused before a leave of absence is imposed?
2. Who should implement the process?
3. What other parties, if any, should be involved in the process?
4. What types of allegations should trigger the process of determining whether to place a pastor on a leave of absence?
5. What timeline should apply to determining whether to place the pastor on a leave of absence?
6. Whether a pastor placed on leave should be compensated, and if so, by whom?

The administrative leave provisions in D-10.0106 were added to the Rules of Discipline as part of a response to the work of the Independent Committee of Inquiry, which was raising particular concerns about the protection of children in mission settings. The adopted language protects both persons under the age of 18 and those over the age of 18 who lack the mental capacity to consent.

In answer to question 4, D-10.0106 is currently limited to allegations of sexual abuse toward any person under the age of 18, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent. A presbytery could identify in its administrative leave policy

other alleged offenses that would expose a teaching elder to the possibility of administrative leave, but the presbytery would also need to provide answers to questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 for those additional offenses because of the limitation in D-10.0106.

This proposed amendment to D-10.0106 would give a new answer to question 4. It would enlarge the scope of those alleged offenses that would mandate a judicial procedure that could lead to administrative leave pending the final outcome of the investigation or trial. The larger set of alleged offenses would encompass allegations of any form of sexual abuse as defined in D-10.0401c.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that the clear identification of alleged offenses that could mandate the D-10.0106 procedure is important. The current language is appropriately clear and specific, and the proposed amendment to D-10.0106 is also appropriately clear and specific.

One problem that this item and Item 06-09 point out is that D-10.0106 does not fully describe the process to be followed, who negotiates with whom about any payment for the costs of administrative leave, or how the administrative leave is to be imposed. These questions are left to presbyteries to answer in a way that is appropriate to their individual contexts. Section D-10.0106 merely identifies the process by which a decision is to be made that there should be administrative leave or restrictions on ministry. A presbytery administrative leave policy is needed in order to explain in advance the procedures the presbytery will follow to implement any administrative leave or restrictions.

The existence of a presbytery administrative leave policy and the inclusion in advance within the terms of call of an agreement by the congregation and the teaching elder to follow the administrative leave policy of the presbytery would mean that imposing administrative leave under that policy would involve merely doing what was already agreed, not amending the call. This procedure would eliminate the problem of needing to consult with the congregation to impose administrative leave in the initial stages of dealing with dire but unproven allegations. In the absence of such a provision within the call, both the session and the congregation should be consulted.

If the General Assembly believes that there should be a constitutional provision for amending terms of a pastoral call in the middle of a crisis, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-03 could be made consistent with other constitutional provisions with the following modification: The sentence this Item proposes to add to G-2.0904 should be amended by striking the words “minister and the session” and inserting in their place “*teaching elder, the session, and the congregation*” so that the proposed new sentence would read:

*“The presbytery may amend the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the [~~minister and the session~~] [teaching elder, the session, and the congregation], it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.”*

If the General Assembly believes that D-10.0106 should be amended to address all situations of sexual abuse by a teaching elder, the ACC advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that this item’s proposed amendment to D-10.0106 is clear and consistent with the Constitution, but that D-10.0106 still requires presbyteries to determine many details in how they will implement administrative leave.

#### Endnote

1. This is a citation to the Form of Government in effect at the time of the decision, which corresponds to G-2.0102 in the current Form of Government.

### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-03.

#### *Rationale*

This item and Item 06-09 propose similar amendments to two sections of the *Book of Order* aimed at expanding and facilitating the use of administrative leave when allegations of sexual abuse have been filed against a teaching elder.

Although we disapprove the G-2.0904 section of this item, ACWC urges the General Assembly to change D-10.0106 as requested by this overture to address all situations of sexual abuse by a teaching elder. Sexual abuse, no matter what age or “mental capacity,” has extreme detrimental effects not only for the victims, but also for the victims’ families and the congregation of which they are a part. By limiting D-10.0106 to include only situations that pertain to victims who are under eighteen-years-old or who allegedly lack the mental capacity to consent, we also minimize the horrors of sexual abuse of persons who are older than eighteen. Although we understand the current wording and procedure to specifically address and protect minors and persons who cannot consent, we strongly believe that the PC(USA) must voice that sexual abuse is an atrocity despite a person’s age or mental capacity to consent.

The ACWC advises against amending G-2.0904 as requested. Item 06-03 presents a situation in which presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship in a congregation after consultation with the teaching elder, session, and congregation. This relationship may then be amended after presbytery only consults with the teaching elder and session. While the session and the teaching elder would be consulted, the lack of congregational action in this regard would no longer be an impediment to placing a teaching elder on administrative leave by a presbytery. Part of the teaching elder's call is in connection with the congregation, as well as the terms of call are not determined by session but by congregations (G-1.0503c and G-2.0804). If any aspect of the teaching elder's call is changed, the congregation is entitled to be consulted.

## Item 06-04

[The assembly approved Item 06-04. See p. 26.]

*On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of Saint Andrew.*

**The Presbytery of Saint Andrew overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Shall the first paragraph of G-3.0301 of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

***“G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibilities***

***“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may *enroll, or may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of, ruling elders serving as moderators of committees or commissions during terms of elected service to the presbytery or its congregations.*”***

### *Rationale*

The 2009–2011 *Book of Order* contained an explicit provision that commissioned lay pastors (now commissioned ruling elders) could be granted voice and vote at meetings of the presbytery (former G-14.0562e). The current *Book of Order* omits that explicit provision, while continuing to include it for both certified Christian educators who are ordained ruling elders under certain circumstances (G-2.1103b) and for the presbytery's officers and moderators of its committees or commissions (G-3.0301).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s parliamentary authority, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition* (RONR), states as one of the general rules for the interpretation of bylaws (or constitutions) that “if the bylaws authorize certain things specifically, other things of the same class are thereby prohibited” (RONR pg. 589, ll. 33–34). At the very least, this principle draws into question whether or not presbyteries may continue to grant voice and vote to commissioned ruling elders.

While one solution would be to simply add commissioned ruling elders to the list of those who may, by rule, be enrolled as members of a presbytery, it seems more in keeping with the spirit of the new Form of Government to remove the specific permission to enroll moderators of committees or commissions, and replace that permission with a more general statement that any ruling elders elected by the presbytery to positions of leadership may be enrolled as members. This approach would seem to give presbyteries the most flexibility in determining their membership (a particular goal of the new Form of Government), within the constraints of our historic principle that “the election of the persons to the exercise of ... authority, in any particular society, is in that society” (F-3.0106).

### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-04**

*Advice on Item 06-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 06-04.

### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-04 identifies a helpful improvement in the language of the first paragraph of G-3.0301.

## Item 06-05

[There is no Item 06-05.]

## Item 06-06

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-06. See pp. 26, 27.]

*On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-4.0203 be amended by inserting an “a.” in front of the current text and inserting a new section “b.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-4.0203 Church Property Held in Trust/*Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations*

“a. *Church Property Held in Trust*

“All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“b. *Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations*

“*All property controlled by a local session and being used by an individual congregation shall be deemed to be the property of that individual congregation. It shall be considered as held in trust for that local congregation, not for another body. The individual congregation shall be the sole owner of such property and shall hold title to such property, even if the congregation votes by a two-thirds (2/3) majority to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) due to theological disagreement with any action taken by a governing body or permanent judicial council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). No disciplinary action shall be brought against any individual congregation that takes action to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition, no disciplinary action shall be brought against any presbytery that dismisses an individual congregation and also permits that congregation to hold sole title to property, under the control of its session, that is used by that congregation for its ministries.*”

### ***Rationale***

The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) currently states “All property held by or for a particular church, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a particular church or of a more inclusive governing body or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” Many individual congregations raise extensive funds for their own buildings to further their local ministries. In keeping with the new missional emphasis of the PC(USA), permitting an individual congregation to retain its property furthers the work of the Church universal without penalizing that congregation in the event of a theological disagreement with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A fundamental concern of individual congregations is that their theological beliefs will continue to be respected even if they vote by a two-thirds (2/3) majority to withdraw from and sever all ties to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This amendment grants individual congregations the right to exercise their freedom of conscience in considering their continuing relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) without coercion.

### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-06**

*Advice on Item 06-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-06.

### ***Rationale***

Item 06-06 would amend G-4.0203, which provides that all church property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lettering the current G-4.0203 as G-4.0203a and adding a new section G-4.0203b.

The proposed G-4.0203b would remove and shelter the individual congregation from what is commonly referred to as “the trust clause,” which states that without exception all property held by or for a congregation, presbytery, synod, the General Assembly or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the proposed G-4.0203b would be inconsistent with the newly lettered but otherwise unchanged G-4.0203a, in that the proposed G-4.0203a would still read:

All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). [current G-4.0203]

Item 06-06 fails to address other, more specific, provisions of G-4.02 on church property and specifying their applications to congregations and the property held by congregations. It is broadly inconsistent with the language and intent of G-4.0204 (on property used contrary to the Constitution), G-4.0205 (on property of a dissolved or extinct congregation), G-4.0206a (on selling or encumbering congregational property, along with G-3.0303f on presbytery responsibility to consider and act on congregation’s request for permission to sell or encumber church property), G-4.0206b (on leasing congregational property), G-4.0207 (on property of congregations in schism), and G-4.0208 (covering the time-limited exceptions to these Form of Government provisions on property). If approved, under F-3.03 (“No provision of the *Book of Order* can of itself invalidate any other”) Item 06-06 would not delete, dilute, or make inapplicable these interrelated provisions for ensuring that church property held by or for a congregation continues to be held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Another significant area of incompatibility of Item 06-06 with G-4.0208 lies in its intent to keep the church from adhering to its own constitutional standards and procedures by including language prohibiting exercise of judicial process involving an individual congregation “that takes action to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” or “any presbytery that dismisses an individual congregation and also permits that congregation to hold sole title to property, under the control of its session, that is used by that congregation for its ministries.” It is contrary to the historic principles of our polity (F-3.0203, F-3.0206; cf. G-3.0101, D-1.0000) to exempt any action from accountability, review, and, if found contrary to the Constitution, remediation.

These deficiencies lead the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to advise the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-06 does not present the minimal compatibility with existing constitutional provisions reasonably to be expected in amending the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the proposed changes have the potential to generate significant issues in matters of civil law, both in the amendment itself and in its effects on the nature of our polity. The committee refers the 220th General Assembly (2012) to this committee’s advice to the 217th General Assembly (2006) in which it reviewed the church’s principle that all church property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

The current provision [in] the Form of Government codifies a Presbyterian understanding of property ownership that prior to its adoption was settled in Presbyterian polity. Section G-8.0201 [now G-4.0203] was only added as a constitutional provision to avoid confusion in the civil courts as to the status of church property.

The origins of Chapter VIII of the Form of Government are found in both the Presbyterian Church in the United States (1981, pp. 224–25, 229–43) and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (1980, pp. 99–105). Both denominations shared a long and common history of understanding a congregation’s property to be held in trust for the whole church. This history is reflected in a number of judicial decisions, all the way to the United States Supreme Court, most notable in an 1872 case, *Watson v. Jones*, 80 U.S. (13 Wall) 679 (1872). However, for the protection of Presbyterian principles it became clear that it was necessary for the denominations to put in place a provision in its constitutional documents that which was implied in the earlier precedents, that is, that property is indeed held in trust for the benefit of the whole church. Both predecessor denominations engaged in long and careful studies of the history of these judicial decisions in the context of historic Presbyterian principles in adopting the antecedents to G-8.0201 [now G-4.0203].

This necessity for adoption of G-8.0201 [now G-4.0203] arose from court decisions that changed the permissible role of courts in determining disputes as to church property. Until a few years before the adoption of G-8.0201 [now G-4.0203], courts determining property disputes sought to determine from the doctrinal documents of a denomination whether the property of local congregations was held in trust for the larger church (this was referred to as the “implied trust” analysis). However, in 1979, the United States Supreme Court found that this type of inquiry into the doctrine of a denomination was an improper intrusion into the First Amendment right to freedom of religion. Accordingly, the courts were required to determine property disputes without seeking to interpret a denomination’s doctrine (the so-called neutral principles of law analysis). For Presbyterians, this change in the legal framework the civil courts applied suggested specific reference in property matters in a denomination’s constitutional documents was prudent. Section G-8.0201 [now G-4.0203] provides that explicit understanding of the long held Presbyterian understanding. As such, it was not a change in our Presbyterian polity, but rather an attempt to protect the denomination’s polity against changes in the permissible framework of legal analysis applied by the civil courts.

Chapter VIII [now Chapter IV] gives broad discretion to the presbytery in the resolution of property disputes. These provisions, which allow the presbytery to exercise its discretion in a property dispute in light of the mission of the Gospel within its bounds, provide a sound foundation for resolution of property disputes and should not be abandoned. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p.359–60).



Furthermore, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that Item 06-06 presents itself as providing for freedom of conscience, in that it would have its proposed G-4.0203b titled “Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations.” Paragraph titles in the *Book of Order* are not part of the Constitution and in themselves carry no constitutional weight for interpreting provisions.

Finally, in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) there is no provision for a congregation, a council, or other entity to have or exercise a “freedom of conscience” more or less analogous to the conscience provisions afforded individuals in the church. “Each congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0103) means that actions of congregations must be in accord with the Constitution; constitutional remedies are available to the church when there is reasonable evidence that a congregation has acted outside what is constitutionally permitted (special administrative review by a higher level of the church, and remedial judicial process under the Rules of Discipline). It is the conscience of the individual which is constitutionally acknowledged and is both defended and limited for so long as the person remains a member in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (F-3.0101; F-3.0105; G-2.0105).

### **GAMC, PILP COMMENT ON ITEMS 06-06 and 06-07**

*Comment on Items 06-06 and 06-07—From the General Assembly Mission Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

Items 06-06 and Item 06-07 seek to amend the “trust clause” of the *Book of Order* by adding conflicting language to provide that property being held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is also owned by the individual congregation and held in trust for the local congregation, and not for any other body. The *Book of Order* at G-4.0203 currently provides important support and safeguards for the low-cost loan programs for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations provided by the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). Therefore, PILP believes the amendments proposed by Items 06-06 and 06-07 will cause unnecessary confusion due to the conflicting language in the proposed amendments, and will jeopardize fundamental and essential aspects of the loan programs of PILP and the GAMC, administered by PILP.

Without the current trust clause of the *Book of Order*, presbyteries would be unlikely to guarantee loans and without guarantees PILP’s ability to assist congregations would be significantly impaired. This change would be particularly difficult for small, mid-sized, and new congregations that may not be able to obtain bank financing.

The PILP makes low-cost loans to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] congregations for new buildings and renovations. The funds for PILP loans are generated through the sale of Term Notes, which are debt securities to PC(USA) members and congregations and the sale of Denominational Account receipts (DARs) accounts to mid councils and PC(USA) agencies. The interest paid on these Term Notes and DARs and any redemptions are funded by the interest and principal repayment of the loans to congregations. The PILP relies on the congregation’s repayment of principal and interest to be able to pay interest to investors and to repay principal to investors at maturity.

The PILP administers the Church Loan Program for the GAMC. The Church Loan Program is a mission program under the responsibility of the GAMC and the principal corporation of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, where endowment funds are also used to make low-cost loans to congregations.

Most church building projects cannot be financed by congregations from their current receipts. Congregations depend on loans from PILP, the GAMC’s Church Loan Program, or commercial lenders to complete these projects. Generally, these loans are secured by first lien mortgages on the property of the borrowing congregation. The property of the congregation provides the collateral for these loans and is a potential source of repayment should the borrowing congregation not be able to repay the loan.

In addition to being secured, these loans are guaranteed by the presbytery of jurisdiction of the borrowing congregation. This means the presbytery is responsible to pay back the loan should the borrowing congregation fail to pay. The presbyteries have confidence in guaranteeing these secured loans due in part to G-4.0203 and G-4.0204, which state:

*G-4.0203 Church Property Held in Trust*

All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

*G-4.0204 Property Used Contrary to the Constitution*

Whenever property of, or held for, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) ceases to be used by that congregation as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with this Constitution, such property shall be held, used, applied, transferred, or sold *as provided by the presbytery*. [Emphasis added.]

Under G-4.0204, when a congregation ceases to exist or leaves the denomination, the congregation’s property (which includes, but is not limited to, its real property, building, and other assets such as investments) is subject to the control of the

presbytery of jurisdiction. The presbytery continues to be responsible for mission of the PC(USA) in the area of the departing congregation, and the presbytery can use the property to implement that mission. If the departing congregation has a secured loan with PILP, guaranteed by the presbytery, the presbytery would have the ability to retain the property or the presbytery could use the property to raise funds to satisfy the presbytery's responsibility under the guaranty. A presbytery may choose to give some or all of this property to a departing congregation, if the presbytery believes that this is the best use of the property in furthering the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ, but this choice will not result in a release of the obligation to repay the secured loan and/or in the release of the guaranty.

If a congregation has a secured loan with PILP and/or the GAMC and chooses to leave the denomination or is dissolved by a presbytery, the terms of the loan provide that the loan is accelerated and becomes immediately due and payable. The guarantee of the presbytery is not satisfied until the loan is paid in full. If the property is no longer held in trust for the PC(USA), there is no constitutional assurance the property would be controlled by the presbytery, and presbyteries would then be reluctant to sign guarantees. The PILP and the Church Loan Program would be more hesitant to make loans secured by mortgages if the underlying property could so easily be transferred and shifted outside the denomination to what would then be a non-PC(USA) congregation. It seems clear this proposed amendment would adversely impact congregations and the loan programs.

In the current economy and in the aftermath of the banking crisis, it has become increasingly difficult for small and mid-size congregations to obtain financing for capital projects from banks. These are often the new, young, or struggling congregations that need the resources of the denomination the most. The PILP is able to meet these needs of PC(USA) congregations. Without the current trust clause of the *Book of Order*, presbyteries would be unlikely to guarantee loans and without guarantees PILP's ability to assist congregations would be significantly impaired.

To the extent the proposed revision is related to denominational disagreements, it is crucial that current denominational disagreements not be allowed to overshadow the primary mission of the presbytery and congregation to carry out "The Great Ends of the Church." Although the property trust clause gives ultimate control to the presbytery, it also gives the presbytery responsibility to assist the congregation in obtaining and properly sustaining the church buildings as homes for congregations. As a denomination we continue to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. For centuries presbyteries have assisted congregations in finding church homes from which to carry out this mission. People in a congregation as a part of the PC(USA) have given the resources to build church buildings over generations. The current congregation should not be given the prerogative to take these resources out of the denomination because of a disagreement with current denominational positions.

For all the reasons stated above, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., with the concurrence of the GAMC, believes the amendments proposed by Items 06-06 and 06-07 will cause unnecessary confusion due to the conflicting language in proposed amendments, and will jeopardize fundamental and essential aspects of the church loan programs of PILP and the General Assembly Mission Council, administered by PILP.

## Item 06-07

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-07. See pp. 26, 27.]

*On Adding New Section G-4.0203b Regarding Ownership of Property—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-4.0203 be amended by inserting an "a." at the beginning of the current text and inserting a new section "b." to read as follows:

*"G-4.0203b Freedom of Conscience for Individual Congregations*

*"b. All property that is under the control of a local session and is being used by an individual congregation shall be deemed to be that individual congregation's property and not be considered as held in trust for any body other than the local congregation. The individual congregation shall be the sole owner of such property, and shall hold title to such property, should the congregation vote by a two-thirds (2/3) majority to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) due to theological disagreement with any action taken by a higher council or permanent judicial commission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), provided all financial obligations dealing with real property for which a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a guarantor are removed. No action shall be brought against any individual congregation that takes action to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). No action shall be brought against any presbytery that dismisses an individual congregation together with permitting the individual congregation to hold sole title to property under the control of the session and which is being used by the individual congregation for its ministries."*

***Rationale***

The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) currently states “All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0203). Many individual congregations raise extensive funds for their own building to further the ministry of the local congregation. In keeping with the new missional emphasis, permitting an individual congregation to retain the property furthers the work of the Church universal without penalizing that congregation when there is a theological disagreement with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) It is vital to clarify for individual congregations that their theological beliefs will continue to be respected should they vote by a two-thirds (2/3) majority to withdraw from and sever all ties to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This amendment gives the necessary affirmation that individual congregations will be permitted to exercise their freedom of conscience in considering their continuing relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The amendment also has narrow grounds on which a congregation may exercise their freedom of conscience. For example, a congregation that simply wants to withdraw because of a dispute with the presbytery over an administrative commission or disciplinary action against their pastor (teaching elder) may not do so under this provision.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-07**

*Advice on Item 06-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-07. The committee refers the General Assembly to its advice in response to Item 06-06.

***Rationale***

Item 06-07 to amend G-4.0203 as written is nearly identical to Item 06-06.

Such variation as exists is minor and does not alter their common intent as demonstrated in their proposed amending language and in their rationales. It is the determination of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the constitutional issues presented are the same.

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**GAMC, PILP COMMENT ON ITEMS 06-06 and 06-07**

*Comment on Items 06-06 and 06-07—From the General Assembly Mission Council and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

Items 06-06 and Item 06-07 seek to amend the “trust clause” of the *Book of Order* by adding conflicting language to provide that property being held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is also owned by the individual congregation and held in trust for the local congregation, and not for any other body. The *Book of Order* at G-4.0203 currently provides important support and safeguards for the low-cost loan programs for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations provided by the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). Therefore, PILP believes the amendments proposed by Items 06-06 and 06-07 will cause unnecessary confusion due to the conflicting language in the proposed amendments, and will jeopardize fundamental and essential aspects of the loan programs of PILP and the GAMC, administered by PILP.

Without the current trust clause of the *Book of Order*, presbyteries would be unlikely to guarantee loans and without guarantees PILP’s ability to assist congregations would be significantly impaired. This change would be particularly difficult for small, mid-sized, and new congregations that may not be able to obtain bank financing.

The PILP makes low-cost loans to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] congregations for new buildings and renovations. The funds for PILP loans are generated through the sale of Term Notes, which are debt securities to PC(USA) members and congregations and the sale of Denominational Account receipts (DARs) accounts to mid councils and PC(USA) agencies. The interest paid on these Term Notes and DARs and any redemptions are funded by the interest and principal repayment of the loans to congregations. The PILP relies on the congregation’s repayment of principal and interest to be able to pay interest to investors and to repay principal to investors at maturity.

The PILP administers the Church Loan Program for the GAMC. The Church Loan Program is a mission program under the responsibility of the GAMC and the principal corporation of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, where endowment funds are also used to make low-cost loans to congregations.

Most church building projects cannot be financed by congregations from their current receipts. Congregations depend on loans from PILP, the GAMC's Church Loan Program, or commercial lenders to complete these projects. Generally, these loans are secured by first lien mortgages on the property of the borrowing congregation. The property of the congregation provides the collateral for these loans and is a potential source of repayment should the borrowing congregation not be able to repay the loan.

In addition to being secured, these loans are guaranteed by the presbytery of jurisdiction of the borrowing congregation. This means the presbytery is responsible to pay back the loan should the borrowing congregation fail to pay. The presbyteries have confidence in guaranteeing these secured loans due in part to G-4.0203 and G-4.0204, which state:

*G-4.0203 Church Property Held in Trust*

All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

*G-4.0204 Property Used Contrary to the Constitution*

Whenever property of, or held for, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) ceases to be used by that congregation as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with this Constitution, such property shall be held, used, applied, transferred, or sold *as provided by the presbytery*. [Emphasis added.]

Under G-4.0204, when a congregation ceases to exist or leaves the denomination, the congregation's property (which includes, but is not limited to, its real property, building, and other assets such as investments) is subject to the control of the presbytery of jurisdiction. The presbytery continues to be responsible for mission of the PC(USA) in the area of the departing congregation, and the presbytery can use the property to implement that mission. If the departing congregation has a secured loan with PILP, guaranteed by the presbytery, the presbytery would have the ability to retain the property or the presbytery could use the property to raise funds to satisfy the presbytery's responsibility under the guaranty. A presbytery may choose to give some or all of this property to a departing congregation, if the presbytery believes that this is the best use of the property in furthering the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ, but this choice will not result in a release of the obligation to repay the secured loan and/or in the release of the guaranty.

If a congregation has a secured loan with PILP and/or the GAMC and chooses to leave the denomination or is dissolved by a presbytery, the terms of the loan provide that the loan is accelerated and becomes immediately due and payable. The guarantee of the presbytery is not satisfied until the loan is paid in full. If the property is no longer held in trust for the PC(USA), there is no constitutional assurance the property would be controlled by the presbytery, and presbyteries would then be reluctant to sign guarantees. The PILP and the Church Loan Program would be more hesitant to make loans secured by mortgages if the underlying property could so easily be transferred and shifted outside the denomination to what would then be a non-PC(USA) congregation. It seems clear this proposed amendment would adversely impact congregations and the loan programs.

In the current economy and in the aftermath of the banking crisis, it has become increasingly difficult for small and mid-size congregations to obtain financing for capital projects from banks. These are often the new, young, or struggling congregations that need the resources of the denomination the most. The PILP is able to meet these needs of PC(USA) congregations. Without the current trust clause of the *Book of Order*, presbyteries would be unlikely to guarantee loans and without guarantees PILP's ability to assist congregations would be significantly impaired.

To the extent the proposed revision is related to denominational disagreements, it is crucial that current denominational disagreements not be allowed to overshadow the primary mission of the presbytery and congregation to carry out "The Great Ends of the Church." Although the property trust clause gives ultimate control to the presbytery, it also gives the presbytery responsibility to assist the congregation in obtaining and properly sustaining the church buildings as homes for congregations. As a denomination we continue to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. For centuries presbyteries have assisted congregations in finding church homes from which to carry out this mission. People in a congregation as a part of the PC(USA) have given the resources to build church buildings over generations. The current congregation should not be given the prerogative to take these resources out of the denomination because of a disagreement with current denominational positions.

For all the reasons stated above, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., with the concurrence of the GAMC, believes the amendments proposed by Items 06-06 and 06-07 will cause unnecessary confusion due to the conflicting language in proposed amendments, and will jeopardize fundamental and essential aspects of the church loan programs of PILP and the General Assembly Mission Council, administered by PILP.

## Item 06-08

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-08. See pp. 26, 27.]

*On Amending F-1.0403, Unity in Diversity—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.*

The Presbytery of Mississippi overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall F-1.0403 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise’ (Gal. 3:27–29).

“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites ~~persons~~ *all believers* through baptism ~~regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction~~ *beyond the bounds of human categories*. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ~~shall guarantee~~ *commits itself to* full participation and representation ~~in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups~~ *of everyone* within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution *or related to personal faith and morals as stated in our Confessions.*”

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by its constitution made up of the Bible, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*. These documents order and govern how members relate to one another and their leadership. It is thus important that the language that underlines the church’s commitment to inclusivity be precise and theologically accurate.

The only requirement for membership into Christ’s church is to profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In the body of Christ, everything that would separate us and divide us falls apart. Each believer is valued and a beloved image bearer of God and has unique gifts and abilities that make Christ’s church stronger and richer. It is thus appropriate for the church to underline the truth that baptism is inextricably linked to faith in Christ.

It does damage to the church when we allow human constructs to separate us and divide us into groups. Christ prayed that his church would be one. Each person comes to know Christ as a broken and sinful individual, healed by Christ and brought into a family of faith in local congregations and the church universal. As a result, each individual member in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is invited to participate fully in its life of worship and service.

At the same time, it is not appropriate for the church to guarantee participation in governance to any group of people. Section G-2.0102 reminds us that “The government of this church is representative, and the right of God’s people to elect presbyters and deacons is inalienable.” Simply belonging to a group of people therefore should not guarantee that anyone will be called to ordered ministry in the church. Instead, such a call should only be “evidenced by the movement of the Holy Spirit in the individual conscience, the approval of a community of God’s people, and the concurring judgment of a council of the Church” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0103).

Those called to ordered ministry “should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104a). Thus, their faith and morals should conform to the Confessions of the Church.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-08

*Advice on Item 06-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-08.

### *Rationale*

The overture would amend the second paragraph of F-1.0403 in the following ways:

1. Strike “persons” and insert “all believers” in the first sentence.
2. Strike “regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction” and insert “beyond the bounds of human categories,” in the first sentence

3. Strike “shall guarantee” and insert “commits itself to” in the third sentence.
4. Strike “in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups” and insert “of everyone” in the third sentence.
5. Insert the phrase “or related to personal faith and morals as stated in our Confessions” at the end of the fourth sentence.

Each of these proposed changes merits comment.

1. There is a deep connection between Baptism and the unity of the Body of Christ. That this is true is immediately visible in the quotation from Galatians 3:27–28 that forms the first paragraph of F-1.0403: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” This unity with Christ is then the basis both for the unity of believers, and the rich diversity through which that unity is expressed. The replacement of “persons” with “all believers” as proposed in this overture may lead to the conclusion that only those persons who “believe” are admitted to Baptism and only through the precondition of faith. To the extent that this sentence would be so interpreted, it represents a significant departure from our Constitution. As the Directory for Worship makes clear, our theology of Baptism is deeply rooted in the language and imagery of God’s covenant of grace expressed in and through Baptism. In that covenant, it is the faithfulness of God that is signified in baptism rather than that of the person baptized. God’s faithfulness is manifest first in the dying and rising of Christ (W-2.3002), then in the recapitulation of the covenant of God with ancient Israel (W-2.3003), and finally through inclusion in God’s covenant of grace (W-2.3004). Section W-2.3008b is clear that “the Baptism of children witnesses to the truth that God’s love claims people *before they are able to respond in faith*” [emphasis added].” But even the Baptism of those who are baptized as adults “... witnesses to the truth that God’s gift of grace calls for fulfillment in a response of faithfulness” (*Book of Order*, W-2.3008c). In all these acts, the person baptized is not the principal actor but the object of the action of God’s grace. While the Directory for Worship does not argue that Baptism *precedes* faith, neither does it understand that faith is *prerequisite* to Baptism.

2. The replacement of the list of human conditions (“regardless of race,” etc) with the generic phrase “beyond the bounds of human categories” substitutes a much more vague and sweeping statement in place of a concrete list of human divisions overcome in baptism. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) notes that the present list has similarities with W-2.3005, which states: “Barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome.”

3. The replacement of “shall guarantee” with “commits itself to” may be seen as some as weakening the commitment of the church to equality and unity within the life of the church.

4. The replacement of “in its worship, governance, and emerging life to persons or groups [within its membership]” with “of everyone” removes the specific areas in which the church commits itself to diversity within its unity in Christ, thus rendering the sentence less clear. It may be seen by some as weakening the church’s commitment to diversity within the unity of its membership.

5. The insertion of the phrase “or related to personal faith and morals as stated in our Confessions” is problematic. *All persons*— regardless of faith, morality, or adherence to *The Book of Confessions* are welcome in the worship and life of the church. It is therefore inappropriate to exclude persons from membership on grounds not related to profession of faith. With regard to those who participate in the ordered ministries of the church, G-2.0104b makes clear that those called to the church’s ordered ministries are to be examined, at minimum, on their willingness to assent to the questions for ordination in W-4.4003, among which are commitments

- to accept the Scriptures as the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ;
- to receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do;
- “in your own life” to seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world.

In addition, G-2.0104a identifies as a qualification of those called to ordered ministry that their “manner of life shall be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.”

In light of these concerns, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that Item 06-08 is not an improvement over the current language of F-1.0403.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL FOR ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, AND 06-17

*Advice and Counsel on Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 recommend essentially three changes to the *Book of Order*, all having to do with statements in the section on Unity in Diversity (F-1.0403) and G-1.0204: (1) a softening of the word “guarantee” in the

section on diverse representation on governance committees and worship; (2) the removal of the explicit list to which that representation applies; and (3) the removal of the wording “through baptism” which undergirds the church’s unity.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA contained the following statement in Article 8, Section 8.2.

Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses.

Participation and representation of racial ethnic membership shall be assured by the Committee on Representation. ...

We keep before us those things that we must remember: biblical truths that we study, memorize, hear in church each Sunday; laws that we must obey; even our “to-do” lists. Black churches in the UPCUSA had deep concerns of having no voice and no role in the new PC(USA), the predominantly white church, where the majority would rule. Hence the clear provisions of the Articles of Agreement, with minority groups explicitly listed and a mechanism for reminding us of their membership in this church (COR) and their need for representation. Removal of the “guarantee” for participation and the explicit list is an affront to all those churches and groups that joyfully celebrated based on these articles in 1983.

While the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recognizes that, in some geographical areas, low racial ethnic populations may make fulfillment of this “guarantee” difficult, exceptions can be granted. It is felt, however, that removal of the assurance in the *Book of Order* would begin a “slippery slope” of failing to search adequately for full representation.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-08.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns believes that the deleted words are crucial to prove the importance of diversity in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). “Beyond the bounds of human categories” is inadequate and too general a description. More specificity is required in order to ensure fair representation.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-08.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Advice and Counsel of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the rationale of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. Changing the wording to F-1.0403 not only weakens the church’s commitment to inclusion for all but attempts to claim discrimination no longer exists or is nominal at best. The human categories specifically mentioned are all examples of people groups who are unquestionably affected by discrimination. Naming the groups articulates our recognition of this fact and our commitment to working against these known forms of discrimination. Watering down the language to the vague term, “human categories,” flies in the face of the 1983 Articles of Agreement, which were intentionally specific. All “human categories” do not represent people groups who are and have historically been discriminated against, which is why the specificity of the current language is appropriate and ultimately more effective in articulating the true intent behind the statement.

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**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, 06-17**

*Comment on Items 06-08, 06-13, 06-17—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17.

*Rationale*

The proposed amendments to F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 are dangerous to the Body of Christ and our own integrity.

As people of faith, we first seek the Lord, but we are renewed by the living word of God's Scripture. The Living Word helps us understand who God is, our relationship to God, and our requisite relationship with one another. A central text in the self-understanding of call, for the sixteen elected members of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) to particular service within the PC(USA), is found in 1 Corinthians 12. The tremendous diversity that makes up the Church is described as "one body, many parts." As part of a single living organism, none of the parts can remain alive without being connected to the rest of the body, neither is one part greater than another. The metaphor is instructive to us as we address the actions recommended in Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 to varying degrees.

In other parts of Scripture the oft echoed line of letting those with "ears to hear" and "eyes to see" witness God's amazing work, but the others are left to their own illusory existences, disconnected from one another and from God. The idea of needing the right lens is critical to the ministry of the GACOR and to see injustice as status quo acts to disguise disparity and disregard difference, those privileged in a system are rendered blind to its faults, incapable without assistance to see how the system advantages some with unearned privileges and disadvantages others (sometimes creating real harm)

The list of conditions and identities currently included in F-1.0403 are not merely "human categories." They have real meaning and consequences in human community. Systemic disadvantage, disparities in leadership, health, wealth, etc. are real impacts for persons in these categories. The intent of a person from a disadvantaged group makes little or no change to the altered realities they experience. The lack of women serving in installed pastorates as head of staff in large congregations remains infinitesimally small despite the majority of persons attending and graduating Presbyterian seminaries are female. These patterns are echoed in the much lower proportion of women being ordained relative to their ratio of persons in the ordination track. Race, while described as a social construct, has real effects on persons depending on what labels are attached to their skin color and features. We do not have to think too hard before coming up with numerous examples in church and society of racialized outcomes distorting the fullness God intends for human community. We talk about these realities in Scripture as well as in our Confessions. These are but two examples.

The GACOR has learned to look at the church and the world training its eyes and ears to see with lenses tuned to how power and privilege are wielded. These glasses make visible the lived experiences of persons who must contend with labels affixed to them because they are members of groups deemed "other" but the dominant group who determines the norms. Disparity and discriminatory practice are rife in human community and must be resisted. These realities are expressly why F-1.0403 exists in the first place so that we may, in the words of A Brief Statement of Faith, remind ourselves that

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

Unearned advantage results in an ability to "not see" and "not hear"—it allows persons to be silent in the presence of oppression and harm being foisted on others. Those who are privileged within a system are allowed to pretend they are not subject to the rules which create their advantage, and in doing so access even more advantage. It is not a mistake that Jesus made a big deal in his ministry of being witnesses of and for one another. Section F-1.0403 is one way we express this foundational principle of being Presbyterian within our communion. Seeing one another and connecting to one another to resist those who are pulled apart along lines of difference, well, these are why we use the banner of "Unity in Diversity" for this section of the Foundations.

As you consider these amendments and the sometimes seemingly innocuous shift in language they suggest, you may want to consult the Preface of the *Book of Order*, which reminds the reader of the language used throughout the Constitution how it is interpreted.

In this *Book of Order*

- (1) *SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE* signify practice that is mandated,
- (2) *SHOULD* signifies practice that is strongly recommended,
- (3) *IS APPROPRIATE* signifies practice that is commended as suitable,
- (4) *MAY* signifies practice that is permissible but not required.
- (5) *ADVISORY HANDBOOK* signifies a handbook produced by agencies of the General Assembly to guide synods and presbyteries in procedures related to the oversight of ministry. Such handbooks suggest procedures that are commended, but not required. (*Book of Order (2011-2013)* Preface, emphasis added)



By this measure the current the language of “shall guarantee” signifies a practice that is mandated. The suggested replacement “commits itself” does not find its equivalent in this guideline and provides a standard with is at best uncertain and vague. This is not the only place where the suggested amendment produces an ambiguous new standard that is confusing. How is it that this assertion of membership now has a the addition of “morals,” followed up by the addition of “personal faith” and these are set up as a means for being “denied participation” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution does a good job in its comment explaining the various places where membership and leadership standards are distinguished. In F-1.0403 it is clearly an expression of the rich diversity of the church’s membership. The imposition of anxieties about standards of ordination and leadership in this section create an obstacle and become a stumbling block, denying groups of persons access to being welcomed by God’s family in worship and the church’s life.

This principle in the Foundations also reminds us of our commitment to be faithful. Within a Presbyterian and Reformed understanding, discerning the will of God for the church is done by listening to the Spirit with one another, connected in community. If we must be in community in order to best discern the will of God, it stands to reason that the greater the diversity of the community, the wider the participation, the greater the capacities for discerning the will of God, the greater access to gifts in community, the deeper faithfulness in the gathering. We err, when we fail to acknowledge where human community falls short, and does so systemically. To err in this way is to bind the body (the Body of Christ) with the shackles of the status quo. The suggested changes in Items 06-13 and 06-17 to make adjustments to G-2.0401 are efforts to lessen the standard and empower the inertia of inaction, enforcing the status quo.

As a testimony to the importance of this small piece of the Foundations, F-1.0403 appears in the Form of Government cited in twelve different locations and is cited once in the Directory of Worship in reference to “Worship and Ministry within the Community of Faith.” The GACOR humbly suggests the assembly pause before it considers amendment.

At every age and time, God calls us as the church to fight against oppressive structures that systematically alienate people from relationship with God and one another and which denies us the gifts of their leadership. The gospel and epistle writers named most every problem and issue, and declared that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ shall be included in the body of Christ. We live into that hope when we remain with the language of F-1.0403 as it is. Even in church, our shared cultural identity is deeply rooted in the dominant culture of U.S. society. As the denomination envisions means to grow the church deep and wide, we are called to preach and practice effective ways to include, especially those persons who are categorically discriminated against and denied the ability to determine their identity and expression unencumbered by demands made by the culture.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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#### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 06-08

*Comment on Item 06-08—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

In lifting up the importance of “Unity and Diversity” within the Reformed tradition, F-1.0403 affirms, “the unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s *membership*” [emphasis added]. As one body with many members (1 Cor. 12:12–31), F-1.0403 recognizes the need for diverse *membership* in the body of Christ and affirms that through baptism Christ unites persons regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction.

Along these lines, G-1.0302 in the Form of Government calls congregations to be a place of “welcome and openness” acknowledging that “no person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith.” The *Book of Order*, F-1.0403, further notes that within the PC(USA)’s membership, “no member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason *other than those stated in this Constitution*” [emphasis added] In line with this italicized clause, the Constitution does place limits on who may be ordained as deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders in accordance with Chapter Two of the Form of Government (“Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification”) as well as W-4.4003 (“Constitutional Questions for Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning”) in the Directory for Worship.

In accordance with Reformed theological standards, W-4.4003 reminds the church that, among others, those seeking ordination and/or installation to ordered ministries must answer the following questions:

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

- d. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- e. Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church? ...

Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider why it's important to have a diverse church membership in line with F-1.0403 and 1 Cor. 12:12–31. Along these lines and in the context of our church's history, commissioners are also encouraged to consider why F-1.0403 specifically enumerates the categories of "race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction." Further, commissioners are encouraged to consider and reflect upon the importance of affording counsels a diverse pool of members from which to nominate, examine and elect those who are called to ordered ministry.

## Item 06-09

[The assembly approved Item 06-09 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 26, 27.]

*On Amending D-10.0106 and G-2.0904 Regarding Administrative Leave—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

**The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:**

**1. Shall D-10.0106, regarding Administrative Leave, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]**

~~“When a written statement of an alleged offense of sexual abuse toward any person under the age of eighteen, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent, has been received against a teaching elder, the stated clerk receiving the allegation shall immediately communicate the allegation to the permanent judicial commission. [The rest of the paragraph remains unchanged.]”~~

~~[2. Shall G-2.0904 be amended as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]~~

~~["The Presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it. *In the case of alleged sexual abuse having been received by the stated clerk against any teaching elder, the presbytery may amend the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister and the session, it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it.*"]~~

**Comment: Every presbytery needs to adopt an adequate comprehensive administrative leave policy with a list of types of allegations that trigger an immediate leave as an explicit agreement between the teaching elder, congregation, and presbytery.**

### *Rationale*

Sexual abuse is devastating to a congregation. Past PC(USA) conversations in this regard have demonstrated the tension between the protections afforded the accused, that they are innocent until proven guilty, and the protection of a congregation, the putative victims and potential victims from additional abuse.

Presently the *Book of Order*, Rules of Discipline, provides three ways the teaching elder may be placed on administrative leave:

1. the accused teaching elder may volunteer for a leave of absence;
2. one of the victim/ survivors of the alleged sexual abuse is under the age of eighteen;
3. or it is alleged that the victim lacked the mental capacity to consent.

The conditions currently found in D-10.0401c(1) are included in D-10.0106. The conditions sited in D-10.0401c.(2) are not included in D-10.0106. This amendment proposes to include those conditions as well. Essentially mandatory administrative leave would be able to be imposed upon any teaching elder if sufficient evidence of sexual abuse as defined in D-10.0401c exists as judged by the two persons appointed by the PJC chair.

Another change in the *Book of Order* is also necessary to provide the possibility to impose mandatory administrative leave in the presence of sufficient evidence. The proposed amendment to G-2.0904 makes this possible. A pastoral call is a contract between pastor, presbytery, and a congregation. Attempts to place a teaching elder accused of sexual abuse have

been complicated in the past due to the fact that the congregation has not voted upon the leave of absence being imposed by the presbytery. The proposed amendment to G-2.0904 would provide for a course of action that could be imposed upon a teaching elder if evidence is sufficient to merit such. The presbytery could amend the terms of call to require teaching elders to abide by a presbytery's administrative leave policies without the approval of the congregation itself. Due process as described in D-10.0106 related to administrative leave would remain the same. While the session and the teaching elder would be consulted, the lack of congregational action in this regard would no longer be an impediment to placing a teaching elder on administrative leave by a presbytery.

If this change is not made, even *with* evidence of sexual abuse by a teaching elder of someone *with* the alleged mental capacity to consent and who *is* over eighteen, the presbytery has little recourse other than to threaten removal from office based upon the judgment that "the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0904). This threat is sometimes employed to persuade an accused teaching elder to voluntarily accept administrative leave. This is often a lengthy process following some weeks of negotiation with a presbytery ministry committee. This negotiation and delay is at the additional emotional, spiritual, and psychological expense of the putative victim(s) and trauma to the congregation. The proposed changes provide a means by which this administrative leave can be appropriately and expeditiously imposed in the context of existing due process. The proposed changes also provide for a course of action available to a presbytery that is short of removal from office when a teaching elder will not voluntarily agree to administrative leave.

### *Summary*

The proposed changes preserve the existing rights of the accused and extend protection to the congregation, the putative victim(s), and potential victims by expanding the range of consideration to all persons, not just those who are under eighteen or who, it is alleged, lacked the mental capacity to consent. These changes make it possible to impose a leave of absence on any teaching elder accused of sexual abuse with any other person based upon the evidence available at that time. These changes leave intact the current process of consideration as defined in D-10.0106. It does not automatically impose the administrative leave but continues to leave it to the judgment of the two persons appointed by the chair of the permanent judicial commission to consider the evidence of sexual abuse.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-09

#### *Advice on Item 06-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-09 for the reasons given in the ACC's advice on Item 06-03.

#### *Rationale*

If the assembly believes that this proposal presents a preferable set of amendments to address this matter, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed amendment to G-2.0904 could be strengthened by amending it as follows: [Text to be deleted from the proposed amendment is shown in brackets with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in brackets with an underline.]

"The Presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it. *In the case of ~~alleged~~ [a written allegation of] sexual abuse having been received by the stated clerk against any teaching elder, the presbytery may amend the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the ~~minister and the session~~ [teaching elder, the session, and the congregation], it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it.*"

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## Item 06-10

**[In response to Item 06-10, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 26, 27.]**

#### *On Amending G-1.0503 Regarding Business at Congregational Meetings—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-1.0503 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]]

"G-1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings

“Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following:

- “a. electing ruling elders, deacons, ~~and~~ trustees, *and members of the congregation’s nominating committee (G-2.0401)*;
- “b. calling a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor, *including election of a pastor nominating committee (G-2.0802)*;
- “c. changing existing pastoral relationships, by such means as reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor or pastors, or requesting, consenting to, or declining to consent to dissolution;
- “d. buying, mortgaging, or selling real property;
- “e. requesting the presbytery to grant an exemption as permitted in this Constitution (G-2.0404);
- “f. *business of the church corporation, such as adopting or amending articles of incorporation and corporate bylaws*;
- “g. *creation, amendment, or dissolution of a joint congregational witness (G-5.05)*.

“Whenever permitted by civil law, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.”

**In response to Item 06-10, that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following recommendation:**

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Amend G-1.0503 by adding a new item f. to read as follows:**

***“f. Approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness (G-5.05).”***

#### ***Rationale***

The adoption of the revised Form of Government in 2011 was intended to create greater flexibility in governance to meet the mission needs of congregations. However, in the revision of former G-7.0304, language was removed that had provided congregations the power to conduct business necessary for the governance of the church. The present overture restores language to subsection “e.” that had been in former G-7.0304 granting such power.

Moreover, the language of G-1.0503 is unclear as to whether the election of nominating committees as required in G-2.0401 and G-2.0802 is subsumed under the current provisions. The present overture clarifies this by amendments to subsections “a.” and “b.”

In addition, the elimination of large portions of former G-7.0400 has added to the confusion as to the process by which corporate business may be transacted. The addition of subsection “f.” above clarifies that corporate business is permissible and appropriate to be conducted at a congregational meeting.

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-10**

*Advice on Item 06-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-10 presents the following issues that the assembly should consider.

This item proposes adding a number of specific additions to the list of types of business that can be conducted at meetings of a congregation. The existing list is preceded by the phrase “matters related to the following.” This phrase indicates that the sphere of matters that are proper business at meetings of the congregation is broader than the single action described, and that some logical relation to the listed actions is necessary in order for unnamed business to be proper for a congregational meeting. The more lengthy and detailed the list in G-1.0503 becomes, the stronger would be the potential argument that any specific business not identified on the list was intentionally excluded from it. Accordingly, the General Assembly should give careful attention to any possible expansion of the list.

#### *1. Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons (and Trustees)*

The proposal asks that the election of the congregation’s nominating committee be added to the short list in G-1.0503a. The election of ruling elders and deacons is described in G-2.0401, which requires that the nominations come from “a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of the congregation’s membership.” The election of this committee is a requirement that is obviously related to the election of elders and deacons.

Interestingly, this proposal as submitted does not propose to add to G-1.0503a an item that would allow a meeting of the congregation to adopt a rule providing for the congregational nominating committee.

The proposal also asks that the election of trustees be added to the short list in G-1.0503a. The Form of Government at G-4.0101 addresses the election of individual trustees by congregations that are not able to form a corporation. It states "... Any such individual trustees shall be elected from the congregation's members in the same manner as those elected to the ordered ministries of deacon and ruling elder. ..." The election by the congregation of individual trustees thus has a relation to the election of ruling elders and deacons.

## 2. *Calling of a Pastor*

The proposal asks that the election of a pastoral nominating committee be added to the short list in G-1.0503a. The election of a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor requires that a nomination come from a pastor nominating committee (G-2.0802). The election of this committee is a requirement that is necessary to the calling a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. An amendment would not be necessary to establish the appropriateness of a congregational meeting called to elect a pastor nominating committee.

Similarly, but not mentioned in the overture, the dismissal of the pastor nominating committee at the conclusion of its work would also be proper business for a meeting of the congregation.

## 3. *Corporate Business*

The proposal asks that a new item f be added to provide for corporate business. The sentence at the end of G-1.0503 already provides for corporate business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation. The Form of Government at G-4.0101 provides that "Where permitted by civil law, each congregation shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained. ..." Where the constitution mandates that a congregation form and maintain a corporation, it would be paradoxical to conclude that the congregation is unable to do so. Forming and maintaining such a corporation requires adopting articles of incorporation and by-laws, and amending them from time to time.

This ability to conduct corporate business is not unlimited, and does not include actions contrary to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## 4. *Joint Congregational Witness*

The proposal asks that a new Section g be added to provide for joint congregational witness. Section G-5.05b requires a 2/3 vote by the congregation to approve a plan for the creation of a joint witness at a duly called meeting of the congregation. It specifically limits the congregation's role to approving a plan for its creation. Once the congregation has done so, it is the presbytery that has the authority to approve the creation of the joint congregational witness.

The absence within the list in G-1.0503 concerning joint congregational witness would raise valid questions about a meeting to approve a plan for creating a joint congregational witness can be duly called. While some parts of such a plan might relate to matters listed in current G-1.0503a to e., approving such a plan is not related to any of the existing matters on the list in G-1.0503. The proposed addition of an item on the list in G-1.0503 would be necessary in order to call a meeting of a PC(USA) congregation to approve the plan for the joint witness, but the language proposed in this item is overbroad and could lead to confusion as to the role of the congregation.

A plan for a joint congregational witness should address the process for amending and dissolving the joint witness. It is likely that the plan's provisions would require a congregational meeting to petition the presbytery to amend or dissolve the witness.

## 5. *Conclusions*

If the General Assembly finds that there is genuine uncertainty about whether a meeting of a congregation can elect trustees, or a congregational nominating committee, or adopt a rule providing for a congregational nominating committee, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that an authoritative interpretation would be a preferable way to provide clarity, rather than amendment. Such an authoritative interpretation would read:

"Section G-1.0503a permits business at a congregational meeting to include electing trustees, electing a congregational nominating committee, or adopting a rule providing for a congregational nominating committee in accord with G-2.0401."

If the General Assembly finds that there is genuine uncertainty about whether a meeting of a congregation can elect a pastoral nominating committee, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that an authoritative interpretation would be a preferable way to provide clarity, rather than amendment. Such an authoritative interpretation would read:

“Section G-1.0503b permits business at a congregational meeting to include electing a pastor nominating committee in accord with G-2.0802, and dismissing such a committee at the conclusion of its work.”

If the General Assembly finds that there is genuine uncertainty about whether a meeting of a congregation can conduct corporate business such as adopting or amending articles of incorporation and corporate bylaws, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that an authoritative interpretation would be a preferable way to provide clarity. Such an authoritative interpretation would read:

“Section G-1.0503 permits corporate business to be conducted at congregational meetings, which may include electing trustees, or adopting or amending articles of incorporation and bylaws. The articles of incorporation and bylaws, and any proposed amendments thereto, must comply with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The presbytery is to provide assistance to congregations and their corporations in achieving such constitutional compliance.”

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 06-10 is appropriate with respect to the creation of a joint congregational witness, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language can be made clearer and more consistent with that intent by being revised to propose only the addition of a new section “f.”, “*approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness,*” and eliminating the other proposed insertions.

## Item 06-11

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-11 with comment. See pp. 26, 27.]

**Comment:** With the knowledge that each congregation is empowered to do its own work, we encourage each congregation to determine its own best practice.

*On Amending G-2.0401 Regarding the Congregational Nominating Committee—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0401 be amended to read as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]

“Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of its membership. Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee, provided that the committee shall consist of at least three active members of the congregation, and shall include at least one ruling elder who is currently serving on the session *to be designated by the session*. The pastor shall serve *ex officio* and without vote. When elections are held, full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination from the floor of the congregational meeting by any active member of the congregation. A majority of all the active members present and voting shall be required to elect.”

### ***Rationale***

Historically, the composition of a congregational nominating committee has provided for the coordination of the respective powers of a congregation to elect its own officers and of the session to coordinate and oversee the ministry of the congregation. This has been accomplished through provision of representation of the session on the congregational nominating committee by designated representatives of the session. However, the revision of former G-14.0223 incorporated into G-2.0401 removes from the session the right to designate this representative. This fails to preserve the historic coordination of powers in the church. The present overture restores this through a simple clarification. We believe this amendment is necessary in order to assure proper communication between the nominating committee and the session, for the health and benefit of the congregation.

### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-11**

*Advice on Item 06-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-11 presents the following issues that the assembly should consider.

The item states that the current language of G-2.0401 fails to preserve the historic coordination of powers in the church, alluding to a balance of power between the congregation and the session. The assembly should determine whether the new

language impinges upon the ability of the session to coordinate and oversee the ministry of the congregation. If the assembly finds that the current language creates such a problem, it should determine whether the proposed amendment is an appropriate remedy.

The practice in use until 2011 was first introduced in the PCUSA in 1956. The 165th General Assembly (1953) had appointed a committee on deacons and trustees with the charge “to clarify the relations of session and deacons and trustees.” That committee presented an interim report to the 166th General Assembly (1954), which sent the report to the presbyteries for study and comment. The committee presented its final report to the 167th General Assembly (1955), with recommendations to end the conflict and dissension within congregations between the sessions and boards of trustees and deacons. The report clarified that within the congregation final authority rested in the session.

Other recommendations in the report introduced mandatory practices now very familiar to the current generation of leaders in our church: the mandatory rotation of elders, deacons, and trustees; the mandatory use of a representative nominating committee; and the mandate for full opportunity for nominations from the floor.

Prior to the 1956 amendment mandating the rotation of officers, the Form of Government allowed congregations to opt for rotation of elders and deacons, but did not mandate it. The committee said that:

the adoption of the mandatory rotary system would bring about the greater democratization of the life of the local church. It would broaden the base of churchmanship in the local congregation. It would solve the problem of any entrenched leadership which is unacceptable to the people. This system of mandatory rotation frees the local church of embarrassment or difficulty in enlarging the circle of leadership in the local church.

In our church’s ongoing dialectic between local flexibility and the regularizing of practices, it may be helpful to be aware of the degree of local flexibility once permitted. Prior to the 1956 amendment that mandated the use of a representative nominating committee, the Form of Government required merely that “Every congregation shall elect persons from among its members in full communion to the office of ruling elder, and to the office of deacon, or either of them, in the mode most approved and in use in that congregation.”

The 1956 amendment mandating the use of a representative nominating committee identified the essential elements that were used until 2011 (i.e., not more than two members designated by and from the session; one member designated by and from the board of deacons; other members in sufficient number to constitute a majority chosen by the congregation; the pastor to serve as a member ex-officio with voice but without vote).

The committee explained:

This representative nominating committee will add much to the strengthening and developing of leadership in the local congregation. Such a nominating committee has been in wide vogue among many of our churches and has grown in favor with usage. The representative nominating committee, where used, has brought new life and strength into the officary of the local church. We believe that the mandatory provision for a representative nomination committee will do much to bring more adequate representative government into the life of the local congregation.

The practice, until 2011, of mandating that the session designate the elders to serve on the nominating committee, has been a familiar and longstanding way of functioning that worked for the majority of congregations. The 2011 amendment gave the congregation the right to choose all of the members of the nominating committee, changed the number of ruling elders on the committee, removed the cap on ruling elder members on the committee, took away the session’s right to designate its representatives on the committee, removed any requirement for deacon representation on the nominating committee, and took away the right of the board of deacons to designate its representative.

Item 06-11 raises concerns about the balance of power between the session and congregation. There are arguments that can be made for and against the validity of these concerns.

In favor of finding a valid concern about a shift in the balance of power, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution would note that there is the possibility of the congregation selecting an elder to serve on the nominating committee who may have other gifts for the work of the session, but who would not be reliable in representing the concerns of the session, or reliable in communicating back to the session matters that would raise the session’s concern, such as the possible nomination of a church member with a history of not working well with others. The nomination and election process can have a snowball effect, gathering momentum until there is little possibility of correction without creating embarrassment for the nominee or the congregation. This view would see the ability of the session to choose its representative on the nominating committee as essential to ensuring that early steps are taken to prevent destructive conflict within the congregation.

In opposition to finding a valid concern about the balance of power between the session and congregation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution would note that the session remains the final authority within the congregation, and has numerous available avenues for communication with the nominating committee. In congregations with installed pastors, the moderator of the session is a member ex-officio of the nominating committee with the ability to voice the concerns of the session in the committee’s deliberations. The session may invite the nominating committee to meet with it. Additionally, members of the session are themselves members of the congregation, with the full right to speak, vote, and make nominations from the floor in the meetings of the congregation. These nominations from the floor can be made for elders and deacons, but

also for the membership of the congregation's nominating committee. If the nomination and election process for elders or deacons were to go completely awry (in the view of the session), the session has the power to disapprove the examination of an unsuitable elder-elect or deacon-elect.

If the assembly finds that the current G-2.0401 has detrimentally changed the balance of powers between the congregation and its session, the question remains whether a constitutional amendment to remedy it is necessary.

Current G-2.0401 would permit any congregation that so wishes to adopt a rule for the composition of its nominating committee such that the ruling elder serving on the session would be designated by the session. The proposed amendment would place a limit on this congregational flexibility.

The dialectic between the role of the session and the rights of the congregation may be bridged by alternative language that would grant Session permission to nominate its participant(s) on the congregational nominating committee while preserving the congregation's right to offer alternative nominations from the floor and to elect those who will serve. This may be accomplished with the following amendment to G-2.0401:

Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee, provided that the committee shall consist of at least three active members of the congregation, and shall include at least one ruling elder who is currently serving on the session. *The session shall nominate the requisite number of its members for service on the committee.* The pastor shall serve ex officio and without vote.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 06-11 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

## Item 06-12

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-12. See pp. 26, 27.]

*On Amending G-1.04 to "Add Special Consideration for Membership for Families Serving Yoked Churches"—From the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.*

The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-1.04 of the *Book of Order* be amended by inserting a new section G-1.0405 to read as follows:

*"G-1.0405 Special Consideration for Membership for Families Serving Yoked Churches*

*"The immediate family of a teaching elder who has been called to serve yoked churches or a multi-church parish setting may, if they desire, become active members (G-1.0402) of churches within the yoked or parish arrangement and will be received by each session and listed on the roll of active members (G-3.0204a) in the churches with full privileges in each church. No person with such special membership shall be allowed, if so nominated and elected, to serve as an active ruling elder on more than one council in the yoked or parish setting."*

### *Rationale*

Within our denomination, the number of teaching elders who serve more than one congregation is growing and will continue to do so. With the changing landscape within our denomination, this kind of call will become more prevalent.

In the current Form of Government, the only choices for the family of the teaching elder are: join neither church and maintain a membership at a "home" church; or join one church as an active member and join the other(s) as an affiliate member.

Given the nature of the small churches that participate in such partnerships, either of the choices leaves the family members in limbo at best and at worst cause uneasiness between or among the churches as one is chosen above the other(s).

This special consideration will allow the family of the teaching elder to be full participants in all churches in the parish and foster a "family feeling" among the members of those churches and members of the pastor's family.

In matters of original jurisdiction, any such matter would be addressed by the session of the church within which the issue arose.

### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-12

*Advice on Item 06-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-12.



*Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds numerous instances of ambiguous language, incompleteness, and inconsistency with the rest of the constitution in this proposal. Before addressing those issues in this proposal, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the General Assembly discern whether the problem to be addressed requires a church-wide answer or could more effectively be resolved by a local or interpersonal solution.

It appears that this overture intends to resolve a quandary faced by some pastoral families by means of a constitutional amendment that has implications for our church's understanding of membership in a congregation. The rationale for the overture suggests that the inability of the family of a teaching elder serving multiple congregations to join all of the congregations served causes problems. It appears to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that the perceived problems are largely interpersonal and can be addressed effectively under the current Form of Government at the level of the congregation and session, and, if necessary, the presbytery.

The session has "... responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness ..." (*Book of Order*, G-3.0201). The session has the responsibility and power to provide "for regular preaching of the Word by a teaching elder or other person prepared and approved for the work" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0201a). For many small membership congregations this can involve working with the presbytery in identifying options that will enable the congregation to attract and retain such a teaching elder or other person. The session weighs the options of merger, yoking, joining a larger parish, or even dissolution of the congregation, and leads the congregation through the process of deciding on which path to pursue.

The session also has the responsibility and power to exercise "pastoral care among the congregation; in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0201b). This includes the responsibility to counsel with members of the congregation whose unreasonable expectations concerning the pastor's family threaten to disrupt the unity of the congregation, or the agreed-upon relationship with other congregations served by the same pastor.

"The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301). The presbytery has the responsibility and power to organize, merge, dismiss, and dissolve congregations in consultation with their members. The presbytery also has the responsibility and power to provide "encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration to the end that the church's witness to the love and grace of God may be heard in the world" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301a). For small membership congregations this can involve the presbytery's counseling with the session on strategies, such as merger, yoking, or forming a larger parish, that would enable those congregations to attract and retain a teaching elder or other qualified person to preach the Word. It is incumbent upon the presbytery to ensure that the session and congregation understand the implications and limitations of each option.

The presbytery also has the responsibility and power to exercise "pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the presbytery may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments," to promote "the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301b, c). Specifically, the presbytery has the authority to "counsel with a session concerning reported difficulties within a congregation" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0303d).

The term "yoked or parish arrangement" is not defined within the *Book of Order*. The absence of constitutional definition would make the application of the proposed insertion dependent on presbytery policy that defines yoking arrangements. In a previous Form of Government, prior to 2007, G-14.0504 provided for a larger parish to be able to call a pastor, and specified agreements the congregations were required to make. As commonly used, the terminology of yoking and larger parish refers to arrangements in which each congregation retains its distinct identity and membership rolls, and continues to be governed by its own session. Such arrangements are distinct from merger, in which one or all of the congregations surrender their individual identities in order to become one congregation with only one set of membership rolls and one session governing the congregation.

It should be noted that the individual congregations in a yoked arrangement or larger parish decided to retain their separate identities rather than merge into a single congregation. Had the congregations sought merger into a single congregation, a member of the immediate family of the pastor would have a simple array of choices: ask to be received as an active member, ask to be received as an affiliate member, or not seek membership. By choosing to remain distinct congregations they have allowed a situation to continue in which one congregation could be chosen for membership and another not chosen.

If the congregations or individual active members forget what the congregations decided, it is the responsibility of the sessions to remind them rather than to allow unreasonable expectations about the shared pastor and her or his family to disrupt

the life and work of the congregations. When the sessions are unable or unwilling to remind the congregations, it becomes necessary for the presbytery that approved the yoking arrangement or larger parish to assist the sessions with this task.

This is not the first time that the General Assembly has considered a proposal for membership in two congregations simultaneously. In 2010, in giving advice on Item 05-09<sup>1</sup> proposing a new category of “associate membership” in a congregation, we said<sup>2</sup>:

It is a principle of Presbyterian polity that active membership is held in one body at a time. Thus, when a candidate is ordained as a minister of the Word and Sacrament, his/her membership moves from the particular church to the presbytery. Section G-10.0302b(4) provides that when a member joins another church, that member’s name is deleted from the rolls of the first church. For purposes of accountability, oversight, and order membership is held in one place at one time.

The Item 05-09 provides that “associate members” would be “entitled to all the rights and privileges of an active member.” This means that an associate member could vote and hold office. The overture stipulates that “an associate member shall not hold office in multiple churches simultaneously.” This requirement places an undue burden on the churches of membership to ascertain where the associate member is an officer, if at all, requiring consultation between nominating committees of various particular churches. An associate member who is an elder might be a commissioner to two or more different presbyteries during the same year, creating the possibility that one person could vote more than one time on certain issues, such as proposed amendments to the Constitution.

Associate membership gives rise to questions about potential dual obligations for per capita remittance.

Church members remain under the jurisdiction of the session. The amendment does not make clear how jurisdictional matters would be handled in disciplinary cases in which the associate member was accused.

As a practical matter, an associate member serving as a session member or member of the board of deacons in one particular church leaves that session or board with a functional vacancy during the portion of the year he or she resides in another location. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 326–27 of the electronic version)

Since that time there has been a major revision of the Form of Government, and the current G-3.0204a corresponds to the former G-10.0302b(4) in requiring the same view of our polity. This item does not include a proposed amendment to G-3.0204a, and thus would fail to achieve the goal of the overture.

Proposals to amend the Constitution to create a polity in which dual membership in congregations would be possible should be drafted so that the new language addresses the issues of accountability, oversight, and order. This proposal does not do so, but suggests in the rationale that original jurisdiction could be resolved based on “where the issue arose.” Not every issue that affects a congregation arises within the congregation. The answer to the question of where an issue arose is irrelevant if the person is an active member of only one congregation, but may not be simple at all under a dual-membership rule.

For example, if the proposal were approved and the pastor’s daughter or son (a member of all the yoked congregations served by the parent) were to sense a call to the ordered ministry of teaching elder, it is not clear which session is the one that the active member should ask to endorse the application to the presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer.

This proposal does not state where in G-1.04 the suggested language would be inserted.

This proposal does not state that the reception of a family member would be the session’s action, but suggests (by using the language “will be received by each session”) that the reception in multiple churches would be a right based only on the decision of the family member. The qualification for this right, according to this proposed amendment, appears not to be based on profession of faith, but simply on being in the immediate family of the pastor of each congregation.

Some members of the pastor’s immediate family might more appropriately be placed on the Baptized Members Roll of one of the churches in the yoked arrangement or local parish. This overture as drafted appears to require the sessions to enroll a baptized child who has not yet made profession of faith as an Active Member simply at the child’s request. The basis for the session action would not be profession of faith, but relation to the pastor.

If this proposal is approved and a child of the pastor desires to become a member of each cooperating congregation on making a profession of faith, it may be difficult to interpret to other young people making their profession of faith at the same time why they don’t have the same choice open to them.

This proposal addresses only the family of a teaching elder serving in a multiple-congregation setting. It would not extend the same privilege to the immediate family members of a ruling elder commissioned to limited pastoral service serving multiple congregations. If this right to dual membership is found to be appropriate for the family of a teaching elder, it is not obvious why the immediate family of a ruling elder should not enjoy the same special consideration.

#### Endnotes

1. *On Amending G-5.0300 and G-10.0302a to Include the Designation of Associate Member—From the Presbytery of Mackinac, 2010.* <https://www.pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=2319>

2. Neither our advice on that overture nor the disapproval of the 211th General Assembly (2010) of the overture constitutes an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution.

## Item 06-13

[The assembly answered Item 06-13 by the action taken on Item 06-08. See pp. 26, 28.]

*On Amending F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 to Eliminate the List of Those Whom We Refuse to Discriminate Against—From the Presbytery of Western New York.*

The Presbytery of Western New York respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall the second paragraph of F-1.0403 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons ~~through baptism~~ *into the one body of believers* regardless of ~~race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction~~ *human sensibilities, constructs, or categories*. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall ~~guarantee~~ *strive to ensure* full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

2. Shall G-2.0401, Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall *seek to* express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall ~~guarantee~~ *strive to ensure* participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). [The balance of G-2.0401 would remain unchanged].”

### *Rationale*

This overture would strike the list of those whom we refuse to discriminate against, noting instead that “God unites persons *into the one body of believers* regardless of *human sensibilities, constructs, or categories*.” The list that this new language would replace keeps growing. It is very tempting—given our present denominational dynamic—to add “sexual orientation” to the list. Yet, when do we stop expanding this constitutional registry? We might also add “body mass,” or “physical deformity,” or “personality type.” We could be yet more inclusive and say regardless of “economic standing,” or “social status,” or “mental acuity,” and the list goes on. Instead of continuing to lengthen the list, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should take the bold step of simply declaring that we refuse to discriminate and leave it at that: “God unites persons ... regardless of *human sensibilities, constructs, or categories*. There is no place in the life of the church for discrimination against any person,” period.

The laudable goal of expressing “the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership” and of guaranteeing “participation and inclusiveness” may not be attainable in practice. For example, persons who are in a minority within “the congregation’s membership” may decline to serve when asked; leaving that group or individual without representation. This same situation conceivably could occur in the higher councils of the church as well. Therefore, this goal should remain just that, a goal and not a mandate. The suggested changes, “*seek to* express” and “*strive to ensure*,” will preserve the goal without enshrining it as a dogmatic requirement.

The statement in F-1.0403 that “God unites persons through baptism” imputes a causality to “baptism” that surpasses a Reformed understanding of the Sacrament as a symbol that publicly proclaims what God has already accomplished. An individual is a member of “*the one body of believers*” from the moment he or she repents and believes the Gospel. Baptism celebrates this truth, but does not induce it. The words “through baptism” should be stricken.

### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-13

*Advice on Item 06-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 06-13 presents the following issues that the assembly should consider.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the intent of this overture is similar to that of Item 06-08 from the Presbytery of Mississippi, and the committee refers the assembly to advice offered on that overture in addition to its comments here.

The present overture would amend F-1.0403 to strike the phrase “through Baptism” near the end of the second sentence and replace it with “into the one body of believers.” Later in that sentence, the overture would strike the list of human condition regardless of which persons are united in Christ, replacing it with “human sensibilities, constructs, or categories.” Finally, in the fourth sentence, it would strike the word “guarantee” in favor of the phrase, “strive to ensure.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that G-1.0301 speaks of Baptism as “the visible sign” of God’s call to “faith and . . . membership in the Church, the body of Christ.” The paragraph goes on to meditate on the significance of the Baptism of both children and adults as illuminative of different facets of God’s inclusive love and grace. Section G-1.0402 identifies public profession of faith and Baptism, along with action by the session, as the marks of active membership in the church.

The Directory for Worship, W-2.3000 speaks more broadly still about the significance of Baptism on membership, reminding us that it is a direct command of Jesus to his followers (Mt 28:19), and rehearsing its meanings for the church: dying and rising with Christ (W-2.3002), as a symbol of the covenant forged in creation and with Israel in the passage through water (W-2.3003), and as a mark of inclusion in the covenant community (W-2.3004). Section W-2.3005 is particularly helpful:

The body of Christ is one, and Baptism is the bond of unity in Christ. As they are united with Christ through faith, Baptism unites the people of God with each other and with the church of every time and place. *Barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome* [emphasis added].

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that the removal of the phrase “through Baptism” weakens the clear connection between Baptism and membership in the “one body of Christ” maintained elsewhere in the polity. In addition, the simultaneous removal of “through Baptism” and the insertion of “into the one body of believers” may give rise to the suggestion that only those who are “believers”—as opposed to “both believers *and their children*” (W-2.3008a, emphasis added; see also G-1.0301)—are included in the Church. To the extent that this impression was created or given credence, it would represent a significant departure from the view of Baptism and membership expressed in our Constitution.

With regard to the replacement of the list of human conditions with “human sensibilities, constructs, and categories,” the Advisory Committee on the Constitution refers to its advice on Item 05-08, which proposes a similar emendation. As noted in that advice, this change would weaken the sentence. In addition, the precise referent of “human sensibilities, constructs, and categories” is considerably less clear than is the present language of the second sentence of F-1.0403.

With regard to the replacement of “guarantee” with “seek to ensure,” the committee advises, as it did in its advice on Item 06-08, that the emendation considerably weakens the church’s expressed commitment to living out the unity of Christ in the life and governance of the church. That the church fails in living out its guarantee is a given; we are finally sinful and fall short of God’s intent for us. Such sinfulness and failure should not be an excuse to weakening the church’s commitment to living out its divinely given identity, that all of us are “one in Christ Jesus.”

The overture further proposes to amend G-2.0401, the description of the ruling elder, by inserting the words “seek to” prior to the word “express” in the second sentence, and by striking the word “guarantee” and inserting the words “strive to ensure” prior to the word “participation” at the end of that same sentence. As with the change of similar nature proposed by this overture to F-1.0403, this weakens the church’s commitment to displaying the unity of Christ through the diversity of its membership.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 06-13 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language can be made clearer and more consistent with that intent by being revised to the following:

Amend the second paragraph of F-1.0403 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ~~ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction~~ *gender, status, age, nationality, history, or practice*. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons and groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

[Section G-2.0401 to remain as presently appears in the *Book of Order*.]

#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL FOR ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, AND 06-17

*Advice and Counsel on Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 recommend essentially three changes to the *Book of Order*, all having to do with statements in the section on Unity in Diversity (F-1.0403) and G-1.0204: (1) a softening of the word “guarantee” in the

section on diverse representation on governance committees and worship; (2) the removal of the explicit list to which that representation applies; and (3) the removal of the wording “through baptism” which undergirds the church’s unity.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA contained the following statement in Article 8, Section 8.2.

Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses.

Participation and representation of racial ethnic membership shall be assured by the Committee on Representation. ...

We keep before us those things that we must remember: biblical truths that we study, memorize, hear in church each Sunday; laws that we must obey; even our “to-do” lists. Black churches in the UPCUSA had deep concerns of having no voice and no role in the new PC(USA), the predominantly white church, where the majority would rule. Hence the clear provisions of the Articles of Agreement, with minority groups explicitly listed and a mechanism for reminding us of their membership in this church (COR) and their need for representation. Removal of the “guarantee” for participation and the explicit list is an affront to all those churches and groups that joyfully celebrated based on these articles in 1983.

While the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recognizes that, in some geographical areas, low racial ethnic populations may make fulfillment of this “guarantee” difficult, exceptions can be granted. It is felt, however, that removal of the assurance in the *Book of Order* would begin a “slippery slope” of failing to search adequately for full representation.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 06-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-13.

*Rationale*

Guaranteed representation has been a hallmark of Presbyterian polity and practice for many years. Reformed theologies of the church are marked by their identification of those who make up the church as the baptized. We find the inserted phrase “human sensibilities, constructs, or categories” confusing and without precedent in Presbyterian polity or Reformed theology. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns understands that full compliance with parts of our Constitution that guarantee representation to all is not always realized. Nevertheless, stating that such representation is guaranteed commits us all, even as we struggle with our racism, our unwillingness to challenge privilege and hegemonic practices, and our inertia when confronted with a sinful status quo to move toward a more faithful stance as a church and as bodies within the church. Eliminating such lists may move us toward permitting greater mono-cultural composition of bodies within the church, with the argument that we strived and we failed. This is not what God calls us to in terms of representation.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-13.

*Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 06-08 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Advice and Counsel of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the rationale of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. Changing the wording to F-1.0403 not only weakens the church’s commitment to inclusion for all but attempts to claim discrimination no longer exists or is nominal at best. The human categories specifically mentioned are all examples of people groups who are unquestionably affected by discrimination. Naming the groups articulates our recognition of this fact and our commitment to working against these known forms of discrimination. Watering down the language to the vague term, “human categories,” flies in the face of the 1983 Articles of Agreement, which were intentionally specific. All “human categories” do not represent people groups who are and have historically been discriminated against, which is why the specificity of the current language is appropriate and ultimately more effective in articulating the true intent behind the statement.

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, 06-17**

*Comment on Items 06-08, 06-13, 06-17—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17.

*Rationale*

The proposed amendments to F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 are dangerous to the Body of Christ and our own integrity.

As people of faith, we first seek the Lord, but we are renewed by the living word of God’s Scripture. The Living Word helps us understand who God is, our relationship to God, and our requisite relationship with one another. A central text in the self-understanding of call, for the sixteen elected members of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) to particular service within the PC(USA), is found in 1 Corinthians 12. The tremendous diversity that makes up the Church is described as “one body, many parts.” As part of a single living organism, none of the parts can remain alive without being connected to the rest of the body, neither is one part greater than another. The metaphor is instructive to us as we address the actions recommended in Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 to varying degrees.

In other parts of Scripture the oft echoed line of letting those with “ears to hear” and “eyes to see” witness God’s amazing work, but the others are left to their own illusory existences, disconnected from one another and from God. The idea of needing the right lens is critical to the ministry of the GACOR and to see injustice as status quo acts to disguise disparity and disregard difference, those privileged in a system are rendered blind to its faults, incapable without assistance to see how the system advantages some with unearned privileges and disadvantages others (sometimes creating real harm)

The list of conditions and identities currently included in F-1.0403 are not merely “human categories.” They have real meaning and consequences in human community. Systemic disadvantage, disparities in leadership, health, wealth, etc. are real impacts for persons in these categories. The intent of a person from a disadvantaged group makes little or no change to the altered realities they experience. The lack of women serving in installed pastorates as head of staff in large congregations remains infinitesimally small despite the majority of persons attending and graduating Presbyterian seminaries are female. These patterns are echoed in the much lower proportion of women being ordained relative to their ratio of persons in the ordination track. Race, while described as a social construct, has real effects on persons depending on what labels are attached to their skin color and features. We do not have to think too hard before coming up with numerous examples in church and society of racialized outcomes distorting the fullness God intends for human community. We talk about these realities in Scripture as well as in our Confessions. These are but two examples.

The GACOR has learned to look at the church and the world training its eyes and ears to see with lenses tuned to how power and privilege are wielded. These glasses make visible the lived experiences of persons who must contend with labels affixed to them because they are members of groups deemed “other” but the dominant group who determines the norms. Disparity and discriminatory practice are rife in human community and must be resisted. These realities are expressly why F-1.0403 exists in the first place so that we may, in the words of A Brief Statement of Faith, remind ourselves that

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

Unearned advantage results in an ability to “not see” and “not hear”—it allows persons to be silent in the presence of oppression and harm being foisted on others. Those who are privileged within a system are allowed to pretend they are not subject to the rules which create their advantage, and in doing so access even more advantage. It is not a mistake that Jesus made a big deal in his ministry of being witnesses of and for one another. Section F-1.0403 is one way we express this foundational principle of being Presbyterian within our communion. Seeing one another and connecting to one another to resist those was we are pulled apart along lines of difference, well, these are why we use the banner of “Unity in Diversity” for this section of the Foundations.

As you consider these amendments and the sometimes seemingly innocuous shift in language they suggest, you may want to consult the Preface of the *Book of Order*, which reminds the reader of the language used throughout the Constitution how it is interpreted.

In this *Book of Order*

- (1) *SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE* signify practice that is mandated,
- (2) *SHOULD* signifies practice that is strongly recommended,

- (3) IS APPROPRIATE signifies practice that is commended as suitable,
- (4) MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required.
- (5) ADVISORY HANDBOOK signifies a handbook produced by agencies of the General Assembly to guide synods and presbyteries in procedures related to the oversight of ministry. Such handbooks suggest procedures that are commended, but not required. (*Book of Order (2011-2013)* Preface, emphasis added)

By this measure the current the language of “shall guarantee” signifies a practice that is mandated. The suggested replacement “commits itself” does not find its equivalent in this guideline and provides a standard with is at best uncertain and vague. This is not the only place where the suggested amendment produces an ambiguous new standard that is confusing. How is it that this assertion of membership now has a the addition of “morals,” followed up by the addition of “personal faith” and these are set up as a means for being “denied participation” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution does a good job in its comment explaining the various places where membership and leadership standards are distinguished. In F-1.0403 it is clearly an expression of the rich diversity of the church’s membership. The imposition of anxieties about standards of ordination and leadership in this section create an obstacle and become a stumbling block, denying groups of persons access to being welcomed by God’s family in worship and the church’s life.

This principle in the Foundations also reminds us of our commitment to be faithful. Within a Presbyterian and Reformed understanding, discerning the will of God for the church is done by listening to the Spirit with one another, connected in community. If we must be in community in order to best discern the will of God, it stands to reason that the greater the diversity of the community, the wider the participation, the greater the capacities for discerning the will of God, the greater access to gifts in community, the deeper faithfulness in the gathering. We err, when we fail to acknowledge where human community falls short, and does so systemically. To err in this way is to bind the body (the Body of Christ) with the shackles of the status quo. The suggested changes in Items 06-13 and 06-17 to make adjustments to G-2.0401 are efforts to lessen the standard and empower the inertia of inaction, enforcing the status quo.

As a testimony to the importance of this small piece of the Foundations, F-1.0403 appears in the Form of Government cited in twelve different locations and is cited once in the Directory of Worship in reference to “Worship and Ministry within the Community of Faith.” The GACOR humbly suggests the assembly pause before it considers amendment.

At every age and time, God calls us as the church to fight against oppressive structures that systematically alienate people from relationship with God and one another and which denies us the gifts of their leadership. The gospel and epistle writers named most every problem and issue, and declared that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ shall be included in the body of Christ. We live into that hope when we remain with the language of F-1.0403 as it is. Even in church, our shared cultural identity is deeply rooted in the dominant culture of U.S. society. As the denomination envisions means to grow the church deep and wide, we are called to preach and practice effective ways to include, especially those persons who are categorically discriminated against and denied the ability to determine their identity and expression unencumbered by demands made by the culture.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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#### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 06-13

*Comment on Item 06-13—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

In lifting up the importance of “Unity and Diversity” within the Reformed tradition, F-1.0403 affirms, “the unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s *membership*” [emphasis added]. As one body with many members (1 Cor. 12:12–31), F-1.0403 recognizes the need for diverse *membership* in the body of Christ and affirms that through baptism Christ unites persons regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction.

Along these lines, G-1.0302 in the Form of Government calls congregations to be a place of “welcome and openness” acknowledging that “no person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith.” The *Book of Order*, F-1.0403, further notes that within the PC(USA)’s membership, “no member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason *other than those stated in this Constitution*” [emphasis added] In line with this italicized clause, the Constitution does place limits on who may be ordained as deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders in accordance with Chapter Two of the Form of Government (“Ordered Ministry, Commissioning, and Certification”) as well as W-4.4003 (“Constitutional Questions for Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning”) in the Directory for Worship.

In accordance with Reformed theological standards, W-4.4003 reminds the church that, among others, those seeking ordination and/or installation to ordered ministries must answer the following questions:

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

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- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- d. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- e. Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church? ...

Accordingly, commissioners are encouraged to consider why it's important to have a diverse church membership in line with F-1.0403 and 1 Cor. 12:12–31. Along these lines and in the context of our church's history, commissioners are also encouraged to consider why F-1.0403 specifically enumerates the categories of "race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction." Further, commissioners are encouraged to consider and reflect upon the importance of affording counsels a diverse pool of members from which to nominate, examine and elect those who are called to ordered ministry.

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## Item 06-14

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-14. See pp. 26, 28.]

*On Amending G-1.0101, The Mission of the Congregation—From the Presbytery of Grace.*

The Presbytery of Grace respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote

Shall G-1.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"G-1.0101 The Mission of the Congregation

"The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context *and within the world at large*. The triune God gives to the congregation all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the Church, *making the* ~~The~~ ~~the~~ congregation ~~is the~~ *a basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a* *and sufficient form of the church in its own right*. ~~Thus~~ *As such*, congregations are ~~bound~~ *called to answer the prayer of Christ Jesus 'that they may all be one' by voluntarily binding themselves together in communion with one another, united* ~~uniting~~ *in relationships of accountability and responsibility, and contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole, and are called, collectively, the church.*

"Through the congregation God's people carry out the ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, ~~and~~ *living in covenant life with God and each other, and working in concert as a primary agent of mission*. In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped ~~for the ministry of witness to serve as witnesses~~ *to the love and grace of God in and for the world. Guided by the Holy Spirit and grounded in Scripture, The* ~~the~~ *congregation labors in God's mission of redemptive reconciliation; reaches* ~~reaching~~ *out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God's children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that now is and is coming into the world."*

### *Rationale*

This amendment seeks to begin restoring the congregation's status and role, which was diminished by the adoption of the new Form of Government. The supposition that a Christian congregation is "not of itself a sufficient form of the church" cannot be sustained. Both the Bible and *The Book of Confessions* affirm that a particular church is "a basic *and* sufficient form of the church *in its own right*."<sup>1</sup> "*Binding themselves together in communion with one another, uniting in relationships of accountability and responsibility, and contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole*" does not make congregations into something different or more than what they already are. Sufficiency to be the church flows from and through Jesus Christ alone.

Though it does not change the status of a congregation as a sufficient form of the church, such effort is very important because Christ Jesus himself prays for the unity of his church.<sup>2</sup> Congregations do well in "*voluntarily binding themselves together*." Such unity should never be forced or mandated. "Joining in communion with one another" is and of right ought to be the free choice of each congregation, *voluntarily* answering the prayer of Jesus Christ by "*uniting in relationships of accountability and responsibility*." As particular churches exercise this right, the resulting fellowship is constituted as a



community of equals engaged in reciprocal relationship. Each congregation contributes “their strengths to the benefit of the whole church.”

All Christians have been called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to serve others. The local congregation is where Christians can come together to worship and serve God. “The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context *and within the world at large*.” As a sufficient form of the church, it “*labors in God’s mission of redemptive reconciliation*”<sup>3</sup> in a mission field that is local, regional, and global. At all times congregations shall remain grounded in Scripture and guided by the Holy Spirit.

The particular church carries a unique responsibility to ensure that its members are prepared for this concerted effort and that “individual believers are equipped *to serve as witnesses* to the love and grace of God in the world.”

As congregations and their members “bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God,” it is important to keep in view the knowledge that God’s rule both “*now is and is coming into the world*.” “The reign of God” is a present reality. God is orchestrating everything to accomplish the Lord’s own good and perfect will, even as we look forward to that day when God’s reign shall arrive in its fulness.<sup>4</sup>

A congregation is an instrument of God’s purposes “*in its own right*.” The approval of this amendment will help to restore the status and role of the congregation within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

#### Endnotes

1. *The Book of Confessions*, 3.18; 1 Cor. 16:19; Phil. 1:2; Rev. 1:1-3:14; etc.
2. Jn. 17:2-23.
3. 2 Cor. 5:19; *The Book of Confessions*, 9.31-.33.
4. Mt. 12:28; Lk. 11:20, 17:21; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 4:20; Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; *The Book of Confessions*, 6.058, 6.190; 7.102, 7.302; 9.54.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-14

*Advice on Item 06-14—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-14.

#### *Rationale*

The overture proposes to amend G-1.0101—The Mission of the Congregation—by making several changes to both paragraphs of the present text. These changes fundamentally alter the meaning of the paragraph.

*In the first paragraph:*

In the first sentence: add “and within the world at large” after the word, “context.”

In the second and third sentences: reduce the 3rd sentence to a clause in the second, and strike “the” for “a” prior to the word “basic.”

Also in the second and third sentences: strike “but is not of itself a” and insert “*and*” and add “*in its own right*” after “church.”

In the fourth sentence: strike “Thus” and insert “*As such*”; strike “bound” and insert “*call to answer the prayer of Christ Jesus ‘that they may all be one’ by voluntarily binding themselves*” prior to “together in communion.”

Also in the fourth sentence: strike “united” and insert “*uniting*” prior to “in relationships.”

*In the second paragraph:*

In the first sentence: add “, *and working in concert as a primary agent of mission*” following “each other” at the end of the sentence.

In the second sentence: strike “for the ministry of witness” and insert “*to serve as witnesses*.”

In the third sentence: insert “*Guided by the Holy Spirit and grounded in Scripture*,” at the beginning of the sentence.

Also in the third sentence: insert “*labors in God’s mission of redemptive reconciliation*” following the word “congregation.”

Taken together, these amendments introduce a fundamentally different understanding of the church than that currently found in our polity in at least two ways: (1) they move from an organic connectionalism, in which congregations are bound together through their relationships in the larger church, to a voluntary congregationalism, in which relationships between congregations are a matter of chosen association on the part of the congregations themselves; and (2) they move from an understanding of ministry as the witness of the whole people of God within which individuals have their particular ministries, to an understanding in which individual believers are “primary agents of mission” without necessary reference to the congregation as a whole.

### (1) From Connectionalism to Congregationalism

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity is explicit about the connectionalism of the church. Section F-3.0201 is the basic principle: “The particular congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) wherever they are, taken collectively, constitute one church, called the church.”

Out of this basic principle grow other core ideas that undergird our polity:

That the church is gathered in councils of regular gradation, and that the action of any one council is the action of the whole church (F-3.0203). Without this principle it would be necessary to re-ordain deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders each time one moved from one congregation or presbytery to another.

That review and control of the work of a lower council is the responsibility of a higher council (F-3.0206). Without this principle, a presbytery would be unable to come to the assistance of a congregation in conflict or crisis.

That councils possess the necessary administrative authority to carry out their responsibilities as assigned by a Constitution upon which the church as a whole has agreed (F-3.0209). Without this principle, councils would be paralyzed by constant negotiations and turf battles.

This organic connectionalism is perhaps most eloquently expressed in the opening lines of Chapter Three of the Form of Government (G-3.0101):

The mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. Congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while possessing all the gifts necessary to be the church, are nonetheless not sufficient in themselves to be the church. Rather, they are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.

In the service of this charge to “nurture, guide, and govern” presbyteries are charged with responsibility for such things as “Organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations” (G-3.0301a). This indicates that congregations exist as a result of the initiative of the larger church, rather than the larger church being the result of voluntary binding on the part of the congregations themselves.

Establishing and dissolving pastoral relations (G-3.0301a). Thus, the relationship of any pastor with a congregation is the direct result of the action of the presbytery to approve and place the call in the hands of a teaching elder.

Developing a strategy for the mission of the church in its district (G-3.0303a). Pursuant to this charge, the presbytery determines whether and where new congregations are located or existing congregations relocated (G-3.0303b).

Counseling with sessions concerning reported difficulties within a congregation, serving as advisor to the session, intervening as necessary to the health of the congregation, and assuming original jurisdiction over the congregation (G-3.0303d and e).

All of these powers, duties, and interrelationships rest on the foundation of the organic unity of the church, a unity that can neither be entered into nor broken “voluntarily.” Redefining the relationship between congregations as a “voluntary binding” of themselves in communion undercuts the fundamental ecclesiological self-understanding on which the powers and duties of the councils are based.

### (2) From the Whole People of God to Individuals as Primary Agents of Mission

The *Book of Order* is also explicit about the nature of ministry, and the relationship of the individual to the ministry of the whole people of God. In its opening paragraphs, the Foundations for Presbyterian Polity establishes the basic premise that it is the Church as a whole—and not simply individuals—that participates in the mission of God:

The mission of the God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God’s mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God’s mission. (F-1.01)

Section G-2.0101 concretizes this principle: “The Church’s ministry is a gift from Jesus Christ to the whole Church. Christ alone rules, calls, teaches, and uses the Church as he wills.... The basic form of ministry is the ministry of the whole people of God....”

Section G-2.0102 continues the thought as it applies to the ordered ministries of the church: “...Ordered ministries are gifts to the whole church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. ...”

The point of these passages is that the membership of a congregation is not an aggregate of individuals each engaged as “primary agents of mission” but a covenant community engaged in participating in the mission of Christ, to which individuals contribute their skills, gifts, and resources.

The *Book of Order* does define the role and ministry of the individual member, G-1.0304 provides that:

Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is a joy and a privilege. It is also a commitment to participate in Christ’s mission. A faithful member bears witness to God’s love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ’s Church. ...

There follows then a list of ways in which such responsible involvement is expressed.

The overture thus poses a basic ecclesiological choice for the church. Is the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) a voluntary association of congregations which are themselves voluntary associations of individuals engaged as “primary agents of mission”? Or are we an organic whole, called into being by the summons of Christ, to which each of us is related as the branches to the vine? The latter is the historic and current self-understanding of the church.

## Item 06-15

[Item 06-15 was withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace on Saturday, June 9, 2012.]

## Item 06-16

[The assembly answered Item 06-16 by the action taken on Item 06-04. See pp. 26, 28.]

*On Amending G-3.0301, Composition and Responsibilities—From the Presbytery of North Puget Sound.*

The Presbytery of North Puget Sound overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

“The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of ruling elders serving as moderators of committees or commissions *or commissioned to particular pastoral service (G-2.10).*”

### *Rationale*

The former Form of Government allowed presbyteries to provide commissioned lay pastors a voice and vote during their time of service. They serve as pastors, like teaching elders, and should have voice and vote if a presbytery wants to allow it.

### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-16**

*Advice on Item 06-16—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 06-16.

### *Rationale*

The overture would insert “*or commissioned to pastoral service (G-2.10)*” at the end of the final sentence of the first paragraph of G-3.0301. The effect of the change would be to include ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service under the terms of G-2.10 among those for whose enrollment as members the presbytery would provide by its own rule. Presently, the passage only covers ruling elders serving as moderators of presbytery committees or commissions.

Previous versions of the Form of Government provided that a presbytery might include in the commission of a (then) commissioned lay pastor the privilege of voice and vote in the meetings of the presbytery (2009–2011 *Book of Order*, G-14.0562e). Inserting the above-stated provision restores this option to the discretion of the presbytery and continues what has become standard practice in numerous presbyteries.

## Item 06-17

[The assembly answered Item 06-17 by the action taken on Item 06-08. See pp. 26, 28.]

*On Amending F-1.0403 “Unity in Diversity” and G-2.0401 “Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons” to Ensure Participation—From the Presbytery of Grace.*

The Presbytery of Grace respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote

1. Shall the second paragraph of F-1.0403 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons ~~through baptism~~ *into the one body of believers* regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological ~~conviction~~ *stance within the historic Christian tradition as expressed in The Book of Confessions*. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall ~~guarantee~~ *strive to ensure* full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this constitution.”

2. Shall G-2.0401, Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall *seek to* express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall ~~guarantee~~ *strive to ensure* participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). [The balance of G-2.0401 would remain unchanged.]”

### *Rationale*

The laudable goal of expressing “the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership” and of guaranteeing “participation and inclusiveness” may not be attainable in practice. For example, persons who are in a minority within “the congregation’s membership” may decline to serve when asked; leaving that group or individual without representation. This same situation conceivably could occur in the higher councils of the church as well. Therefore, this goal should remain just that, a goal and not a mandate. The suggested changes, “*seek to* express” and “*strive to ensure*,” will preserve the goal without enshrining it as a dogmatic requirement.

The statement in F-1.0403 that “God unites persons through baptism regardless of ... theological conviction” is overly broad and imputes a causality to “baptism” that surpasses a Reformed understanding of the sacrament as a symbol that publicly proclaims what God has already accomplished. An individual is a member of “*the one body of believers*” from the moment he or she repents and believes the Gospel. Baptism celebrates this truth, but does not induce it.

Simply saying “regardless of ... theological conviction” throws the door wide open to giving “representation” to all manner of spurious notions that may be contrary to theologically Reformed faith and practice. The phrase “regardless of ... theological *stance within the historic Christian tradition as expressed in The Book of Confessions*” helps to make it clear that people come “*into the one body of believers*” by the narrow door of trust in Christ alone. Yet, that door is not so narrow as to exclude a variety of valid theological convictions that can be drawn from the rich well of “*the historic Christian tradition as expressed in The Book of Confessions*.”

### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-17

*Advice on Item 06-17—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 06-17 and refers the assembly to its advice on Item 06-13.

### *Rationale*

Item 06-17 is identical to Item 06-13 except that it proposes to amend the second sentence of the second paragraph of F-1.0403 by striking “conviction” and inserting “stance within the historic Christian tradition as expressed in *The Book of Confessions*.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the first sentence of F-1.0403 pertains to the action of God to unite persons through baptism into the membership of the whole Christian Church, not simply the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the term “Church” in the *Book of Order* refers to the Church Universal; see footnote to the first page of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity). The claim that God unites into membership in the Church of Jesus Christ only those persons who subscribe to the standards of confessions in *The Book of Confessions* is inaccurate, since persons in such Free Church traditions as the Baptist traditions would accept no creedal requirements, and yet would be regarded by our polity as fellow Christians.

The committee further notes that *membership* in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has never been subject to subscription to the confessions, but only to the basic prerequisites of profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and baptism (G-1.0401). Moreover, the church has committed itself to welcoming “all persons who trust in God’s grace in Jesus Christ and desire to become part of the fellowship and ministry of his Church” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0302).

The Advisory committee on the Constitution suggests that it may be helpful to see the second paragraph of F-1.0403 in its larger context. The section F-1.04 as a whole deals with the ongoing movement of the Spirit of God in the life of the Church Universal, and in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a subset of the larger Church. Section F-1.0403 begins with a quotation from Galatians 3:27–28 that affirms that we who are “... baptized into Christ have clothed [ourselves] with Christ. ...” The unity of the Church then rests on this baptismal ingrafting into Christ: “There is no longer Jew or Greek, ... [for] you are [all] one in Christ. ...”

The second paragraph of F-1.0403 is a multi-tiered expression of this fundamental principle of unity in Christ. It is governed by the topic sentence: that the unity of Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ (note again the use of “Church” here). The second sentence then makes explicit what is implied in the first: that within that Church, God unites *through baptism* people who are widely diverse in their human particularity. Race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, and theological conviction—all these expressions of human diversity are secondary to God’s act in Christ to unite persons in the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is important to note that the “membership” referred to in this sentence is *not* the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but that of the Church Universal. The third sentence crystallizes this principle of unity in diversity in the Church Universal by declaring that discrimination against any person is always out of place among Christians of any sort, not merely of Presbyterians.

Only in the final two sentences does the second paragraph of F-1.0403 apply these principles to the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The fourth sentence commits the church—now lowercase and referring to the PC(USA)—to full participation and representation in the worship, governance, and emerging life of the church. Similarly, the fifth sentence affirms the fourth—that no member of the PC(USA) shall be denied participation and representation. Here, however, there is one important limitation imposed on the expression of diversity within the PC(USA): that there are reasons stated in our Constitution that may restrict or define participation. Such limits include, but are not necessarily limited to, the requirement of faith in Jesus Christ and the renunciation of sin for membership (see G-1.0301, G-1.0304, and W-4.2003), and the gifts and qualifications stated in G-2.0104 in the case of ordered ministry.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL FOR ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, AND 06-17

*Advice and Counsel on Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 recommend essentially three changes to the Book of Order, all having to do with statements in the section on Unity in Diversity (F-1.0403) and G-1.0204: (1) a softening of the word “guarantee” in the section on diverse representation on governance committees and worship; (2) the removal of the explicit list to which that representation applies; and (3) the removal of the wording “through baptism” which undergirds the church’s unity.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA contained the following statement in Article 8, Section 8.2.

Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses.

Participation and representation of racial ethnic membership shall be assured by the Committee on Representation. ...

We keep before us those things that we must remember: biblical truths that we study, memorize, hear in church each Sunday; laws that we must obey; even our “to-do” lists. Black churches in the UPCUSA had deep concerns of having no voice and no role in the new PC(USA), the predominantly white church, where the majority would rule. Hence the clear provisions of the Articles of Agreement, with minority groups explicitly listed and a mechanism for reminding us of their

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membership in this church (COR) and their need for representation. Removal of the “guarantee” for participation and the explicit list is an affront to all those churches and groups that joyfully celebrated based on these articles in 1983.

While the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recognizes that, in some geographical areas, low racial ethnic populations may make fulfillment of this “guarantee” difficult, exceptions can be granted. It is felt, however, that removal of the assurance in the *Book of Order* would begin a “slippery slope” of failing to search adequately for full representation.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-17

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 06-17—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-17.

#### *Rationale*

Guaranteed representation has been a hallmark of Presbyterian polity and practice for many years. Reformed theologies of the church are marked by their identification of those who make up the church as the baptized. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns understands that full compliance with parts of our Constitution that guarantee representation to all is not always realized. Nevertheless, stating that such representation is guaranteed commits us all, even as we struggle with our racism, our unwillingness to challenge privilege and hegemonic practices, and our inertia when confronted with a sinful status quo to move toward a more faithful stance as a church and as bodies within the church. Eliminating such lists may move us toward permitting greater mono-cultural composition of bodies within the church, with the argument that we strived and we failed. This is not what God calls us to in terms of representation.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-17

*Advice and Counsel on Item 06-17—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 06-17.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on Item 06-17. We would further add that there is great danger in weakening the language of “guarantee” to “strive to ensure” when discussing full participation and representation in worship, governance, and emerging life of the church. The groups named are those who have historically experienced and continue to experience systemic discrimination in the world and in our church. As the body of Christ, it is our call to commit ourselves to working against the systems that hold people back. There is no reason we cannot commit to guaranteeing full participation and representation, and doing so can only result in the body of Christ more fully and accurately representing the breadth and diversity of God’s children and the gifts they bring. This is no “dogmatic requirement,” but rather, a faithful commitment to the entire body of Christ.

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### GACOR COMMENT ON ITEMS 06-08, 06-13, 06-17

*Comment on Items 06-08, 06-13, 06-17—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17.

#### *Rationale*

The proposed amendments to F-1.0403 and G-2.0401 are dangerous to the Body of Christ and our own integrity.

As people of faith, we first seek the Lord, but we are renewed by the living word of God’s Scripture. The Living Word helps us understand who God is, our relationship to God, and our requisite relationship with one another. A central text in the self-understanding of call, for the sixteen elected members of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) to particular service within the PC(USA), is found in 1 Corinthians 12. The tremendous diversity that makes up the Church is described as “one body, many parts.” As part of a single living organism, none of the parts can remain alive without being connected to the rest of the body, neither is one part greater than another. The metaphor is instructive to us as we address the actions recommended in Items 06-08, 06-13, and 06-17 to varying degrees.

In other parts of Scripture the oft echoed line of letting those with “ears to hear” and “eyes to see” witness God’s amazing work, but the others are left to their own illusory existences, disconnected from one another and from God. The idea of needing the right lens is critical to the ministry of the GACOR and to see injustice as status quo acts to disguise disparity and disregard difference, those privileged in a system are rendered blind to its faults, incapable without assistance to see how the system advantages some with unearned privileges and disadvantages others (sometimes creating real harm)

The list of conditions and identities currently included in F-1.0403 are not merely “human categories.” They have real meaning and consequences in human community. Systemic disadvantage, disparities in leadership, health, wealth, etc. are real impacts for persons in these categories. The intent of a person from a disadvantaged group makes little or no change to the altered realities they experience. The lack of women serving in installed pastorates as head of staff in large congregations remains infinitesimally small despite the majority of persons attending and graduating Presbyterian seminaries are female. These patterns are echoed in the much lower proportion of women being ordained relative to their ratio of persons in the ordination track. Race, while described as a social construct, has real effects on persons depending on what labels are attached to their skin color and features. We do not have to think too hard before coming up with numerous examples in church and society of racialized outcomes distorting the fullness God intends for human community. We talk about these realities in Scripture as well as in our Confessions. These are but two examples.

The GACOR has learned to look at the church and the world training its eyes and ears to see with lenses tuned to how power and privilege are wielded. These glasses make visible the lived experiences of persons who must contend with labels affixed to them because they are members of groups deemed “other” but the dominant group who determines the norms. Disparity and discriminatory practice are rife in human community and must be resisted. These realities are expressly why F-1.0403 exists in the first place so that we may, in the words of A Brief Statement of Faith, remind ourselves that

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

Unearned advantage results in an ability to “not see” and “not hear”—it allows persons to be silent in the presence of oppression and harm being foisted on others. Those who are privileged within a system are allowed to pretend they are not subject to the rules which create their advantage, and in doing so access even more advantage. It is not a mistake that Jesus made a big deal in his ministry of being witnesses of and for one another. Section F-1.0403 is one way we express this foundational principle of being Presbyterian within our communion. Seeing one another and connecting to one another to resist those we are pulled apart along lines of difference, well, these are why we use the banner of “Unity in Diversity” for this section of the Foundations.

As you consider these amendments and the sometimes seemingly innocuous shift in language they suggest, you may want to consult the Preface of the *Book of Order*, which reminds the reader of the language used throughout the Constitution how it is interpreted.

In this *Book of Order*

- (1) *SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE* signify practice that is mandated,
- (2) *SHOULD* signifies practice that is strongly recommended,
- (3) *IS APPROPRIATE* signifies practice that is commended as suitable,
- (4) *MAY* signifies practice that is permissible but not required.
- (5) *ADVISORY HANDBOOK* signifies a handbook produced by agencies of the General Assembly to guide synods and presbyteries in procedures related to the oversight of ministry. Such handbooks suggest procedures that are commended, but not required. (*Book of Order (2011-2013)* Preface, emphasis added)

By this measure the current the language of “shall guarantee” signifies a practice that is mandated. The suggested replacement “commits itself” does not find its equivalent in this guideline and provides a standard with is at best uncertain and vague. This is not the only place where the suggested amendment produces an ambiguous new standard that is confusing. How is it that this assertion of membership now has the addition of “morals,” followed up by the addition of “personal faith” and these are set up as a means for being “denied participation” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution does a good job in its comment explaining the various places where membership and leadership standards are distinguished. In F-1.0403 it is clearly an expression of the rich diversity of the church’s membership. The imposition of anxieties about standards of ordination and leadership in this section create an obstacle and become a stumbling block, denying groups of persons access to being welcomed by God’s family in worship and the church’s life.

This principle in the Foundations also reminds us of our commitment to be faithful. Within a Presbyterian and Reformed understanding, discerning the will of God for the church is done by listening to the Spirit with one another, connected in community. If we must be in community in order to best discern the will of God, it stands to reason that the greater the diversity of the community, the wider the participation, the greater the capacities for discerning the will of God, the greater access to gifts in community, the deeper faithfulness in the gathering. We err, when we fail to acknowledge where human community falls short, and does so systemically. To err in this way is to bind the body (the Body of Christ) with the shackles of the status quo. The suggested changes in Items 06-13 and 06-17 to make adjustments to G-2.0401 are efforts to lessen the standard and empower the inertia of inaction, enforcing the status quo.

As a testimony to the importance of this small piece of the Foundations, F-1.0403 appears in the Form of Government cited in twelve different locations and is cited once in the Directory of Worship in reference to “Worship and Ministry within the Community of Faith.” The GACOR humbly suggests the assembly pause before it considers amendment.

At every age and time, God calls us as the church to fight against oppressive structures that systematically alienate people from relationship with God and one another and which denies us the gifts of their leadership. The gospel and epistle writers named most every problem and issue, and declared that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ shall be included in the body of Christ. We live into that hope when we remain with the language of F-1.0403 as it is. Even in church, our shared cultural identity is deeply rooted in the dominant culture of U.S. society. As the denomination envisions means to grow the church deep and wide, we are called to preach and practice effective ways to include, especially those persons who are categorically discriminated against and denied the ability to determine their identity and expression unencumbered by demands made by the culture.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

## Item 06-18

[The assembly approved Item 06-18 with amendment. See pp. 26, 28.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) amend D-3.0101b(2) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

**“(2) A teaching elder engaged in work within the *geographic* bounds of a presbytery other than the presbytery of membership, whether that work is under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or not, does, by engaging in that work, submit to the jurisdiction of that presbytery for the purposes of discipline. Should disciplinary process be initiated against a teaching elder under this provision, the presbytery of membership shall be notified. *The presbytery within whose bounds the teaching elder is engaged in work may, [at its discretion, either] [alternatively, chose to] cede jurisdiction to the presbytery of membership, or choose to cooperate with the presbytery of membership in any disciplinary inquiry, alternative form of resolution, or trial. This paragraph shall apply even if the provisions of G-3.0306 concerning permission to labor outside or within the bounds have not been followed.* This paragraph shall not apply if the teaching elder is working in ~~an approved, a validated ministry under the provisions of G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a~~ *in other service of this church such as a staff member of a [mid or higher] council [beyond the session], or of an organization related to one of these councils; or in an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a joint congregational witness church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, an interdenominational agency; or as a partner in mission in connection with a church outside the United States of America.*”**

### *Rationale*

The Book of Order, D-3.0101b(2), was editorially revised in July 2011 as a result of the new Form of Government from:

(2) A minister engaged in work within the bounds of a presbytery other than the presbytery of membership, whether that work is under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or not, does, by engaging in that work, submit to the jurisdiction of that presbytery for the purposes of discipline. Should disciplinary process be initiated against a minister under this provision, the presbytery of membership shall be notified. This paragraph shall apply even if the provisions of G-11.0401b concerning permission to labor outside or within the bounds have not been followed. This paragraph shall not apply if the minister is working in a validated ministry under the provisions of G-11.0410.

to:

(2) A ~~minister~~ *teaching elder* engaged in work within the bounds of a presbytery other than the presbytery of membership, whether that work is under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or not, does, by engaging in that work, submit to the jurisdiction of that presbytery for the purposes of discipline. Should disciplinary process be initiated against a ~~minister~~ *teaching elder* under this provision, the presbytery of membership shall be notified. This paragraph shall apply even if the provisions of ~~G-11.0401b~~ *G-3.0306* concerning permission to labor outside or within the bounds have not been followed. This paragraph shall not apply if the ~~minister~~ *teaching elder* is working in a validated ministry under the provisions of ~~G-11.0410~~ *G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a*.

Issue: The last two sentences of this paragraph refer to a situation that is not found in the current Form of Government, namely “labor outside or within the bounds” requirement found in the former Form of Government as a requirement for a particular validated ministry. The last sentence refers to an exception to that particular validated ministry “labor outside or within the bounds” requirement that exempted persons who were engaged in a validated ministry “in other service of this church” so that they were not required to have approval to “labor outside or within the bounds.” Since there is no longer a category anymore of “labor outside or within the bounds” the third sentence edit is erroneous but moot (not harmful). The final sentence, which was the disciplinary exception to the exception to the labor outside the bounds requirement, now, unfortunately, incorporates the entire validated ministry category as exempt from the requirement of the first part of the



paragraph. So that it reads as though the first part of the paragraph does not apply to all persons engaged in a validated ministry as opposed to a Rules of Discipline exception that mirrors the exception to the “labor outside or within the bounds” requirement (excepting persons in other service of this church from getting permission to labor outside or within the bounds) that was a subset of the validated ministry category. This has the effect of making the entire paragraph moot, which does not seem to be the intent of the editors.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-18

*Advice on Item 06-18—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC).*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve Item 06-18 with amendment.

#### *Rationale*

This referral proposes amendment to D-3.0101b(2) concerning the exercise of jurisdiction for the purposes of discipline of teaching elders laboring outside the bounds of the teaching elder’s presbytery of membership. The amendment seeks to correct changes affecting this provision due to the omission of sections to which this provision refers in the Form of Government. In one case (laboring within bounds), the matters being referenced in D-3.0101b(2) no longer appear in the Form of Government. In the second case, the category of validated ministry being referenced (other service in the church) is no longer clearly and discretely identified. In both cases, the proposed change inserts interpretive language in D-3.0101b(2) seeking to preserve the intent of the provision. The overture supplements the editorial changes inserted in D-3.0101b(2) by the Office of the Stated Clerk under Section B.2.c. of the *Organization for Mission* in the *Manual of the General Assembly* for the 2011–2012 edition of the *Book of Order* and presented to the assembly as Item 06-18.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) will address the changes in the proposed amendment serially.

1. The insertion of “*geographic*” before the word “bounds”:

The ACC advises that this is a helpful modification as it removes ambiguity in the assignment of jurisdiction where a non-geographic presbytery may also have a presence in a particular community. It also clarifies that it applies to ministers engaged in service in validated ministries beyond the congregation.

2. The replacement of the sentence, “This paragraph shall apply even if the provisions of G-3.0306 concerning permission to labor outside or within the bounds have not been followed” with the sentence, “*The presbytery within whose bounds the teaching elder is engaged in work may, at its discretion, either cede jurisdiction to the presbytery of membership, or choose to cooperate with the presbytery of membership in any disciplinary inquiry, alternative form of resolution or trial.*”:

The ACC regards the intent of this change as a helpful clarification of process to fulfill the responsibility of jurisdiction for the purpose of discipline. However, it advises that the use of the phrase, “may, at its discretion, either” could be understood to imply that these are the only options available to the presbytery in whose bounds the teaching elder is serving. The ACC advises that this may be remedied by replacing the phrase with the words, “may, alternatively, choose to” (with the sentence continuing as proposed), so that the sentence reads, “*The presbytery within whose bounds the teaching elder is engaged in work may, alternatively, choose to cede jurisdiction to the presbytery of membership, or choose to cooperate with the presbytery of membership in any disciplinary inquiry, alternative form of resolution or trial.*”

3. The replacement of the sentence, “This paragraph shall not apply if the teaching elder is working in a validated ministry under the provisions of G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a.” with the sentence, “This paragraph shall not apply if the teaching elder is working in an approved, validated ministry under the provisions of G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a. *in other service of this church such as a staff member of a mid or higher council, or of an organization related to one of these councils; or in an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a joint congregational witness church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, an interdenominational agency; or as a partner in mission in connection with a church outside the United States of America.*”:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) advises this to be a helpful amendment to restore the clarifying language present in the previous Form of Government. The ACC advises that such clarification is necessary for the order of the mission of the graduated councils of the church, so that those serving these councils may be accountable to the councils, agencies, and partnerships which for which the service is rendered, and to the presbytery of membership for the purpose of discipline.

However, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the terms “mid council” and “higher council” do not appear elsewhere in the Constitution. We believe the language of the proposed amendment would be clearer and more consistent if the phrase “mid or higher council” were changed to “council beyond the session,” so that the sentence would read,

This paragraph shall not apply if the teaching elder is working in a validated ministry under the provisions of G-2.0502 and G-2.0503a. *in other service of the church such as a staff member of a council beyond the session, or of an organization*

*related to one of these councils; or in an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a joint congregational witness church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, an interdenominational agency; or as a partner in mission in connection with a church outside the United States of America.*

If the assembly agrees with the intent of Item 06-18, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that, with the exceptions noted under (2) and (3) above, the language of the amendment is clear and consistent to accomplish its intent.

## Item 06-19

[The assembly approved Item 06-19. See pp. 26, 28.]

### *Amending G-3.0104—From the Manager, Polity Guidance and Training*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request with the following response:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly that the changes to G-3.0104 are not editorial in nature and would require amendment of the Constitution, therefore the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Amend G-3.0104 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

#### **“G-3.0104 Officers**

**“[First three paragraphs remain unchanged.]**

**“Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, *maintain any required registers, including the rolls of all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators and all Ruling Elders commissioned to particular pastoral service,* preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church. [The rest of the text of G-3.0104 remains the same.]”**

2. Amend G-3.0305 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

#### **“G-3.0305 Minutes and Records**

**“Minutes and other official records of the presbytery are the property of the presbytery, and are subject to the review specified in G-3.0108. The stated clerk is responsible for the preservation of the presbytery’s minutes and records. *These records shall include the rolls of the presbytery’s membership and registers of all Certified Christian Educators, Certified Associate Christian Educators, and ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service.*”**

### *Rationale*

This recommendation comes as the result of a request received by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution from the manager of Polity Guidance and Training. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution does not initiate business before the assembly. However, pursuant to G-6.02, the Stated Clerk must submit to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution all questions requiring an interpretation of the *Book of Order* by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution, in turn, must report its findings and any recommendations it has to the General Assembly. The assembly is free to approve, amend, or decline to approve the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further recommends to the Stated Clerk that the current text of G-3.0104 contains a mixture of elements that would properly be separated into different provisions. Section G-3.0104 pertains to the office of the clerk, clerk of session, and stated clerk of higher councils and is not properly the place for enumerating the rolls and registers a clerk or stated clerk is required to keep. Moreover, the inclusion of the requirement to keep “rolls of all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators and all ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service” is improperly placed in a sentence governing the function of all clerks, including clerks of session. These functions are appropriate only to the stated clerk of the presbytery, and not to any other clerk or stated clerk. This material is most appropriate in the section of Chapter Three pertaining to the presbytery (G-3.03) and specifically in G-3.0305, Minutes and Records, where its application is limited to the work of the stated clerk of the presbytery.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution therefore advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the intent of this editorial correction may best be accomplished by amending both G-3.0104 and G-3.0305 as indicated above.

***Question Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution***

The Manager of Polity Guidance and Training of the Department of Constitutional Services asked whether the above are editorial changes, and whether the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly may be instructed to make such changes:

*G-3.0104 Officers*

“Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance including ~~the rolls~~ *two registers, one listing of all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators, and one listing all Ruling Elders commissioned to particular pastoral service...*”

*Rationale*

Amendment 10-E, recommended by the 219th General Assembly (2010) and approved by the presbyteries amended G-11.0407 to read as follows:

“The stated clerk shall maintain four rolls, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are active members, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are members-at-large, one listing the names of all of the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are continuing members of the presbytery and who are inactive members, ~~and one listing all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice at all presbytery meetings during the term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, and a fifth~~ roll listing those who have been deleted from the other rolls. On or before December 31 of each year, the presbytery shall determine the category of membership of each continuing member in accordance with the relevant sections of this chapter and cause appropriate record of such determination to be made. *The stated clerk shall also maintain two registers, one listing all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice at all presbytery meetings during the term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, and one listing all Commissioned Lay Pastors within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice and vote at all presbytery meetings during the term of service in a church or other validated ministry.*”

The editorial adaptation of this amendment to the newly adopted Form of Government the G-3.0104 reads as follows:

“Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, including the rolls of all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators and all Ruling Elders commissioned to particular pastoral service, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church.”

The manager of Polity Guidance and Training suggests the recommended editorial changes, including replacing the word “roll” with “registers,” would more faithfully align with the wording of the originally approved overture.

## **Item 06-Info**

### **A. *Governing Bodies Statements of Compliance with General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions***

Section IV.B.2.d of the *Organization for Mission* requires that when a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission contains an order directed to another governing body, the Stated Clerk report to the General Assembly a statement of the governing body’s compliance. Below is a report of the statements of compliance received by the Stated Clerk from the governing bodies for cases decided by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission during the years 2010–2012.

1. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-01, Ivan White and David Crews Appellants (Complainants), v. Session, St. Paul Presbyterian Church of San Angelo, Texas, Appellee (Respondent).*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Sun is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Tres Rios report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

## 06 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Sun report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Sun Stated Meeting on October 20, 2010, and the Presbytery of Tres Rios at its stated meeting on October 15, 2010.

### 2. *GAPJC Disciplinary Case 220-02, Jean K. Southard, Appellant/Accused v. Presbytery of Boston, Appellee/Accuser.*

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Northeast is hereby reversed in part and affirmed in part.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the judgment of the Synod of the Northeast finding Southard guilty on charges 1 and 2 is reversed, and the Presbytery of Boston's judgment of not guilty on charges 1 and 2 is reinstated.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Boston report this decision to the Presbytery of Boston at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Boston enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this decision to the Synod of the Northeast at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Northeast Stated Meeting on October 21, 2011. The Presbytery of Boston has not yet provided confirmation of compliance.

### 3. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-03, Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young, and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, Appellants (Complainants), v. Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Respondent).*

This Commission denies the Appellee's Motion to Dismiss, as the issues raised by the Appellants in the Specifications of Error are broader than the applicability of G-6.0106b.

The record does not reflect that the SPJC ruled on the Appellants' contention that Scripture and the Confessions prohibit certain sexual behavior. While the Appellants' complaint was based primarily on G-6.0106b, the Appellants clearly and consistently presented arguments at trial on the basis of scriptural and confessional standards without objection by the Presbytery. Since the doctrinal issue is central to the Appellants' case, it was error for the SPJC not to expressly rule upon the issue.

The SPJC Decision is reversed in part and affirmed in part and the case is remanded to the SPJC to rule on the matters which are the subject of Specifications of Error Nos. 10 and 11 above, and such other matters as may come before it. Since the Constitution has changed, the SPJC is encouraged to direct the Presbytery to reexamine the candidate under G-2.0104b.

The Stay of Enforcement remains in place pending further adjudication of these proceedings.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is hereby reversed in part and affirmed in part.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this case is remanded to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Pacific Stated Meeting on November 11–13, 2011, and the Presbytery of San Francisco Stated Meeting on September 13, 2011.

### 4. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-04, Session of Caledonia Presbyterian Church, Paula Bremer, James Gunn, Alan Crandall, Jerry Indermark, James F. Scaife, Presbytery of Central Florida, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and Presbytery of Stockton, Appellants (Complainants), v. Presbytery of John Knox.*

The *Motion to Dismiss Appeal as Moot* is granted, and the Stay of Enforcement is lifted. The only alleged irregularities set out in Appellants' Notice of Appeal cite G-6.0106b and Authoritative Interpretations of that section as the basis of their

Appeal. The language of that section was removed from the *Book of Order* prior to the GAPJC hearing of the Appeal. In granting this motion, this Commission declines to rule upon the application of a provision of the *Book of Order* that no longer exists. Nothing in this Decision should be construed to interpret the ordination standards under the new Form of Government, as that issue is not before the Commission.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the *Motion to Dismiss Appeal as Moot* is granted, and the case is Dismissed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of John Knox report this decision to the Presbytery of John Knox at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of John Knox enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies report this decision to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of Lakes and Prairies enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision was reported at the Synod of Lakes and Prairies Stated Meeting on October 2, 2011. The Presbytery of John Knox has not yet provided certification of compliance.

5. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-05, Steve S. Hwang, Complainant, v. Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Respondent.*

After two days of trial, this Commission considered the documentary evidence presented to it, evaluated the testimony of the witnesses and carefully deliberated and voted on each alleged irregularity. This Commission finds that neither alleged irregularity is sustained by a preponderance of the evidence.

As to the first alleged irregularity, while it may be questioned whether the Synod wisely allocated G-11.0502 responsibilities between the SAC and the Presbytery, this Commission declines to substitute its judgment for that of the Synod. Under the *Book of Order* as currently interpreted, a synod may appoint an administrative commission with original jurisdiction over some or all of the functions of a presbytery Committee on Ministry (G-9.0503a); it may do so without giving the Commission complete jurisdiction over the Presbytery (G-9.0503a(4)).

In reaching this conclusion, this Commission acknowledges that, in 2003, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation of then G-9.0408 (now G-3.0108b) which listed the assumption of original jurisdiction over a presbytery by a synod as one of the remedies available to the synod if a presbytery within its jurisdiction is not obeying decisions of the General Assembly's Permanent Judicial Commission. While this Commission defers to and does not set aside that authoritative interpretation, it notes that the authority to assume original jurisdiction over a lower governing body is not a specifically delegated authority in the *Book of Order*, except in the case of a presbytery assuming original jurisdiction of a session. This Commission lifts up to the church for its consideration the question of whether the 2003 Authoritative Interpretation adequately embodies the principle of F-3.0209 (formerly G-9.0103) that "the jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries." While the provision of former G-9.0503a(4) (now G-3.0109b(5)) makes it clear that councils may appoint administrative commissions to "inquire into and settle the difficulties" in bodies within their jurisdiction, this Commission suggests that assuming original jurisdiction of a lower body is a matter of such a serious nature that the authority to do so should be explicitly prescribed in the *Book of Order*.

As to the second alleged irregularity, it may be questioned whether the Synod should have included the TAC as one of the administrative commissions over which it was taking jurisdiction, since the record is unclear as to whether the TAC existed on December 18, 2010. However, the Synod's action did not rise to the level of an irregularity since, if the TAC did then exist, the Synod would have had authority to assume jurisdiction over it under G-9.0503 (but see discussion above); if it did not then exist, the assertion of authority would have been of no effect.

At the conclusion of the trial, Complainant submitted a Motion for a Directed Finding regarding the status of the TAC. The Commission finds that such Motion is outside the limits of the Pre-Trial Order entered August 23, 2011, and is therefore ruled out of order.

IT IS ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first stated meeting following the date of this Order, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, that the Stated Clerk of the Synod deliver a copy of this Decision and Order to its Administrative Commission having jurisdiction over Hanmi Presbytery, and that an excerpt from the Synod's minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii will read the order into their minutes at their 2012 Stated Meeting.

6. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-06, Bruce F. Haapalainen, Complainant, v. Synod of Lincoln Trails, Respondent.*

This Commission affirms the decision of the EC that Complainant does not have standing because he was not an “enrolled” commissioner to the Synod’s January 28, 2011, meeting.

The case of *Fair-Booth v. National Capital Presbytery* (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 300), establishes that a ruling elder elected to serve as a commissioner to a presbytery meeting must be present and enrolled in order to file a remedial complaint alleging that an irregularity or delinquency occurred at that meeting. The considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a synod meeting are indistinguishable from those considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a presbytery meeting. Like ruling elder commissioners to a presbytery meeting, commissioners to a synod are elected by a lower governing body, the presbytery. According to Fair-Booth, “the requirement for enrollment, as separate from election ... is consistent with the principle that lower governing bodies do not determine the membership of higher governing bodies.” Moreover, as in Fair-Booth, the requirement of attendance “is not a mere technicality. ... Presbyterians come together in governing bodies to deliberate and decide matters as a community of faith, open to the work of the Spirit among them.”

If any one of the four jurisdictional grounds of D-6.0305 is lacking, the complaint fails. Since this Commission found that the Complainant lacked standing, there is no need to address the EC’s finding that the Complaint was not timely filed.

The Executive Committee’s dismissal of the Complaint is hereby affirmed.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Dismissal of the Complaint is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision was reported at the Synod of Lincoln Trails Stated Meeting on January 27, 2012.

7. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-07, Bruce F. Haapalainen, Complainant, v. Synod of Lincoln Trails, Respondent.*

This Commission affirms the decision of the EC that Complainant does not have standing to file the Complaint because he was not present at the Synod meeting of January 28, 2011, and consequently was not an “enrolled” commissioner to the Synod.

The case of *Fair-Booth v. National Capital Presbytery* (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 300), establishes that a ruling elder elected to serve as a commissioner to a presbytery meeting must be present in order to bring a remedial complaint against an action taken at that meeting. The considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a synod meeting are indistinguishable from those considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a presbytery meeting. Like ruling elder commissioners to a presbytery meeting, all commissioners to a synod are elected by a lower governing body. According to Fair-Booth, “the requirement for enrollment, as separate from election ... is consistent with the principle that lower governing bodies do not determine the membership of higher governing bodies.” Moreover, as in Fair-Booth, the requirement of attendance “is not a mere technicality. ... Presbyterians come together in governing bodies to deliberate and decide matters as a community of faith, open to the work of the Spirit among them.”

If any one of the four jurisdictional grounds of D-6.0305 is lacking, a complaint fails. Since this Commission has found that Complainant lacks standing, there is no need to address the EC’s finding that the Complaint failed to state a claim for which relief can be granted or the Respondent’s contention that the Complaint was not timely filed.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Dismissal of the Complaint is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

This decision was reported at the Synod of Lincoln Trails Stated Meeting on January 27, 2012.

8. *GAPJC Disciplinary Case 220-08, Jane Adams Spahr, v. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Redwoods.*

## Decision

In *Spahr 2008*, Spahr was directed to refrain from implying, stating, or representing that a same-sex ceremony is a marriage. Within months of that order, Spahr performed marriage ceremonies for approximately sixteen same-sex couples.

Although counsel for both parties confirmed that state law recognizes the legality of these marriages, the change in state law did not and could not change what is permissible for marriages to be authorized by the PC(USA).

The *Book of Order* states that its provisions may be authoritatively interpreted by the General Assembly or by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. No distinction is made between these forms of interpretation in authority or application, and the most recent interpretation is binding (G-13.0103r, now G-3.0501c and G-6.02). Since *Spahr 2008* was decided, there have been attempts at the General Assembly level to expand the language in W-4.9000. Such attempts have failed.

*Spahr 2008* did not arise in a vacuum. In 1991, the General Assembly issued an authoritative interpretation (1991 AI) clarifying the denomination's stance on same-sex union ceremonies. The 1991 AI stated:

If a same sex ceremony were considered to be the equivalent of a marriage ceremony between two persons of the same sex, it would not be sanctioned under the *Book of Order*.

The 1991 AI further stated that a session "should not allow the use of the church facilities for a same sex union ceremony that the session determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony," and that:

since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 395, 21.124, Req. 91-23).

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do.

This Commission agrees with the SPJC regarding Specification of Error No. 1 d and e (Appellant's Specifications of Error Nos. 6, 7, and 8). The SPJC correctly found that "being faithful to Scripture and the Constitution on other matters does not provide a defense for the actions charged in this case," and "the constitutional interpretations of Spahr (2008) and Southard by the PPJC are not inconsistent with the *Book of Order* when read as a whole." Both the PPJC and SPJC found that Spahr's conduct violated the Constitution.

As to Specification of Error No. 3 (Appellant's Specification of Error No. 4), the SPJC did not rephrase the charges, contrary to Spahr's argument. The SPJC included descriptive language regarding the Southard decision but that did not amount to a modification of the charge. The SPJC upheld the PPJC on the specific charges before it. The SPJC discussed the Southard decision as a statement that Spahr 2008 continues to apply in a state which authorizes same-sex marriage by civil law. The SPJC correctly stated that the term "marriage" in the charge relates to "Christian marriage" (or "ecclesiastical marriage" as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this decision to the Synod of the Pacific at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Pacific enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the Redwoods report this decision to the Presbytery of the Redwoods at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of the Redwoods enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Margaret MacLeod was absent and did not take any part in the deliberations or decision.

This decision was reported at the stated meeting of the Presbytery of Redwoods on May 12, 2012.

10. *GAPJC Remedial Case 220-09, Presbytery of New York City v. Cornell A. Edmunds.*

#### Decision

As noted above, the SPJC determined that the restructuring of the Presbytery's Stated Clerk position and terms of call was part of a re-evaluation of its mission in response to a serious financial crisis. All existing staff of the Presbytery were

affected by the restructuring, which included a number of terminations with severance packages. The SPJC further determined that the Stated Clerk's restructured position and reduced terms of call did not constitute a constructive discharge.

While stated clerks must be elected to specific terms of office in accordance with the *Book of Order*, the GAPJC determines that their elected terms and any agreed-upon remuneration are not irrevocable contracts for those fixed terms, but rather terms of call that may, in the case of a serious financial crisis and/or mission re-evaluation, be adjusted by the employing entity, so long as fundamental fairness is demonstrated (G-6.0201 and G-14.0522). Fundamental fairness was evident through the numerous efforts of the Presbytery's Personnel Committee to meet with all staff members and Edmonds and work with them in the process. It was ultimately demonstrated through Edmonds' opportunity to speak on the floor of the Presbytery to the motion that effected the change to his terms of call.

Edmonds argued that since his term of office was for "a term of years, not for a term of years *or* until a successor is elected," *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th Ed.* (RONR), the parliamentary authority then in effect, prohibits the Presbytery's action without a disciplinary procedure. The Presbytery responded that the provision of RONR relied upon by Edmonds does not apply since the exact wording of G-9.0302 is only that "*meetings* of governing bodies, commissions, and committees shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order except in cases where this Constitution provides otherwise" (emphasis added), and the rule Edmonds cited does not refer to the conduct of a meeting.

Both the Presbytery and Edmonds are in error. The rules in RONR regarding terms of officers are applied by means of decisions of assemblies rendered in the course of their meetings. RONR's provisions regarding officers clearly do apply in this case. The RONR rule relied upon by Edmonds, however, relates to the *removal* of officers. The Presbytery did not remove Edmonds from office. The directly applicable provision from RONR is not its provision on the removal of officers, but rather its provision regarding the amendment of a society's own rules relating to its officers:

Amendments to the article on officers may raise difficulties in relation to the time at which adopted changes take effect, unless special care is taken. A society can, for example, amend its bylaws so as to affect the emoluments and duties of the officers already elected, or even to abolish an office; and if it is desired that the amendment should not affect officers already elected, a motion so specifying should be adopted before voting on the amendment, or the motion to amend can have added to it the proviso that it shall not affect officers already elected. There is virtually a contract between a society and its officers, and while to some extent action can be taken by either party to modify or even terminate the contract, such action must be taken with reasonable consideration for the other party (RONR p. 579, ll. 9-21).

In this provision, RONR clearly contemplates the possibility that even a society's currently elected officers can be affected by changes to its own rules—including both duties and emoluments (compensation)—even though "there is virtually a contract between a society and its officers." Additionally, this provision establishes the principle that in such cases, "reasonable consideration for the other party" must be demonstrated. The record reflects that such consideration was extended to Edmonds.

While the SPJC did not rule on Counts Two, Three, and Four of the Complaint, it nevertheless would have considered those matters in the overall course of the proceedings. In addition, as previously stated, this Commission concludes that the errors alleged in the Counter-Appeal, if any, are collectively harmless and did not substantially affect the outcome of the case. Thus, the Commission sees nothing to be gained by remanding the case for a new trial.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Northeast is reversed and the case is dismissed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this decision to the Synod of the Northeast at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of New York City report this decision to the Presbytery of New York City, at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Margaret MacLeod was absent and did not take part in the deliberations or decision.

This decision was reported at the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of New York City on March 31, 2012.



**B. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission**

1. *Roster of Former Members (D-5.0206b)*

a. *Class of 2010*

Fred L. Denson, 789 John Glenn Blvd., Webster, NY 14580; Fane Downs, 206 Red Oak, Ingram, TX 78025; Mary Eleanor Johns, 1270 N. Negley Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206; Judy L. Woods, 111 Monument Street, Ste 2700, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

b. *Class of 2008*

Catherine Borchert, 13415 Shaker Blvd, #9C2, Cleveland, OH 44120; Ernest E. Cutting, 3145 40th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406; Wendy Warner, 139 Corson Avenue, Modesto, CA 95350; Mildred Morales, URB Punto Oro, 4018 Calle El Anaez, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 00728, Leon Fanniel, 5588 Village Green, Los Angeles, CA 90016.

c. *Class of 2006*

Jesse Butler, 8316 N. Flora Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64118; Gwen Cook, 1104 Oak Drive, Durango, CO 81301; Jane Fahey, 2930 Habersham Way, Atlanta, GA 30305; John Dudley, P. O. Box 1488, Hattiesburg, MS 39403, David Snellgrove [deceased], P. O. Box 616, Batesville, MS 38606; Christopher Yim, 20701 Frederick Road, Germantown, MD 20876.

[Note: The Reverend John Dudley resigned in 2005 and Rev. Snellgrove was appointed as Rev. Dudley’s replacement.]

2. *Final Decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission*

The Permanent Judicial Commission met in Louisville, Kentucky, on August 5–9, 2010; in Louisville, Kentucky, on February 3–7, 2011; in Louisville, Kentucky, on July 28–August 1, 2011; in San Diego, California, on October 26–31, 2011; in San Antonio, Texas, on February 16–20, 2012; and in Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 36–30, 2012. Having received the final decisions from the commission from its clerk, Gregory Goodwiller, the Stated Clerk now reports to the 220th General Assembly (2012) the final decisions received in the following cases and advises the General Assembly that they will be included in the *Minutes*:

a. *Remedial Case 220-01*

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Ivan White and David Crews	)	
Appellants (Complainants),	)	
v.	)	DECISION AND ORDER
	)	Remedial Case 220-01
Session, St. Paul Presbyterian Church of San Angelo, Texas	)	
Appellee (Respondent)	)	

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Arrival Statement

This filing before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal of a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Sun (SPJC) rendered on March 23, 2010. The Notice of Appeal was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on March 29, 2010.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Appellants Ivan White (White) and David Crews (Crews) have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-8.0105.

Appearances

White and Crews appeared in person, representing themselves. The Session of the St. Paul Presbyterian Church (Session) was represented by Douglas Nave and Mary Noel Golder.

## History

This case concerns an elder-elect who is openly gay and living in a committed same-sex relationship. However, the undisputed testimony is that the relationship is non-sexual.

The original complaint, filed by Wayne White and Ivan White on December 12, 2008, with the Presbytery of Tres Rios (Presbytery), challenged the action by the Session in sustaining the examination for ordination of David Cooper (Cooper) as an elder-elect for the class of 2011. The Presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission (PPJC) granted a stay of enforcement on December 18, 2008.

A trial was held by the PPJC on May 16, 2009. The Decision of the PPJC reversed the Session's action to sustain the examination of Cooper as an elder. The Decision cited Cooper's statement that "I am gay;" his participation in a commitment ceremony with a man he refers to as his partner; that on two occasions Cooper and his partner had been photographed together for a church pictorial directory; and the statement of Cooper's partner at a November 2007 congregational meeting that Cooper's name had been withdrawn from a slate of nominees for office at that time because "it is against Presbytery rules for anyone living in an openly homosexual relationship to serve as elder." In rendering its decision, the PPJC cited *Wier v. Second PC, Remedial Case 214-5*, noting that the "governing body [had] reasonable cause for inquiry based on its knowledge of the life and character of the candidate," and had "the positive obligation to make due inquiry and uphold all the standards for ordination and installation" (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, p. 341).

After the PPJC reversed the Session's decision, on May 31, 2009, the Session conducted a second examination of Cooper, following the specific direction which had been provided by the PPJC "on the matters upon which examination should be conducted." During this examination, the Session specifically asked Cooper if he was in compliance with G-6.0106b of the *Book of Order*. Cooper stated that he was in compliance. No information was submitted to contradict Cooper's statement that his relationship with his male partner did not involve sexual activity. The Session sustained the examination.

On June 1, 2009, White and Crews filed a complaint virtually identical to the one filed earlier, alleging that the Session had sustained the examination of Cooper, "a self-affirmed, practicing homosexual," as an elder-elect for the class of 2011. A second trial was held by the PPJC on September 8, 2009. The decision of the PPJC, rendered on September 12, 2009, again ordered that the Session's examination of Cooper be reversed on the basis of its finding that "as a self affirmed homosexual living in a committed same sex relationship [Cooper] is in violation of confessional standards." The PPJC also noted in its discussion that "The confessional statements and scripture do not make a distinction between homosexual orientation and practice."

On October 19, 2009, the Session filed a Notice of Appeal with the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Sun (Synod) and requested a Stay of Enforcement of the PPJC's decision, which was granted by the SPJC on November 16, 2009. On February 10, 2010, the SPJC issued a decision which was subsequently determined to be incomplete by the Executive Committee of the GAPJC on the grounds that the SPJC decision did not include a determination of "whether the decision of the lower governing body shall be affirmed, modified, set aside, reversed, or the case remanded for a new trial" (D-8.0404b). A corrected decision by the SPJC, completed on March 23, 2010, clarified that the decision of the PPJC was reversed. No discussion or rationale is included in the SPJC decision and Order.

Subsequently, a Notice of Appeal and a Request for a Stay of Enforcement were received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. A Stay of Enforcement was granted on April 5, 2010. The Executive Committee of the GAPJC accepted the Appeal on April 16, 2010.

## Specifications of Error and Decision

*Specification of Error No. 1: The SPJC committed a procedural irregularity when the former moderator of the SPJC signed the corrected decision instead of the corrected decision being signed by the current moderator of the SPJC.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained for the reason stated below, following Specification of Error No. 3.

*Specification of Error No. 2: The SPJC committed a procedural irregularity when its corrected decision was not rendered by a majority of SPJC members.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained for the reason stated below, following Specification of Error No. 3.

*Specification of Error No. 3: The SPJC committed a procedural error when its corrected decision did not adjust the directive date.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained.

While the Notice of Appeal alleges that certain procedural errors were made by the SPJC, there are no facts in the record to support the allegations.

*Specification of Error No. 4: The SPJC accepted as true Cooper's statement that while he is in a committed same-sex relationship, he is not sexually active.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained.

There is no evidence in the record that contradicts Cooper's statement. The SPJC was bound to the record it had before it, as is this Commission.

*Specification of Error No. 5: The SPJC erred by not accepting the PPJC's determination that Cooper refused to repent of his homosexual orientation and living in a committed same-sex relationship.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained.

The Church has repeatedly distinguished between sexual orientation and sexual practice. In 1998, the 210th General Assembly approved the following authoritative interpretation of G-6.0106 and G-4.0403:

Standing in the tradition of breaking down the barriers erected to exclude people based on their condition, such as age, race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commits itself not to exclude anyone categorically in considering those called to ordained service in the church, but to consider the lives and behaviors of candidates as individuals (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp. 68, 166).

There is no constitutional expectation that an individual would need to repent of any of the above "conditions."

Cooper testified under oath that while he is gay and in a same-sex relationship, the relationship is non-sexual. He testified that his relationship "doesn't preclude love, it doesn't preclude caring for each other. It does preclude the sexual activity, the physical involvement of sexual activity."

It was the Session's responsibility to assess the suitability of Cooper for ordination, including the relationship between Cooper and his partner. Such an assessment may be overturned by a higher governing body only for "extraordinary reasons" (*Rankin v. National Capital Union Presbytery*, *Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 113, 114). Neither the record nor the argument of the parties reflected that the PPJC had extraordinary reasons for overturning the action of the Session. This constitutional error by the PPJC was reversed by the SPJC.

This Commission concurs with the SPJC.

*Specification of Error No. 6: The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by failing to recognize the jurisdictional oversight of the Presbytery over a Session regarding the examination and ordination process.*

This Specification of Error Is Not Sustained.

The SPJC properly exercised its responsibilities of judicial review of the decision of a lower governing body.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Sun is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Tres Rios report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Sun report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Participants

Commissioner Clifford Looney was absent and did not participate in the deliberations.

Concurring Opinion

I concur in this Decision. I do so, however, with the conviction that additional comment is necessary regarding a perceived terminological problem in this case and the need for clarification.

06 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

The provision of G-6.0106b prohibits ordination of a person who is unrepentant of any “self-acknowledged practice” of sinful behavior as defined by the Confessions. The General Assembly as far back as 1978, reiterated by the General Assembly in 1998, and by this Commission as recently as 2002, distinguished between “orientation” and “practice,” in ruling that only the latter has been the basis of application of this prohibition.<sup>1</sup> But, instant this case, the issue of “practice” has emerged anew through the claim that a “practiced” sexual dimension (here not applicable) is necessary in order for “practice” in G-6.0106b to apply, i.e., sexual practice is necessary beyond the acknowledged fact of participation in a committed homosexual relationship.

The church confronts here the need for clarification. Is the focus of the church exclusively on practice that is narrowly defined as “sexual practice” (undefined further within the spectrum of sexual conduct) or does it intend a wider application to a committed homosexual relationship in general?

In the absence of definitional clarity in this matter of “practice”, judicial judgment is faced with an interpretive dilemma that the church needs to address.

Dated this the 8th Day of August, 2010.

Michael B. Lukens

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case GA2010-101, Ivan White and David Crews, Appellants (Complainants), v. Session, St. Paul Presbyterian Church of San Angelo, Texas, Appellee (Respondent)* made and announced at Louisville, KY on August 8, 2010.

Dated this 8th day of August, 2010.

Endnote for Remedial Case 220-01

1. *Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1978, Part I, pp. 264–265; *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 166; *Wier v. Session, Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale* (2002).

b. *Disciplinary Case 220-02*

Jean K. Southard, )  
Appellant/Accused )  
v. )  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Boston, )  
Appellee, Complainant )

DECISION AND ORDER  
GAPJC Disciplinary Case 220-02

Arrival Statement

This disciplinary case came before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by the Appellant, Jean K. Southard (Southard), from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast (SPJC) dated June 25, 2010.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Southard has standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-13.0106.

Appearances

Southard was represented by Sara Taylor and Scott Clark. The Appellee, Presbytery of Boston (Presbytery), was represented by Jean K. Risley and Kevin Manuel.

Factual History

On March 1, 2008, Southard, a minister of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)), and a member of the Presbytery, officiated at a marriage ceremony between two women, Jennifer Irene Duhamel (Duhamel) and

Sara Jane Herwig (Herwig). The ceremony, which was characterized by the participants as a “Christian marriage,” was conducted at the First Presbyterian Church, in Waltham, Massachusetts (First Presbyterian). Duhamel and Herwig were longtime active members of, and participants in the life of, First Presbyterian. Prior to the wedding, Southard conducted pre-marital counseling for the two women and concluded that they were well suited for marriage. The Session of First Presbyterian (Session) gave prior approval to the marriage.

The ceremony took place on March 1, 2008. The program for the wedding service was entitled “A Service of Christian Marriage and Worship” and the service followed the customary Presbyterian liturgy for marriage found in the *Book of Common Worship*. During the homily, Southard warned Herwig and Duhamel that “the majority of people out there may challenge you on the very fundamental fact of whether you are married at all.” At the conclusion of the service, Southard proclaimed the two women to be “joined together in holy marriage” and stated that they might “seal the covenant of marriage with a wedding kiss.”

At the time the events of this case occurred, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognized same-gender marriages conducted within its borders as legal marriages. On March 12, 2008, the Session added the marriage to its register of marriages. A certificate of the marriage of Duhamel and Herwig was signed by Southard as a member of the clergy and recorded in the town records on March 13, 2008.

This Commission’s decision in *Spahr v. Presbytery of the Redwoods* (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 314), was rendered on April 28, 2008, after the marriage was conducted.

#### Procedural History

This is an appeal of a decision of the SPJC dated June 25, 2010, in which the SPJC reversed a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery (PPJC), rendered on August 22, 2009. The PPJC decision came as the result of a disciplinary complaint filed against Southard, which was tried by the PPJC on August 22, 2009. Presbytery’s prosecuting committee initially promulgated five charges against Southard, but they were revised and consolidated such that two charges were actually tried by the PPJC. Neither charge was sustained by the PPJC.

The two charges were:

Charge 1: On 1 March 2008, in the sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church of Waltham, Massachusetts, the Rev. Jean Southard as a minister of the Word and Sacrament violated the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by participating in and directing a worship service publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith:

a) that appropriated the liturgical forms for Christian marriage to celebrate the marriage of two women sanctioned by civil law and purporting to be consistent with the Christian understanding of marriage under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

b) where Rev. Southard declared that as a result of the marriage ceremony she performed, the two women were then joined in Christian marriage, declaring a new status that is reserved to the marriage of one man with one woman under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

c) where Rev. Southard failed to differentiate between the marriage celebrated between the two women and a Christian marriage between one man and one woman, but rather directed the marriage worship service to be similar to the marriage service between one man and one woman under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), by conducting the service in the sanctuary and by including in the worship service one or more of the following elements:

- i) the two women declared their intention to enter into Christian marriage;
- ii) the two women exchanged vows of love and faithfulness similar to the vows expressed by a man and a woman in a ceremony of Christian marriage;
- iii) prayers were offered for the two women as a new couple in their new dimension as being married together;
- iv) Rev. Southard declared that as a result of the marriage ceremony the two women were then joined in Christian marriage.

By so participating and directing the worship service, Rev. Southard disregarded the Directory for Worship W-4.9000, in particular W-4.9001, which expressly defines our biblical and constitutional understanding of Christian marriage.

Charge 2: On 1 March 2008, in the sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church of Waltham, Massachusetts, the Rev. Jean Southard as a minister of the Word and Sacrament failed to fulfill her ordination vow to be governed by our church’s polity (W-4.4003e) by participating in and directing the ceremony as set forth in Charge #1, purporting to perform a Christian marriage between two women.

“Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline?...” --W-4.4003e

On appeal to the SPJC by the Presbytery, the SPJC, on June 26, 2010, reversed the decision of the PPJC and remanded the case to the PPJC to determine the degree of censure, if any, to be imposed. Southard filed a Notice of Appeal to this Commission on August 13, 2010, which was received by this Commission on August 16, 2010. This Commission determined that it had jurisdiction, that Southard had standing to appeal the SPJC decision, that the Notice of Appeal was timely filed, and that the Notice of Appeal stated one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-13.0106.

A hearing on this Appeal was held by this Commission on February 4, 2011, in Louisville, Kentucky.

#### Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1 (Appellant’s 7 and 10): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by determining that Southard committed an offense by participating in and directing a same-gender marriage ceremony as a Christian marriage.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 2 (Appellant’s 9): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by determining that Southard violated her ordination vows by participating in and directing the same-gender marriage ceremony as a Christian marriage.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 3 (Appellant’s 5, 6, and 8): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by determining that a minister of the Word and Sacrament who performs (participating in and directing) a same-gender marriage as a Christian marriage commits an offense prohibited by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Authoritative Interpretations and violates his or her ordination vows.*

(Note: Specification of Error No. 3 is distinguished from Specifications of Error No. 1 and 2 because the first two specifications pertain to Southard specifically, who acted prior to *Spahr*, while Specification of Error No. 3 refers to ministers of the Word and Sacrament in general.)

This specification of error is not sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 4 (Appellant’s 1): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by failing to distinguish the difference between same-sex ceremonies and same-gender marriages.*

This specification of error is not sustained (see “II. Appellant’s Characterization of SPJC Error” below).

*Specification of Error No. 5 (Appellant’s 2): The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation in finding that the four statements contained in W-4.9001 constitute an exclusive definition of marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*

This specification of error is not sustained (see “II. Appellant’s Characterization of SPJC Error” below).

*Specification of Error No. 6 (Appellant’s 3, 13, and 14): An error in the proceedings occurred when the SPJC reversed the not guilty verdict of the PPJC without providing Southard with certain constitutionally required due process safeguards. This was contrary to D-11.0401 through 11.0403 and therefore constitutes an irregularity in the proceedings and an injustice in the process and the decision.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 7 (Appellant’s 4, 11, and 12): The SPJC erred when it reversed the decision of the PPJC by reinterpreting and rephrasing the original charges to determine Southard was guilty of “performing a same-gender marriage as a Christian marriage.” This modification of the original charges constituted an irregularity in the proceedings and an injustice in the process and the decision.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

#### Decision

##### I. Constitutional Interpretation (GAPJC Specifications of Error No. 1–3)

In this case, this Commission considers whether a minister of the Word and Sacrament is permitted under the Constitution of the PCUSA to conduct a marriage of two persons of the same gender when such marriages are permitted under the laws of the state in which the marriage is performed.

The precedents governing this case begin in 1991, when the General Assembly stated, in an Authoritative Interpretation, (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 395) (1991 AI): “[S]ince a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.” In *Benton v. Presbytery of Hudson River* (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, pp. 580–89), this Commission quoted and affirmed the language of the 1991 AI.

The 1991 AI, as well as *Benton* and *Spahr*, involved relationships that did not constitute legal marriages as defined by the applicable civil law. The question before this Commission, then, is whether the Massachusetts law defining this relationship as a legal marriage changes the impact of the definitions in W-4.9001. This Commission holds that it does not. While the PC(USA) is free to amend its definition of marriage, a change in state law does not amend the *Book of Order*. It is the responsibility of the church, following the processes provided in the Constitution for amendment, to define what the PC(USA) recognizes as a “Christian marriage.” Consequently, *Spahr*’s holding, “By the definition in W-4.9001, a same sex ceremony can never be a marriage,” remains in effect.

This Commission further held in *Spahr*, for *prospective* application, “that the liturgy should be kept distinct for the two types of services.” In light of the change in the laws of some states, this Commission reiterates that officers of the PC(USA) who are authorized to perform marriages, when performing a ceremony for a same-gender couple, shall not state, imply, or represent that the same-gender ceremony is an ecclesiastical marriage ceremony as defined by PC(USA) polity, whether or not the civil jurisdiction allows same-gender civil marriages.

This Commission concluded in *Spahr* that prior authoritative interpretations lacked mandatory language. Southard conducted this ceremony two months prior to *Spahr*. Sensitive to the authoritative interpretation in *Spahr*, this Commission agrees with the SPJC that *Spahr* cannot be applied retroactively to the facts of this case. Therefore, Southard did not violate the *Book of Order* or her ordination vows by erring in her constitutional interpretation. She did not commit an offense because the applicable authoritative interpretation (*Spahr*) had not yet been promulgated.

## II. Appellant’s Characterization of SPJC Error (GAPJC Specifications of Error No. 4 and 5).

This Commission does not sustain these two Specifications of Error because they do not accurately reflect the holding of the SPJC as to the matters involved.

## III. Due Process (GAPJC Specification of Error No. 6).

The SPJC reversed the PPJC, finding Southard guilty on both counts, and remanded the case to the PPJC for a determination of censure. This was error. When an appellate permanent judicial commission reverses a not guilty finding, it must remand the case for a new trial, rather than imposing its own guilty verdict. As this Commission held in *Davis (cite)*, the finding of guilt can only be made by the trier of fact, which has an opportunity to hear and evaluate the evidence.

If the appellate body finds that the trier of fact has made an error of law, the proper procedure is to identify that error and remand for a new trial.

In this case, there were disputed questions of fact, particularly around the issue of intent. The PPJC did not address these issues because it determined elsewhere that Southard’s actions did not violate the *Book of Order*. It would have been necessary for the trier of fact to consider these issues in order to determine guilt.

## IV. Charges (GAPJC Specification of Error No. 7).

In reversing the PPJC, the SPJC did not address the details of charge 1. By addressing charge 1 only in its generalities, the SPJC effectively amended the charge to remove the detailed references to specific actions previously required by the PPJC. Such a modification of charges is not appropriate on appeal.

## Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Northeast is hereby reversed in part and affirmed in part.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the judgment of the Synod of the Northeast finding Southard guilty on charges 1 and 2 is reversed, and the Presbytery of Boston’s judgment of not guilty on charges 1 and 2 is reinstated.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Boston report this decision to the Presbytery of Boston at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Boston enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this decision to the Synod of the Northeast at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Margaret A. MacLeod did not participate in this case .

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Disciplinary Case 220-102, Jean K. Southard, Appellant (Accused), vs. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Boston, Appellee (Complainant)*, made and announced at Louisville, KY on February 7, 2011.

Dated this 7th of February, 2011.

Concurring Opinion

While we agree with the constitutional interpretation of the majority, we are intensely troubled by the underlying issue—the marginalization of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people by the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (PC(USA)). This issue is larger than the PC(USA). It is a human rights issue.

The PC(USA) is reformed and always being reformed. The constitution is contradictory in its language regarding the acceptance of our gay, lesbian, and bisexual brothers and sisters into the full fellowship of the church. See for example, G-4.0403; G-5.0103; G-5.0302; G-6.0106b; W-4.9000. We urge the General Assembly to amend the constitution to allow for the marriage of same sex couples in the PCUSA, and otherwise welcome gay, lesbian, and bisexual people into the full fellowship of the church.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2011

Jeana Lungwitz  
Barbara Bundick  
A. Bates Butler, III Michael Lukens Rebecca New

Concurring Opinion

We concur in this decision. We have, nonetheless, a continuing concern about a foundational assumption in this case as well as other recent cases dealing with the definition of Christian marriage. This assumption would ground the definitive interpretation of marriage in the provisions of W-4.9001. The concern is whether W-4.9001 provides an effective and unambiguous definition of Christian marriage.

First, W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for the whole section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture. Its content serves to establish a progression of four theological claims (gift, civil contract, covenant, commitment) as a foundation for the church's general understanding of marriage.

In W-4.9001, there is an overarching, schematic narrative that develops a biblical and theological progression. These elements are explicated as four simple but profound claims, each of which has theological bearing. Marriage is viewed within a progression of God's gift (general revelation in the created natural order), to civil order (part of universal civil order), to covenant (a distinctive mark of biblical people), and the characteristics of such covenant (promise, trust, and faithful commitment).

To claim that this paragraph is primarily and intentionally legal in nature places a strain upon its obvious narrative purpose. As a fourfold theological outline of Christian marriage in narrative form, it is arguable that it proposes either regulatory imperative or legal intention. Certainly, it does not have the kind of language or format that the church has come to expect in definitional statements, for the language in this paragraph is not obviously legislative, in the sense of providing regulatory lines that define boundaries or proscribe behavior.

Further, recent definitional arguments have revolved around ancillary elements in the text, which have taken priority over the primary focus of its sentences. The key sentence ("For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship") has been treated as a consummate definition and legal regulation, based on one element in its secondary clause. The question may be raised whether a portion of a secondary



clause, one part in a set that elaborates upon and describes the character of a covenantal relation, constitutes an absolute and exclusionary prescription. In fact, it can be argued that it is not immediately clear or textually obvious that any of the ancillary clauses in these four provisions rises to the level of legal intention or definitional weight.

Thus, W-4.9001 has become contested regarding whether it can bear the interpretive weight that judicial process and decision has put upon it. The church needs a sharper degree of clarification and guidance that precisely defines how it understands marriage, especially in light of the high financial and personal burden involved. Given the contention regarding the nature and practice of Christian marriage in our time, it would be important and valuable for the Church to state its definition in clearer and more precise legislation.

H. Clifford Looney  
Rebecca New

Concurring Opinion

We concur with the Decision of the Commission, and with the holding that *Spahr* is not applicable as precedent because the actions taken by Southard took place before the *Spahr* Decision was rendered. However, it is disingenuous of Southard to claim that no guidance was available from the larger church on the advisability of performing a same-gender marriage.

The very language quoted in the History of the Decision from the Authoritative Interpretation of 1991 and *Benton* provides considerable counsel.

If, as *Benton* states, it is not “proper” for a minister to perform a same-gender ceremony determined to be the same as a marriage ceremony, it would logically seem to be “improper” for a minister to perform a ceremony that was, in actuality, a legally-sanctioned marriage service. This is particularly true in this case since, as the Decision points out, there is a direct conflict between the definition of marriage under local state law and the definition stated in our polity. Similarly, *Benton* antedates *Spahr* in stating the impropriety of using liturgical elements from the marriage service, especially a pronouncement that a new status has been conferred, whether the ceremony was a marriage (which would be itself “improper”) or a blessing of a same-gender relationship.

Southard should have consulted not only the Session about the advisability of officiating at this ceremony, but should have considered the guidance already available through the larger Church. While Southard may be commended for her desire to provide compassionate pastoral care, a failure to seek out the guidance of the larger Church would raise a concern about Southard’s willingness to “be governed by our church’s polity, and to abide its discipline.”

Meta Shoup Cramer  
Bradley Copeland  
William Scheu

c. Remedial Case 220-03

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Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, )  
 Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young, and the Session of )  
 Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, )  
 Appellants (Complainants), )  
 v. )  
 Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Respondent) )

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DECISION AND ORDER  
Remedial Case 220-03

Arrival Statement

This matter now before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal of a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC) rendered on September 25, 2010. The Notice of Appeal was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on November 9, 2010.

Parties

The Appellants (originally Complainants) in the case are Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young, and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church. The Appellee (originally Respondent) in the case is the Presbytery of San Francisco.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Appellants have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Appellants were represented by Mary Holder Naegeli and Bruce McIntosh. Appellee was represented by Douglas Nave and Pamela Byers.

## History

In April, 1997, the Presbytery of San Francisco (Presbytery) enrolled Lisa Larges (the Candidate) under care as a candidate for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament, upon transfer from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. In December, 2007, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery conducted its final assessment and on January 15, 2008, the Presbytery voted to certify the Candidate as ready for examination.

At its stated meeting of November 10, 2009, the Presbytery voted to validate the Candidate's call to serve as coordinator of the organization That All May Freely Serve, pending her ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The Presbytery then voted to approve the Candidate for ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. In her examination, she presented to the Presbytery both a Statement of Faith and a Statement of Departure. In the latter document and within her examination, she affirmed that she is not currently in a same gender relationship.

On December 21, 2009, Appellants filed a remedial complaint against the Presbytery for its approval of the Candidate for ordination who stated a departure from G-6.0106b. On January 11, 2010, the SPJC, in its Decision and Order on Preliminary Questions, accepted the case for trial and at the same time entered a Stay of Enforcement as requested by more than one-third of the commissioners present at the November meeting of Presbytery. The trial before the SPJC was held on September 23, 2010. Substantial evidence was presented to the SPJC about scriptural and confessional interpretations concerning sexual behavior.

In its decision of September 25, 2010, (SPJC Decision) the SPJC affirmed the Presbytery's action to ordain the Candidate, with a departure. The record does not reflect that the SPJC ruled upon the scriptural and confessional issues noted above. The SPJC also ordered a continuation of the Stay of Enforcement in anticipation of an appeal to this Commission. On November 4, 2010, the Appellants filed a Notice of Appeal.

As of July 10, 2011, the *Book of Order* was amended to replace G-6.0106b with the language now codified in G-2.0104b. On July 15, 2011, the Presbytery filed a *Motion to Dismiss*, alleging that the Appellants' case was now moot because G-6.0106b had been replaced. However, the parties conceded that the issues raised in this case were broader than G-6.0106b.

## Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1:* The SPJC erred when it failed to sustain Specification of Error No. 1, which stated: The Presbytery erred when it voted to approve the ordination of candidate Lisa Larges, because her refusal to abide by the constitutional requirement of G-6.0106b was equivalent to answering "No" to the fifth constitutional question for ordination, "Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline?" (W-4.4003e), thus rendering her ineligible.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 2:* The SPJC erred when it failed to sustain Specification of Error No. 2, which stated: The Presbytery erred when it found that the Candidate's departure from G-6.0106b, a church-wide requirement for ordination, was not a serious departure from Reformed faith or polity.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 3:* The SPJC erred when it failed to sustain Specification of Error No. 3, which stated: The Presbytery erred when it granted to the candidate a departure from G-6.0106b, a mandatory church-wide ordination standard, because such an act obstructs the constitutional governance of the church.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 4:* The SPJC erred when it failed to sustain Specification of Error No. 4, which stated: The Presbytery erred when it granted to the candidate a departure from G-6.0106b, a mandatory church-wide standard, because departures can only be granted with regard to the interpretation of Scripture, not conduct.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 5.* The SPJC erred when it failed to sustain Specification of Error No. 5, which states: The Presbytery erred when it granted to the candidate a departure from G-6.0106b, a mandatory church-wide ordination standard, because it exceeds the bounds of freedom of conscience for one who seeks to hold office in the PC (USA).

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 6.* The SPJC erred when it applied the Knox AI to expand the limits of freedom of conscience beyond those plainly stated in the constitution.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 7.* The SPJC erred when it applied the Knox AI to excuse the candidate from the expressly stated mandatory “requirement” found in G-6.0106b.

This specification of error is not sustained. See discussion under Specification of Error No. 8.

*Specification of Error No. 8.* The SPJC erred when it found that an authoritative interpretation could amend, modify, or excise express terms from the meaning of the Constitution, even if it did not actually change or remove words from the printed page.

This specification of error is not sustained.

Given that the constitutional provisions under which the Candidate was examined are no longer part of the Constitution, and that the Candidate was not in a same gender relationship at the time of the examination, this Commission declines to interpret provisions that no longer exist. Therefore, Appellants’ Specifications of Error Nos. 1-8 are not sustained.

*Specification of Error No. 9 (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 11).* The SPJC erred when it failed to recognize that the Presbytery’s affirmation of the Candidate’s erroneous belief and statement of non-compliance was itself a departure from the essentials tenants [sic] of Reformed faith and polity.

This specification of error is not sustained.

The record does not sustain the contention that the Presbytery’s action constituted a departure.

*Specification of Error No. 10 (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 9).* The SPJC erred by not correcting the doctrinal error and abuse of discretion exercised by the Presbytery of San Francisco in this ordination decision.

This specification of error is sustained. See discussion in the Decision and Order below.

In sustaining this specification of error, this Commission is not ruling on whether doctrinal error or abuse of discretion occurred, but only that it is not evident from the language of the decision whether or not the SPJC ruled upon this matter.

*Specification of Error No. 11 (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 10).* The SPJC erred when it failed to rule on the constitutionality of the ordination decision itself, limiting its comments to presbytery process only.

This specification of error is sustained. See discussion in the Decision and Order below.

#### Decision and Order

This Commission denies the Appellee’s Motion to Dismiss, as the issues raised by the Appellants in the Specifications of Error are broader than the applicability of G-6.0106b.

The record does not reflect that the SPJC ruled on the Appellants’ contention that Scripture and the Confessions prohibit certain sexual behavior. While the Appellants’ complaint was based primarily on G-6.0106b, the Appellants clearly and consistently presented arguments at trial on the basis of scriptural and confessional standards without objection by the Presbytery. Since the doctrinal issue is central to the Appellants’ case, it was error for the SPJC not to expressly rule upon the issue.

The SPJC Decision is reversed in part and affirmed in part and the case is remanded to the SPJC to rule on the matters which are the subject of Specifications of Error Nos. 10 and 11 above, and such other matters as may come before it. Since the Constitution has changed, the SPJC is encouraged to direct the Presbytery to reexamine the candidate under G-2.0104b.

The Stay of Enforcement remains in place pending further adjudication of these proceedings.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is hereby reversed in part and affirmed in part.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this case is remanded to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Jeana Lungwitz did not participate in this case.

#### Concurrence of H. Clifford Looney

I am concurring in the disposition of this case because the result obtained by the majority suggests returning this case to the Presbytery.

The Presbytery was entitled to and required to decide on the appropriateness of ordination.

This case presents an element of belief about which there have been great tensions but about which resolution, to the degree achieved, has been only possible by emphasis upon the requirement of mutual forbearance. The extent to which we “forbear” is continually tested by so called “constitutional” questions raised by those who would impose a particular idea of what an essential tenet of our faith might be upon those who hold a less or more restrictive view on the belief or conduct of church officers. See the concurring opinion of *Lungwitz, et al., in Southard (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 606, Section 2.b. of this report)*.

We need to continue to mutually forbear as individuals, as presbyteries, as synods, and as a denomination. To do that we should place more emphasis on our reluctance to micromanage the decisions presbyteries reach on the ordination of those who express the need to depart from scriptural or confessional interpretations that challenge what others regard as essential.

The record in this matter presents substantial evidence that the Presbytery found:

- C. the requirements of G-6.0106b were not offended by the beliefs of the Candidate (there was no active offending conduct), or that she was entitled to exercise her right of scruple as expressed;
- D. given the right of scruple, and that there was no seriously offending conduct, that there was not a refusal to repent;
- E. the Candidate’s expression of her interpretation of scripture was not a “serious” departure from essentials of Reformed faith and polity;
- F. the Candidate’s expression of departure did not infringe on the rights of others or obstruct church governance.

I would have preferred to simply affirm the SPJC because I would limit the use of “constitutional” questions to look behind the decisions of ordaining councils on the ordination of persons in ordered ministries. Hopefully the change in our Constitution will have a similar impact.

Aside from the rule which accords great weight to the factual decisions of ordaining bodies, ordination decisions by those bodies are regarded as being uniquely within their authority because of the intense, if not intimate, contact of the nurturing relationship that is required by the candidacy process. That relationship provides an ordaining body with a foundation for decision that cannot be supplanted by the appellate process. For appellate bodies to be empowered to continually micromanage the ordination process would inappropriately encourage disagreement and waste judicial resources.

The protocol for review by an appellate body needs, therefore, to be very prudently limited to those cases in which either an ordaining body or a Permanent Judicial Commission has very clearly erred or the process is so defective as to have deprived one of the parties of due process, such that there are extraordinary reasons for reversal. The duty of a reviewing body is to be discharged with caution and great deference. We have so held in *Hope v. Presbytery of San Francisco (Minutes, 2004, p. 363)*.

I do not believe that the record here supports a finding that such extraordinary reasons are present.

06 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY

Dissent of A. Bates Butler III, Jay Lewis and Susan J. Cornman

Specifications of Error Nos. 10 and 11 should not be sustained. Our polity recognizes that it is the ordaining body that is best suited to make decisions about the candidate’s fitness for office, and factual determinations by examining bodies are entitled to deference by higher governing bodies in any review process. (see *White and Crews*, Remedial Case 220-01 *Minutes*, 2012, Part I, p. 603; Section 2.a. of this report). This deference to the examining body exists because of the intense, if not intimate, contact of the nurturing relationship between the candidate and the examining body that is required by the candidacy process. It is that relationship that provides the examining body with a foundation for decisions that cannot and should not be supplanted by the appellate process unless for extraordinary reasons. No such reasons exist herein. For an appellate body to be empowered to micromanage the ordination process without there being extraordinary reasons would be ill-advised.

In this matter the Presbytery conducted a reasonable, responsible, prayerful and deliberate examination of the Candidate. Based upon the evidence in the Record, the Presbytery considered both the scriptural and confessional standards of the church as well as the relevant provisions of the *Book of Order*. In reviewing the Presbytery’s decision, the SPJC also had presented to it both the scriptural and confessional standards of the church in addition to the relevant ordination provisions of the *Book of Order* including G-6.0106b. While the SPJC decision might have been more clear in its language, and indeed may have been in-artful, to suggest that the SPJC itself did not rule upon the scriptural and confessional standards ignores the totality of the language in its decision and elevates form over substance.

Both parties urged this Commission not to remand this case for further hearings as they recognized that to do so would not only cause significant and unnecessary expense to the church, but would also result in no difference in outcome. This Commission is charged with securing the “economical determination of proceedings.” We believe that sending the case back to the SPJC does not accomplish that charge.

We would affirm the decision of the SPJC.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 220-03, Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, Appellant (Complainants) vs. The Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Complainant)*, made and announced at Louisville, KY on August 1, 2011.

Dated this August 1, 2011.

d. Remedial Case 220-04

Session of Caledonia Presbyterian Church, Paula Bremer, James )	
Gunn, Alan Crandall, Jerry Indermark, James F. Scaife, )	
Presbytery of Central Florida, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and )	DECISION AND ORDER
Presbytery of Stockton, )	Remedial Case 220-04
Appellants (Complainants), )	
v. )	
Presbytery of John Knox, )	
Appellee (Respondent). )	

Arrival Statement

This matter now before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal of a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies (SPJC) dated October 8, 2010. The Notice of Appeal was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on November 22, 2010.

Parties

The Appellants (originally Complainants) in the case are the Session of Caledonia Presbyterian Church, Paula Bremer, James Gunn, Alan Crandall, Jerry Indermark, James F. Scaife, The Presbytery of Central Florida, The Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and the Presbytery of Stockton. The Appellee (originally Respondent) in the case is the Presbytery of John Knox.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Appellants have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Appellants were represented by Whitman H. Brisky and Vashti Varnando. Appellee was represented by Douglas Nave, Marilyn Gamm, and Michael Hibbs.

## History

At a stated meeting convened February 20, 2010, The Presbytery of John Knox (the Presbytery) approved Scott Anderson (the Candidate) for ordination as minister of the Word and Sacrament and approved his call as Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council of Churches.

As stipulated between the parties before the SPJC, at the time of such approval for ordination the Candidate was known to the Presbytery to be living in a committed partnership of many years' duration with another man and not within a covenant of marriage between a man and a woman. During his examination by the Presbytery, the Candidate stated that "in every respect" his relationship with his partner is exactly like a marriage except for procreation, and that he has never taken a vow of celibacy. The Candidate stated at his examination that he believes his manner of life is consistent with Scripture and the Confessions, as well as with the ordination standards in the *Book of Order*.

After examination and collective discernment, the Presbytery voted to approve the Candidate's ordination by a vote of 81 in favor, 25 against. The Complainants thereafter filed a remedial case with the SPJC objecting to such ordination approval by the Presbytery. The SPJC by a vote of 7 in favor, 2 opposed (1 opposed/1 abstain on one specification), did not sustain the specifications of error in the complaint to the SPJC. This Appeal to the GAPJC followed. A Stay of Enforcement had been entered, and remains in effect.

A number of weeks before the scheduled date for the hearing before the GAPJC, G-6.0106b of the *Book of Order* was replaced with new language (now G-2.0104b) by a majority vote of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), effective July 10, 2011. In light of this change, the Appellee submitted to the GAPJC a *Motion to Dismiss Appeal as Moot*. Appellant filed a Response to such motion. The parties orally argued the motion, and the GAPJC reserved its decision on the motion until after completion of the arguments in the scheduled hearing on the specifications of error in the Appeal.

## Decision &amp; Order

The *Motion to Dismiss Appeal as Moot* is granted, and the Stay of Enforcement is lifted. The only alleged irregularities set out in Appellants' Notice of Appeal cite G-6.0106b and Authoritative Interpretations of that section as the basis of their Appeal. The language of that section was removed from the *Book of Order* prior to the GAPJC hearing of the Appeal. In granting this motion, this Commission declines to rule upon the application of a provision of the *Book of Order* that no longer exists. Nothing in this Decision should be construed to interpret the ordination standards under the new Form of Government, as that issue is not before the Commission.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the *Motion to Dismiss Appeal as Moot* is granted, and the case is Dismissed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of John Knox report this decision to the Presbytery of John Knox at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of John Knox enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies report this decision to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of Lakes and Prairies enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Concurrence of Bradley C. Copeland, Yun Jin Kim Meta Cramer and Susan J. Cornman

We concur with the decision of the majority to grant the *Motion to Dismiss* on the basis of mootness.

While we find the "Knox AI" to be flawed, we believe that the Presbytery acted in good faith when it based its decisions on its interpretation of that Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 adopted by the 218th General Assembly (2008). G-13.0103r of the Form of Government in force at the time of the contested ordination examination states, "The most recent interpretation of a provision of the *Book of Order* shall be binding." In this case this would be the Knox AI. The flaw of the Knox AI, however, is that it fails to recognize that any AI, regardless of who issues it, cannot modify a specific requirement of the *Book of Order*. An AI can interpret the Constitution but the only way to modify such an explicit requirement (G-6.0106b) is through the amendment process.

Additionally, the Appellants, while arguing on appeal a scriptural basis for overturning the Presbytery's action, failed to include such arguments in either their original complaint or the specification of errors. These omissions meant that this Commission was unable to address issues broader than the application of G-6.0106b in its Decision.

Finally, given that the language of G-6.0106 has now been replaced through the amendment process, we believe that it would have been in the best interest of the church had the parties withdrawn this case, as they were urged to do, and agreed to examine the candidate under the new standard of ordination, G-2.0104b.

Concurrence of William E. Scheu

I concur in the majority's decision to grant the Motion to Dismiss on the basis of mootness.

Had the passage of Amendment 10A not occurred prior to the hearing of this case, I would have voted to reverse the decision of the SPJC by which it affirmed the action of the Presbytery in granting to Scott D. Anderson a departure to a mandatory provision of the constitution (G-6.0106b). In my view, the Anderson departure, as approved by the Presbytery, was an obstruction of constitutional governance, and thereby not a permissible exercise of conscience under G-6.0108a. In reversing the SPJC I would have joined with a dissent in this case which held that that the *Knox AI* did not reverse *Bush* because the General Assembly by an authoritative interpretation could not and in fact did not interpret away the explicit mandatory standard expressed in G-6.0106b.

However, Amendment 10A passed and the express mandatory standard of G-6.0106b is no longer in the constitution. Therefore there is now no obstruction of constitutional governance and neither the *Knox AI* nor *Bush* have any remaining vitality as they relate to G-6.0106b. The denomination by constitutional process has decided to proceed under different rules. In granting the Motion to Dismiss, we members of this Commission model the old standard of life together, expressed in the old PCUS Book of Church Order as "subjecting ourselves to our brethren in the Lord."

My prayer is that the new constitutional provision will lead to ordination examinations that take the meaning of Scripture and the Confessions seriously and honestly, so that the peace, unity and purity of the church may be upheld and nourished.

Concurrence of H. Clifford Looney, Barbara A. Bundick, A. Bates Butler III

We concur in the result obtained by the majority opinion. The position of the appellant at virtually all stages of this proceeding relied on their objections to the approach taken by the Presbytery to the ordination decisions only in the context of G-6.0106b. Those provisions are no longer to be a bone of contention. The Presbytery relied in good faith on the principles of freedom of conscience and mutual forbearance. Its reliance was justified.

The practical aspects of this situation and the interests of our denomination suggest that we have no reason to disturb the decision of the Synod PJC.

We would prefer to affirm the Synod but concur in this result.

Dissent of Michael J. Lukens and Margaret MacLeod

We respectfully dissent from the majority opinion of this Commission.

We agree that it serves no useful purpose to review the validity of a complaint against an action that was taken under a law that no longer exists. However, at the very core of this issue are doctrinal matters that rest upon our interpretation of Scripture and understanding of the covenantal nature of our faith. The record in this case amply demonstrates that such issues were considered by the SPJC, yet these matters are not reflected in its judgment.

While the Appellants in this case focused their complaint primarily within the constitutional provisions of G-6.0106b (now altered in the current Form of Government), both parties reflected extensive investment in deeper doctrinal and scriptural foundations. It is a common assessment in this record as well as within the whole church that controverted doctrine and moral theology are the critical arenas of conflict in the question of ordaining practicing homosexual persons. The SPJC in its ruling ignores these critical dimensions. It is the responsibility of the SPJC in the testing of the Appellants' Complaint against the Presbytery to review not only the validity of the process but also the core substance of the Complaint, i.e., whether the action of the Presbytery was consistent with the range of acceptable doctrinal formulation in the Reformed interpretation of Scripture and Confessions. This the SPJC did not do. A more comprehensive review does not require definitive doctrinal or scriptural judgment on a widely controverted issue in the church today. The review, however, does mean that the SPJC is to provide a judgment on the range of legitimate interpretive options before the church, options that can be validated within the parameters of our theological legacy. For we have a legacy in which we are bold to strive openly for the true teaching of our faith, in which we are confident that, by the rule of the Spirit, we may exhibit to the world the wonders of God's grace and the truth that is before us in the ministry and love of Jesus Christ. In this legacy, judicial review extends not just to procedural matters but also to the very foundations of our faith.

In the absence of this substantial doctrinal judgment, the SPJC decision is flawed. The SPJC decision should be reversed and the matter remanded for this further consideration and judgment regarding attendant doctrinal and scriptural matters in this case.

Dissent of Gregory A. Goodwiller, Margaret MacLeod, Tony Cook and Flor Vélez-Díaz

We respectfully dissent from the majority's conclusion that the elimination of G-6.0106b to the *Book of Order* make this case moot. The result is that Presbytery is free to ordain this candidate, based on the Synod review, without any determination by this Commission that either G-6.0106b or the new language authorizes such an ordination. However, any candidate in similar circumstances that the Presbytery might consider in the future may be subjected to challenge and full judicial process. By this decision the majority is essentially creating a decision-free zone of time in which an ordination can occur without substantive review beyond the Synod level. We believe that a better result is one in which the issues are clearly decided.

In its decision, the SPJC relied heavily on its interpretation of an Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108 adopted by the 218th General Assembly (2008) (the so called "John Knox AI") that is purported to overturn the historic understanding of our polity that those who are ordained to office or ordered ministry in our church must be willing to abide by all constitutional standards.

This understanding has been clearly articulated many times in our denomination's life, and was well stated in the document, *Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government*, presented to the 195th General Assembly (1983) which concludes: "Church officers must conform their actions, though not necessarily their personal beliefs or opinions, to the practice of the church in areas which the church has determined to be necessary or essential" (*Minutes*, UPC, 1983, p. 141ff).

While G-6.0108 of the *Book of Order* (now G-2.0105) clearly establishes the importance of maintaining freedom of conscience (another historic principle of our tradition), it also sets limits on that freedom. Freedom of Conscience for those in ordered ministries (church officers) is to be maintained only "so far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church" (G-6.0108a. now G-2.0105).

The Candidate in question is undeniably unwilling to "conform" his "actions" to a "practice of the church" in an area "which the church has determined to be necessary" (by placing G-6.0106b into the *Book of Order*), which clearly should have led the Commission to sustain Specification of Error #2. We contend that the Presbytery of John Knox has obstructed the constitutional governance of our church by voting to proceed to ordain him despite the Candidate's unwillingness. We further contend that while the John Knox AI does not need to be read as an abrogation of these principles, to the extent that it does so, the John Knox AI is unconstitutional.

We also recognize that since the church has now voted to remove the "fidelity and chastity" language from the former G-6.0106b (now G-2.0104); the circumstances that gave rise to the John Knox AI have changed. We pray that the church will now return to its historic polity and practice with respect to freedom of conscience articulated in the Authoritative Interpretation adopted by the 195th General Assembly (1983) as recommended in *Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government*:

The Historic Principles of Presbyterianism have sought to establish balance between the private judgment of the individual and the freedom of the church to order its affairs. While the majority cannot force its will on an unwilling minority, neither can the minority thwart the intention of the majority on the grounds that the conscience of the minority is violated. Freedom of conscience does not require that the conscientious opinion of every member of the church will prevail. Where there are differences of opinion, our church recognizes that the ways of resolving conflict between the freedom of individual conscience and the requirements of our polity are compromise, acquiescence by one group or another, or withdrawal without causing schism. Therefore freedom of conscience is not abridged by the requirements of our Constitution.

We realize that this process has gone on for many years and been exceedingly costly to all involved. Nevertheless, for the sake of maintaining the peace, unity, and purity of our beloved church, and in ultimate fairness to both the Appellants in this case and the Candidate himself, we would urge him to voluntarily submit to another examination and ordination decision by his presbytery under the new provision (G-2.0104) of our *Book of Order*.

#### Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 220-04, Session of Caledonia Presbyterian Church, Paula Bremer, James Gunn, Alan Crandall, Jerry Indermark, James F. Scaife, Presbytery of Central Florida, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and Presbytery of Stockton Appellant (Complainants), v. Presbytery of John Knox, Appellee (Respondent)*, made and announced at Louisville, KY on August 1, 2011.



Dated this August 1, 2011.

e. Remedial Case 220-05

Steve S. Hwang, Complainant	)	DECISION AND ORDER Remedial Case 220-05
v.	)	
Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Respondent.	)	

Arrival Statement

This is a remedial case of original jurisdiction which is before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) as a result of a Remedial Complaint filed by Complainant Steve S. Hwang (Hwang) against the Respondent Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (Synod). The trial of the case was held at the Fall, 2011 meeting of the GAPJC held in San Diego, California, October 27-31, 2011. Hwang was present and was represented by W. Dan Lee. Synod was represented by Kay Virginia Gustafson and its Committee on Counsel members Leon Fanniel and Paul Kim.

Jurisdictional Statement

In its Preliminary Order dated April 5, 2011, the Executive Committee of the GAPJC found that this Commission has jurisdiction, that Complainant has standing to file the Complaint, that the Complaint was timely filed, and that the Complaint states a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Appearances

The Complainant was represented by W. Daniel Lee. The Respondent was represented by Kay V. Gustafson, Leon Fanniel, and Paul Kim.

Brief History

The case involves actions taken by the Synod at a meeting held on December 18, 2010 (the Meeting). On February 13, 1999, the Synod had appointed an Administrative Commission (SAC) to take jurisdiction over Hanmi Presbytery (Presbytery). The SAC's duties and powers were modified several times over many years, and the SAC was still operating on the date of the meeting. At the meeting, the Synod voted to add to the jurisdiction of the SAC by: (i) adding the responsibilities of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) outlined in G-11.0502 a, b, c, and j of the *Book of Order*<sup>1</sup>, (ii) adding jurisdiction over the administrative commissions previously created by Presbytery, specifically including the Administrative Commission for Torrance First Presbyterian Church (TAC), and (iii) prohibiting the Presbytery and its COM from taking any actions from those designated responsibilities without the prior consent of the SAC.

Prior to the trial, there were three pre-trial conferences held pursuant to D-6.0310. By agreement of the parties and pursuant to a Pre-Trial Order dated August 23, 2011, the issues tried by the GAPJC were limited to:

(i) Whether on December 18, 2010, the Synod committed an irregularity under G-11.0502 when it added to the jurisdiction of the pre-existing Synod Hanmi Presbytery Administrative Commission by giving the Commission full jurisdiction over the responsibilities of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry as outlined in G-11.0502 a, b, c, and j, without giving the Commission complete jurisdiction over the Presbytery itself; and

(ii) Whether on December 18, 2010, the Synod committed an irregularity under G-9.0502 when it gave the pre-existing Synod Hanmi Presbytery Administrative Commission complete jurisdiction over administrative commissions previously constituted by Hanmi Presbytery, including specifically the Administrative Commission for Torrance First Presbyterian Church.

Decision

After two days of trial, this Commission considered the documentary evidence presented to it, evaluated the testimony of the witnesses and carefully deliberated and voted on each alleged irregularity. This Commission finds that neither alleged irregularity is sustained by a preponderance of the evidence.

As to the first alleged irregularity, while it may be questioned whether the Synod wisely allocated G-11.0502 responsibilities between the SAC and the Presbytery, this Commission declines to substitute its judgment for that of the Synod. Under the *Book of Order* as currently interpreted, a synod may appoint an administrative commission with original jurisdiction over some or all of the functions of a presbytery Committee on Ministry (G-9.0503a); it may do so without giving the Commission complete jurisdiction over the Presbytery (G-9.0503a(4)).

In reaching this conclusion, this Commission acknowledges that, in 2003, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation of then G-9.0408 (now G-3.0108b) which listed the assumption of original jurisdiction over a presbytery by a synod as one of the remedies available to the synod if a presbytery within its jurisdiction is not obeying decisions of the General Assembly's Permanent Judicial Commission. While this Commission defers to and does not set aside that authoritative interpretation, it notes that the authority to assume original jurisdiction over a lower governing body is not a specifically delegated authority in the *Book of Order*, except in the case of a presbytery assuming original jurisdiction of a session. This Commission lifts up to the church for its consideration the question of whether the 2003 Authoritative Interpretation adequately embodies the principle of F-3.0209 (formerly G-9.0103) that "the jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries." While the provision of former G-9.0503a(4) (now G-3.0109b(5)) makes it clear that councils may appoint administrative commissions to "inquire into and settle the difficulties" in bodies within their jurisdiction, this Commission suggests that assuming original jurisdiction of a lower body is a matter of such a serious nature that the authority to do so should be explicitly prescribed in the *Book of Order*.

As to the second alleged irregularity, it may be questioned whether the Synod should have included the TAC as one of the administrative commissions over which it was taking jurisdiction, since the record is unclear as to whether the TAC existed on December 18, 2010. However, the Synod's action did not rise to the level of an irregularity since, if the TAC did then exist, the Synod would have had authority to assume jurisdiction over it under G-9.0503 (but see discussion above); if it did not then exist, the assertion of authority would have been of no effect.

At the conclusion of the trial, Complainant submitted a Motion for a Directed Finding regarding the status of the TAC. The Commission finds that such Motion is outside the limits of the Pre-Trial Order entered August 23, 2011, and is therefore ruled out of order.

#### Order

IT IS ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first stated meeting following the date of this Order, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, that the Stated Clerk of the Synod deliver a copy of this Decision and Order to its Administrative Commission having jurisdiction over Hanmi Presbytery, and that an excerpt from the Synod's minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

#### Concurring Opinion

We reluctantly concur with the decision. The parties carefully agreed on the specific issues before this body. As the issues have been narrowly defined, no irregularity occurred. However, this case demonstrates the difficulties that can arise when a synod administrative commission assumes original jurisdiction over a troubled presbytery.

Original jurisdiction is an inadequate and confusing response to the problems posed by a troubled presbytery, particularly where, as here, the presbytery membership is of a discrete ethnic, cultural and linguistic minority. A fundamental principle of the Presbyterian Church is that "[t]he government of this church is representative, and the right of God's people to elect their officers is inalienable" (G-6.0107). The right to self-government of the members and congregations of the Hanmi Presbytery has been restricted for a dozen years. While the Synod has diligently tried to respect the cultural differences between itself and the Presbytery, the lack of self-government over such an extended time has created distrust and misunderstanding.

If a presbytery is so fragile or so conflicted that it cannot govern itself then it should be asked if the presbytery is viable. If not, the presbytery should be dissolved and its congregations transferred to other presbyteries. However, a presbytery, having been established, should first be given a fair opportunity to succeed or fail by its own efforts. The current situation, where a presbytery is deemed viable but denied self-government, is unworkable. The congregations and ministers of Hanmi Presbytery deserve better.

Barbara A. Bundick  
A Bates Butler III

#### Opinion Concurring in Part and Dissenting in Part

We are dissenting from the Decision of the Commission as it pertains to Issue #1. We are in agreement with Commissioner Lukens' rationale and have signed his dissenting opinion.

We concur with the legal conclusion of the Commission regarding the SAC's assumption of jurisdiction over all existing ACs in Hanmi Presbytery. We are troubled, however, by some of the testimony heard at trial.

We heard testimony that the report of the Hanmi Administrative Commission was not distributed to commissioners prior to the October 2010 meeting of the Synod Assembly. We heard that no consultation took place between the Hanmi AC and representatives of Hanmi Presbytery. Indeed, we heard that the SAC's report and recommendations were intentionally kept confidential prior to the meeting of the Assembly.

We also heard at trial energetic efforts by the Synod to suppress information about the Synod PJC Decision in Case Number: R-2010-03 (Sohn v. Hanmi Presbytery consolidated with Case No. R-2010-04, Chon and Kang v. Hanmi Presbytery). This Decision post-dated the events considered in this proceeding. However, the underlying complaint was filed at the time of the Stated Synod Assembly meeting of October 2010; was certainly in process before the December 18, 2010 vote; and dealt with Hanmi Presbytery's action of September 30, 2010 which dissolved the AC in place at the Torrance Presbyterian Church, an AC which had been appointed by Hanmi Presbytery on March 24, 2005.

In other words, the status of the Torrance AC was the subject of judicial process at the time of the Hanmi AC's report and its subsequent adoption by the Synod. It seems, therefore, rather disingenuous for the report to have included the words, "including specifically the Administrative Commission for [Torrance] First Presbyterian Church." This does not seem to be a transparent representation of the status of the Torrance AC which, as the Decision in this case states, was at best "unclear."

While we concur with the legal reasons for denying the Complainant's Motion for a Directed Finding, we believe that the facts, including the decision of the SPJC, support the conclusion that "the Torrance AC did not exist on December 18, 2010." Therefore, it was inappropriate and even misleading for the SAC's recommendation to have given specific emphasis to the Torrance AC. That portion of the Synod's action should be considered null and void. Neither a declaration by the Synod nor a Decision of this Commission can call back into existence an AC which no longer exists.

Meta Shoup Cramer  
Michael B. Lukens

I concur with all but the first two paragraphs of this document.

Flor Velez-Diaz

#### Dissenting Opinion

We undersigned respectfully dissent from the majority's decision.

It is the constitutional mandate that all governing bodies of the church share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers. And also, "with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries" (G-9.0103, now F-3.0208-.0209).

Since, the jurisdiction of each governing body is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, even though it is possible that a higher governing body exercise its right of review and control over a lower one (G-9.0407-.0408), In *Johnston, et al. v. Heartland Presbytery*, this Commission ruled that "it must not be understood in hierarchical terms, but in light of the shared responsibility and power at the heart of Presbyterian order" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 462), and such a reviewing authority does not provide authority for a pro-active taking over of the jurisdiction of a lower governing body. It is not the Presbyterian way that "one governing body interferes with the constitutional mandate of another governing body" (*Williamson vs. Presbytery of Western North Carolina, Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 475).

The Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) and Administrative Commission (AC) are the core entities of the Presbytery to carry out its mission in its boundary and govern the local churches effectively (G-11.0103s, G-11.0501a). Granting a Synod Administrative Commission (SAC) jurisdiction over the Presbytery's COM jurisdiction and over Administrative Commissions appointed by the Presbytery will paralyze the role and function of the Presbytery. Furthermore, since the SAC does not have complete jurisdiction over the Presbytery, it will bring unnecessary conflict of accountabilities and confusion between two governing bodies. During the course of the trial, the witnesses of both sides demonstrated their misunderstanding and confusion regarding the governing bodies' structures and accountabilities resulting from this Synod decision.

Our constitution has no explicit provision whether a synod can appoint an Administrative Commission to assume the original jurisdiction over a Presbytery. Applying a provision for Presbytery to Synod is over-reaching interpretation of the Constitution and may not be well reflected the principle of Presbyterian governing (F-3.0208, F-3.0209). We believe the empowering of the SAC by the Synod to intervene in the existing Presbytery's power to govern its congregations through its committee on ministry and administrative commissions is un-Presbyterian and an erroneous decision and, therefore, the complaints must be sustained.

Yun Jin Kim  
Flor N. Velez-Diaz

I concur with all but the last paragraph of this dissent.

Tony M. Cook  
Barbara Bundick  
A. Bates Butler III

Opinion Concurring in Part and Dissenting in Part

In the first stipulated issue in this case, Synod granted to the Synod Administration Commission additional authority in partial jurisdiction over the Committee of Ministry of Hanmi Presbytery. This additional authority pertained to G-11.0502, a., b, c, and j, while the other functions in G-11.0502 remained with the Hanmi Presbytery Committee.

The functions of a Committee on Ministry as outlined in G-11.0502, a-j, are not to be pastorally or operationally fragmented because its processes and procedures are holistic by nature. The segregation of selected functions or divided authorization between a committee and a commission is unwieldy and unnecessary. It fractures the operations of work that is often pastorally delicate and operationally intricate.

This action presents the possibility of a highly disruptive situation in the life of the Presbytery. Action that offers the possibility of substantial confusion and chaotic operation may be legal but in its threat of disorder it rises to the level of irregularity.

The substantial likelihood, if not inevitability, of disorder and disruption supports a decision to sustain the Complaint that this action is irregular. If the Synod’s intention was alleviating problems within the Hanmi Presbytery Committee on Ministry, the better option for preserving the unity and integrity of the functions in G-11.0502 would be to grant complete jurisdiction to the Synod Administrative Commission.

While I concur with the decision of the Commission regarding the second issue in the Complaint, I respectfully dissent from the majority view of this Commission on the first issue and would sustain the Complaint that this action is irregular.

Michael B. Lukens  
Meta Cramer  
Tony M. Cook  
Susan J. Cornman  
A. Bates Butler III

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 220-05, Steve S. Hwang, Complainant v. Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Respondent*, made and announced at San Diego, CA. this 30th day of October, 2011.

Endnote for *Remedial Case 220-05*

- 1. This case was tried under the *Book of Order* in effect at the time of the alleged irregularities.

Dated this October 30, 2011.

f. *Remedial Case 220-06*

Bruce F. Haapalainen, Complainant,	)	
v.	)	DECISION AND ORDER
Synod of Lincoln Trails, Respondent.	)	Remedial Case 220-06

Arrival Statement

This matter now before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is the Challenge of a May 6, 2011, Preliminary Order of the Executive Committee (EC) of the GAPJC to Dismiss the Complaint. In its D-6.0305 Examination of Papers, the EC found that Bruce E. Haapalainen lacked standing to file the case and that the Complaint was not timely filed. The Notice of Challenge under D-6.0306 was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on May 25, 2011.

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### Parties

The Complainant is Bruce E. Haapalainen (Complainant). The Respondent is the Synod of Lincoln Trails (Synod).

### Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that the Challenge was properly filed by Complainant within thirty days after receipt of the EC's Preliminary Order of Dismissal.

### Appearances

Complainant was represented by W. Dan Lee. Respondent was represented by Judy L. Woods and Linda Long.

### History

This remedial case concerns allegations of irregularities arising from the action of a Synod Administrative Commission for the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi (AC) in causing the removal of Yong Sam Rhee from the jurisdiction of the church. On November 7, 2010, acting under G-6.0702, the AC caused the removal of Yong Sam Rhee from membership and ordained office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Synod next met on January 28, 2011. According to the Complaint, the AC did not report its November 7, 2010, action at that time. It is undisputed that the Complainant was not present at the January 28, 2011, Synod meeting. The Complaint was filed on March 7, 2011.

Upon its examination of papers under D-6.0305, the EC found that this Commission had jurisdiction over the matter under D-6.0202. However, the EC also found that Complainant did not have standing to file the case under D-6.0202a(2) because he was not an enrolled commissioner of the Synod at the meeting of January 28, 2011. The EC further determined that the Complaint was not timely filed because the action complained against, the declaration of renunciation, was effective on November 7, 2010, and the Complaint was not filed within 90 days after that action.

### Decision and Order

This Commission affirms the decision of the EC that Complainant does not have standing because he was not an "enrolled" commissioner to the Synod's January 28, 2011, meeting.

The case of *Fair-Booth v. National Capital Presbytery* (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 300), establishes that a ruling elder elected to serve as a commissioner to a presbytery meeting must be present and enrolled in order to file a remedial complaint alleging that an irregularity or delinquency occurred at that meeting. The considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a synod meeting are indistinguishable from those considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a presbytery meeting. Like ruling elder commissioners to a presbytery meeting, commissioners to a synod are elected by a lower governing body, the presbytery. According to *Fair-Booth*, "the requirement for enrollment, as separate from election ... is consistent with the principle that lower governing bodies do not determine the membership of higher governing bodies." Moreover, as in *Fair-Booth*, the requirement of attendance "is not a mere technicality....Presbyterians come together in governing bodies to deliberate and decide matters as a community of faith, open to the work of the Spirit among them."

If any one of the four jurisdictional grounds of D-6.0305 is lacking, the complaint fails. Since this Commission found that the Complainant lacked standing, there is no need to address the EC's finding that the Complaint was not timely filed.

The Executive Committee's dismissal of the Complaint is hereby affirmed.

### ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Dismissal of the Complaint is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

### Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 220-06, Bruce E. Haapalainen, Complainant, v. the Synod of Lincoln Trails, Respondent*, made and announced at San Diego, California, on October 30, 2011.

Dated this 30th day of October, 2011.

g. Remedial Case 220-07

Bruce F. Haapalainen,  
Complainant,

v.

Synod of Lincoln Trails,  
Respondent.

)  
)  
)  
)  
)

DECISION AND ORDER  
Remedial Case 220-07

Arrival Statement

This matter now before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (this Commission) is the Challenge of a Preliminary Order of the Executive Committee (EC) of this Commission dated May 6, 2011. In its D-6.0305 Examination of Papers, the EC found that the Complainant lacked standing to file the case and that the Complaint failed to state a claim for which relief could be granted. The Notice of Challenge under D-6.0306 was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on May 25, 2011.

Parties

The Complainant in the case is Bruce E. Haapalainen (Complainant). The Respondent is the Synod of Lincoln Trails (Synod).

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that the Challenge was properly filed by Complainant within thirty days after receipt of the EC's Preliminary Order of Dismissal.

Appearances

Complainant was represented by W. Dan Lee. Respondent was represented by Judy L. Woods and Linda Long.

History

In 2008, Synod appointed an Administrative Commission (AC) that later assumed original jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi (Presbytery).

Complainant alleges that at its meeting on January 28, 2011, the Synod committed an irregularity when it adopted the minutes of the previous Synod meeting of October 29, 2010, without modification or revision of the report of the AC. At the October meeting, the Synod had received a report that on September 8, 2010, the AC declared that the Canaan Presbyterian Church, part of Presbytery, was in schism. The AC report was reflected in the minutes of the October 29, 2010 meeting. Complainant does not allege any factual inaccuracy in those minutes.

It is undisputed that the Complainant was not present at the January 28, 2011 Synod meeting where the October 29, 2010 minutes were approved. The Complaint was filed on March 7, 2011.

Decision and Order

This Commission affirms the decision of the EC that Complainant does not have standing to file the Complaint because he was not present at the Synod meeting of January 28, 2011, and consequently was not an "enrolled" commissioner to the Synod.

The case of *Fair-Booth v. National Capital Presbytery* (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 300), establishes that a ruling elder elected to serve as a commissioner to a presbytery meeting must be present in order to bring a remedial complaint against an action taken at that meeting. The considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a synod meeting are indistinguishable from those considerations governing enrollment of an elected commissioner at a presbytery meeting. Like ruling elder commissioners to a presbytery meeting, all commissioners to a synod are elected by a lower governing body. According to *Fair-Booth*, "the requirement for enrollment, as separate from election ... is consistent with the principle that lower governing bodies do not determine the membership of higher governing bodies." Moreover, as in *Fair-Booth*, the requirement of attendance "is not a mere technicality.... Presbyterians come together in governing bodies to deliberate and decide matters as a community of faith, open to the work of the Spirit among them."

If any one of the four jurisdictional grounds of D-6.0305 is lacking, a complaint fails. Since this Commission has found that Complainant lacks standing, there is no need to address the EC's finding that the Complaint failed to state a claim for which relief can be granted or the Respondent's contention that the Complaint was not timely filed.

## ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Dismissal of the Complaint is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

## Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 2011-07, Bruce E. Haapalainen, Complainant, v. the Synod of Lincoln Trails, Respondent*, made and announced at San Diego, California, on October 30, 2011.

Dated this 30th day of October, 2011.

h. *Disciplinary Case 220-08*

Jane Adams Spahr,	)	
Appellant (Accused),	)	
	)	DECISION AND ORDER
v.	)	Disciplinary Case 220-08
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of the	)	
Redwoods,	)	
Appellee (Complainant).	)	

## Arrival Statement

This case before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an Appeal from the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC) dated March 25, 2011, affirming the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of the Redwoods (PPJC) dated August 27, 2010.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that the Appellant, Jane Adams Spahr (Spahr), has standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal required under D-13.0106.

## Appearances

Spahr appeared in person and was represented by Sara Taylor, Scott Clark, and Beverly Brewster. The Appellee, Presbytery of the Redwoods (Presbytery), was represented by JoAn Blackstone.

## History

On April 28, 2008, this Commission issued its Decision and Order in the case of *Jane Adams Spahr v. Presbytery of the Redwoods (Spahr 2008)* (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 314). That decision stated that a same-sex ceremony is not a marriage and that officers of the PC(USA) shall not state, imply, or represent that a same-sex ceremony is a marriage. On May 17, 2008, the Supreme Court of California ruled that same-sex marriages were legal under California law. Later that month, Spahr sent a request seeking a modification or clarification of *Spahr 2008* due to the change in California law. The GAPJC denied the request, stating that “the *Book of Order* provides no standing for any party to request a reconsideration of a final decision of this Commission.”

Same-sex marriages were sanctioned by the State of California from June 20, 2008, through November 4, 2008. During that time period Spahr performed wedding ceremonies for approximately sixteen same-sex couples.

In 2010, a prosecuting committee of the Presbytery brought charges against Spahr for officiating at these ceremonies and a three day trial was held before the PPJC in August of 2010. At the conclusion of the trial the PPJC found her guilty of three of the four charges, issued a Rebuke, and enjoined her “to avoid such offenses in the future.” The three charges read in salient part as follows:

1. Committing the offense of representing that a same-sex ceremony was a marriage by performing a ceremony in which two women were married under the laws of the State of California and thereafter signing their Certificate of Marriage as the person solemnizing the marriage;

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2. Persisting in a pattern or practice of disobedience concerning an authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order*, in that under the laws of the State of California, she represented that no fewer than fifteen such additional ceremonies she performed were marriages of persons of the same sex;

3. Acting in violation of the authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order* by failing to be governed by the polity of the PC(USA) in violation of her ordination vows.

A fourth charge of intentionally and repeatedly acting in violation of the *Book of Order*, and therefore failing to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church, was not sustained, and that finding was not challenged. The PPJC also declared that the “rebuke and injunction shall not be imposed” until any appeals were complete. Spahr appealed to the SPJC.

On March 25, 2011, after a hearing, the SPJC affirmed the decision of the PPJC. Spahr filed this Appeal to the GAPJC on May 4, 2011.

### Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1: The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by:*

a. *Affirming that Spahr committed the “offense of representing that a same sex ceremony was a marriage” (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 1) and stating, implying, or representing that these “ceremonies were ecclesiastical marriages” in violation of W-4.9001 as interpreted in Spahr 2008 and Southard 2011 (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 3).*

b. *Determining that an authoritative interpretation can serve as a basis for an offense against the Constitution of the PC(USA) (First Part of Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 2).*

c. *Determining that Spahr violated her ordination vow in W-4.4003e and acted in violation of Spahr 2008 (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 5).*

d. *Affirming the PPJC’s guilty verdict that was contradicted by the PPJC’s own findings that Spahr was faithful to Scripture and the Book of Order in celebrating marriages of same-sex couples and does not meet burden of proof requirements under D-11.0403a (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 6).*

e. *Requiring ministers to discriminate against lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgendered persons, contrary to constitutional requirements of pastoral care under G-6.0202(b), G-6.0203, W-6.3002, W-6.3010, W-6.4000, W-7.3000, and W-7.4000; Spahr 2008; as well as being contrary to Scripture and G-3.0401, G-4.0403, and G-5.0103 (Appellant’s Specifications of Error No. 7 and 8).*

f. *Failing to determine whether Spahr’s ministry with same-sex couples and families was faithful to Scripture and essentials of reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 9).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 2: The PPJC, SPJC, and GAPJC (in the Spahr 2008 and Southard cases) have erred by usurping the legislative power of the General Assembly (Second Part of Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 2).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 3: The SPJC erred in rephrasing the charges to determine that Spahr was guilty (Appellant’s Specification of Error No. 4).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

### Decision

In *Spahr 2008*, Spahr was directed to refrain from implying, stating, or representing that a same-sex ceremony is a marriage. Within months of that order, Spahr performed marriage ceremonies for approximately sixteen same-sex couples. Although counsel for both parties confirmed that state law recognizes the legality of these marriages, the change in state law did not and could not change what is permissible for marriages to be authorized by the PC(USA).

The *Book of Order* states that its provisions may be authoritatively interpreted by the General Assembly or by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. No distinction is made between these forms of interpretation in authority or application, and the most recent interpretation is binding (G-13.0103r, now G-3.0501c and G-6.02). Since *Spahr 2008* was decided, there have been attempts at the General Assembly level to expand the language in W-4.9000. Such attempts have failed.



*Spahr 2008* did not arise in a vacuum. In 1991, the General Assembly issued an authoritative interpretation (1991 AI) clarifying the denomination's stance on same-sex union ceremonies. The 1991 AI stated:

If a same sex ceremony were considered to be the equivalent of a marriage ceremony between two persons of the same sex, it would not be sanctioned under the *Book of Order*.

The 1991 AI further stated that a session "should not allow the use of the church facilities for a same sex union ceremony that the session determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony," and that:

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 395, 21.124, Req. 91-23).

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do.

This Commission agrees with the SPJC regarding Specification of Error No. 1 d and e (Appellant's Specifications of Error Nos. 6, 7, and 8). The SPJC correctly found that "being faithful to Scripture and the Constitution on other matters does not provide a defense for the actions charged in this case," and "the constitutional interpretations of *Spahr (2008)* and *Southard* by the PPJC are not inconsistent with the *Book of Order* when read as a whole." Both the PPJC and SPJC found that Spahr's conduct violated the Constitution.

As to Specification of Error No. 3 (Appellant's Specification of Error No. 4), the SPJC did not rephrase the charges, contrary to Spahr's argument. The SPJC included descriptive language regarding the Southard decision but that did not amount to a modification of the charge. The SPJC upheld the PPJC on the specific charges before it. The SPJC discussed the Southard decision as a statement that *Spahr 2008* continues to apply in a state which authorizes same-sex marriage by civil law. The SPJC correctly stated that the term "marriage" in the charge relates to "Christian marriage" (or "ecclesiastical marriage" as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this decision to the Synod of the Pacific at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Pacific enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the Redwoods report this decision to the Presbytery of the Redwoods at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of the Redwoods enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Margaret MacLeod was absent and did not take any part in the deliberations or decision.

#### Concurring Opinion

I concur with the majority that Spahr's action in conducting these ceremonies as marriages was not authorized.

According to the 1991 AI, Presbyterian teaching elders do not have authority to perform same-gender marriages. Thus, when a teaching elder performs a same-gender ceremony as a marriage, he or she is misrepresenting the authority granted by Presbyterian polity.

The issue of authority is not exclusively ecclesiastical. With marriage, church law and secular law intersect. All United States jurisdictions grant clergy the authority to act as agents of the secular government in conducting civil marriages. The basis for granting that authority varies from one jurisdiction to another. In some jurisdictions, clergy can only perform those marriages that are authorized by their denominations. Other jurisdictions are more generous in the grant of authority. Some jurisdictions will validate a marriage even if the pastor erred. Other jurisdictions will not. According to the counsel for both Spahr and the Presbytery, the marriages Spahr conducted in 2008 will remain valid marriages under California law even if this Commission holds that her actions exceeded the authorization granted by the PCUSA. The result could have been different had Spahr performed the same acts in a different jurisdiction. Overstepping one's authority thus risks putting a trusting couple in the position of discovering that the civil law does not recognize their marriage.

While I affirm the majority opinion, I have serious concerns that the majority, in affirming the SPJC's decision, is also affirming the SPJC's criticism of the content of the ceremonies and the counseling Spahr conducted. In drawing a distinction between same-sex blessings, which are permissible, and same-sex marriages, which are not, the authoritative interpretations have gone beyond the definition of marriage to dictate the nature of the liturgy that can be used in same-sex blessings. As was stated in *Benton* (cite), "Ministers should not appropriate specific liturgical forms from services of Christian marriage or services recognizing civil marriage in the conduct of such ceremonies." In *Spahr 2008*, this Commission stated "the liturgy should be kept distinct for the two types of services." This aspect of the precedent has created a difficult situation for those who minister to the GLBT community.

There is an inevitable and legitimate overlap between a same-sex blessing ceremony and a mixed-sex marriage ceremony. Both ceremonies involve a couple making promises to each other in the presence of God, their families and their community. As oft noted, "Form follows function." Moreover, many, if not most of the trappings surrounding such ceremonies reflect popular culture rather than Biblical command. Given the overlap and the input from popular culture, how the two liturgies can be "kept distinct" is a mystery.

Requiring different liturgies has led to judicial micromanagement of the liturgy. In this case, the SPJC ruled:

The cumulative effect of signing the marriage license as a Presbyterian minister, conducting ceremonies on church property, using the same pre-marital counseling, and using the same liturgy for services further supports the implication that these were ecclesiastical marriages.

Conducting same-sex ceremonies on church property has always been appropriate, providing one is clear about the nature of the ceremony. Requiring that relationship counseling offered to same-sex couples somehow differ in kind from that offered to mixed-sex couples ignores the nature and purpose of counseling. In a world where neutral relationship counseling becomes grounds for censure, teaching elders who conduct same-sex blessings cannot realistically determine what they can appropriately do, even when they are clear that the blessing is not a marriage ceremony.

The best solution is for the General Assembly to amend the definition of marriage to authorize teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to preside at the marriages of same-sex couples in civil jurisdictions that recognize such marriages as legal. The definition now found in W-4.9001 was never designed for these circumstances. It was adopted in a world where same-sex marriages were inconceivable. By retaining that definition despite the increasing number of jurisdictions recognizing same-sex marriage, the church creates a form of second class citizenship for faithful Christians despite all the other places in the *Book of Order* where the full equality of persons regardless of sexual orientation is affirmed. I encourage the General Assembly to so act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara A. Bundick

#### Concurring Opinion

The Appellant argues that W-6.3002, W-6.3010, W-6.4000; W-7.3000 and W-7.4000 support a teaching elder's ability to officiate at same-sex marriage ceremonies as a form of pastoral care. This argument is an interpretation of these provisions. At the same time, the Appellant argues that the Authoritative Interpretation made by this Commission in *Spahr 2008* is not sufficient grounds for considering this action an offense. The Appellant asks this Commission to substitute her own interpretation for that made by this Commission in *Spahr 2008*.

W-6.3010 states that pastoral care includes the recognition of "transitions which bring joy and sorrow in human life" and specifically mentions the establishment of households and the making of new commitments. This portion of the constitution would appear to provide ample support for the celebration of relationships, including the commitment of same-sex couples to one another.

Marriage, however, is discussed in W-4.9000 and is described as a "civil contract," a "covenant," and a "lifelong commitment" between a woman and a man. W-4.9004, concerning the "Form and Order of Service," also refers to declarations of intention and marriage vows spoken by a man and a woman and the declaration by the teaching elder that the "woman and the man are now joined in marriage."

There is clearly disagreement with the definition and description of marriage provided in W-4.9004. However, this Commission has authoritatively interpreted this portion of the Constitution in *Spahr 2008*. Descriptions of pastoral care found in the Directory of Worship do not reach to the question of marriage.

The appropriate way to redefine marriage and permissible practice within the PC(USA) is not through individual reinterpretation of the advice of the larger church, but by means of an amendment to the Constitution approved by the General Assembly and ratified by the presbyteries of the church.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meta Shoup Cramer  
Yun Jin Kim  
Tony Cook

#### Dissenting Opinion

*Book of Order* W-4.9001 has been interpreted to deny homosexuals their rights as full members of the PCUSA, despite the overwhelming language in our Constitution recognizing the equality and rights of all people. See F-1.0403, F-1.0404, G-1.0302. The majority's application of the *Book of Order* provision provided by the *Spahr 2008* and *Southard* cases injures where it should not, and its presence interferes with our process of being in conversation about how celebrations of the joining of lives are to be conducted.

Both parties agree that before the *Spahr 2008* decision there was no limitation on the conduct of teaching elders (clergy) regarding how they approached the matter of gay marriage, although most of the denomination hesitated to perform same gender marriages. The dissent in the first *Spahr 2008* decision questioned the appropriateness of the interpretation of the majority. In that case five commissioners stated in part:

Neither the 1991 AI, nor this Commission's decision in *Benton*, prohibited ministers from performing ceremonies intended to bless or recognize the union between two men or two women. Because a same sex ceremony cannot be a "marriage" as marriage is defined by W-4.9001, it should not be necessary to say more. It is not the place of this Commission to go any farther and step into the legislative realm. The larger church has declined at least four times to amend W-4.9001 with regard to same sex ceremonies. The majority now takes this step to amend the definition to include prohibitions. See the Annotations to W-4.9001 describing repeated unsuccessful attempts to change W-4.9001. Any steps to define or distinguish same sex ceremonies or the nomenclature applied to them is best left to the General Assembly, not this Commission.

*Benton* attempts to draw a line between a marriage and a same sex ceremony based on the conclusion that a marriage confers a new status on the couple, while a same sex union blesses an existing relationship. The new status on which *Benton* differentiates marriages from same sex ceremonies is not defined. Then in circular fashion, *Benton* concludes the status results from the pronouncement of "marriage" which is a priori defined by W-4.9001 as a status only available to a man and a woman. *Benton* and the 1991 AI "admonished" ministers and sessions to take special care to avoid confusing same sex ceremonies with marriages. This advice is consistent with the current state of our Constitutional language, which makes it clear that there is no such thing as "marriage" between same sex couples. W-4.9001. The majority purports that *Benton* (on which the SPJC relied heavily for its decision to censure Spahr) is not applicable. However, the holding in this case extends the holding in *Benton*. The majority refused to address *Benton* squarely or acknowledge that *Benton* is built on a foundation of sand. We dissent because the majority fails to point out the fallacies of *Benton*, and then converts admonitions in *Benton* into prohibitions. We disagree with that portion of the majority decision and do not join in it.

We agree with the dissent in *Spahr 2008*. The larger church has repeatedly declined to amend W-4.9001 with regard to same-sex ceremonies. The church needs a sharper degree of clarification and guidance that precisely defines how it understands marriage, especially in light of the high financial and personal burden involved. Given the contention regarding the nature and practice of Christian marriage in our time, it would be important and valuable for the Church, through its General Assembly, to state its definition in clearer and more precise legislation.

Spahr was specifically called to a validated ministry by the Presbytery to provide pastoral care to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) community. It is ironic that the majority has now found her in violation of the Constitution by pursuing a natural consequence of such ministry.

We cannot perpetuate the idea that LGBT couples are children of a lesser God. They are ethically and spiritually the equals of heterosexual couples in the eyes of our Lord. None of us can honestly declare to a committed couple that somehow heterosexuals reflect a more perfect image of the God we worship than they who view their gender differently. Our denomination has failed to do justice to the LGBT community while emphasizing the traditions of heterosexual marriage which are embodied in W-4.9001.

As Christians we claim the high goal of loving and including all, then seek to exclude the LGBT community. This second class (or worse) treatment proclaims the hypocrisy of our present interpretations. Since the Directory for Worship is part of our constitution and the majority has found that it may give rise to disciplinary cases, then it should be immediately amended to clearly state that we fully welcome the LGBT community into their rightful place in our church, including allowing them to marry. For the reasons explained above we must respectfully dissent from the majority opinion which perpetuates our reliance upon an incorrect construction of W- 4.9001 and continues the discrimination against our LGBT brothers and sisters.

Respectfully Submitted

Clifford Looney  
A. Bates Butler III  
Susan J. Cornman

Jeana Lungwitz  
 Michael Lukens  
 Rebecca New

### Dissenting Opinion

We respectfully dissent from this Decision.

The majority judges this case primarily in relation to the decisions in *Spahr 2008* and *Southard (2011)* in a conviction that, behind its judicial interpretation, there is in the Constitution an explicit basis against officiating in a same-sex marriage. In fact, this conviction rests upon an assumption rather than explicit constitutional rule. It is grounded principally upon one section, even one sentence, in the Directory of Worship, that is claimed to have clear and obvious legal status. The Commission assumes here and in earlier cases that W-4.9001 presents a legal basis for denying the permissibility and validity of same-sex marriage because it presents a “definition” of marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. This assumption is flawed. This provision in the Directory of Worship cannot serve effectively as a judicial criterion.

There are several reasons why W-4.9001 is incapable of bearing the legal significance and weight that the Commission has placed upon it. First, this paragraph emerged decades ago, in a very different time and context. In its language and descriptions, it reflects conventions of a time when same-sex unions presented little, if any, cultural concern or attention. The exclusive conventional norm was heterosexual marriage, when same-sex marriage, either civil or ecclesiastical, was unimaginable.

Secondly, W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for a distinctive, introductory section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture. Its content serves to establish a progression of four theological claims (gift, civil contract, covenant, commitment) as a foundation for the church’s general understanding of marriage. In W-4.9001, there is an overarching, schematic narrative that develops a biblical and theological progression. These elements are explicated as four simple but profound claims, each of which has theological bearing. Marriage is viewed within a progression of God’s gift (general revelation in the created natural order), as an element of civil order (part of universal civil order), rooted in our covenant (a distinctive mark of biblical people), and with the characteristics of such covenant (promise, trust, and faithful commitment). To claim that this paragraph is primarily and intentionally legal in nature forces an artificial warp upon its evident narrative purpose. As a fourfold theological outline of Christian marriage in narrative form, in no way is it clear or obvious that it proposes regulatory imperative or legal intention. Certainly, it does not have the kind of language or format that the church has come to expect in definitive juridical statements, the kind of “shall” language that is common to our order in providing regulatory lines for boundaries of action or proscribed behavior.

Further, recent definitional arguments have devolved from ancillary elements in the text that seem to take priority over the primary focus of its sentences. The key sentence from W-4.9001: “For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” has been treated as a consummate definition and legal regulation, based on one element in its secondary clause. For many, the secondary gendered example has become more central than the primary definitional clause that denotes the covenantal nature of marriage. This displaced emphasis the common role of such secondary material as descriptive and illustrative. The question may be raised whether a portion of a secondary clause, one part in a set that elaborates upon and describes the character of a covenantal relation, constitutes an absolute and exclusionary prescription. In fact, it can be argued that it is not immediately clear or textually obvious that any of the ancillary clauses in these four provisions rises to the level of legal intention or definitional weight.

Thus, W-4.9001 cannot bear the interpretive weight that judicial process and decision has put upon it. Referring to W-4.9001, the majority in this Decision claims: “...the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct...”—and in that approach precisely avoids the truly foundational issues in this and all recent related cases. The church has long held a biblically-based, covenantal theology of marriage, as outlined above, well beyond views bound within natural theology or gendered orders of creation. So-called definitional descriptions do not suffice because they lack depth and weight, because definition is neither directive nor legislative.

This is all to say that, in cases such as this one, a determination of offense requires clear demonstration of a violation against Scripture or the Constitution, in which the terms of a mandate are unambiguous and expressly stated. In this case and in the other recent cases, it is strikingly significant to note the absence of arguments upon perceived biblical warrants or directly applicable mandates in our Constitution and the presence of mere definitional bases.

In this case and the other recent decisions, my principal concern is that this Commission has forged a standard upon an extremely fragile provision, employing a strained interpretation that does not provide the necessary legal foundation for resolution of our dilemma or foster pastoral guidance in the life of the church. By relying so heavily on W-4.9001, the Commission has ruled upon convention rather than law. The definitive clarity that the church deserves and expects in this continuing and vexatious dispute awaits deeper foundational judgment as well as more precise legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Lukens  
A Bates Butler III  
Susan J. Cornman  
Jeana Lungwitz  
Rebecca New

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Disciplinary Case 220-08, Jane Adams Spahr Appellant (Accused), v. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Redwoods, Appellee* (Complainant) made and announced at San Antonio, TX, this 20th day of February, 2012.

Dated this 20th day of February, 2012.

i. Remedial Case 220-09

Presbytery of New York City,  
Appellant/Counter-Appellee,

v.

Cornell A. Edmonds,  
Appellee/Counter-Appellant.

DECISION AND ORDER  
Remedial Case 220-09

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by the Appellant, Presbytery of New York City (Presbytery), from a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast (SPJC) on April 1, 2011. A Counter-Appeal was subsequently filed by Counter-Appellant, Cornell A. Edmonds (Edmonds).

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that both the Appellant and Counter-Appellant have standing to file the appeals, that the appeals were properly and timely filed, and that both the Appeal and Counter-Appeal state one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-8.0105.

Appearances

At the request of the Appellant/Counter-Appellee with the concurrence of the Appellee/Counter-Appellant and this Commission, oral argument was waived and neither party appeared in person before the GAPJC.

Structure of this Decision

This Decision is structured so as to consider the specifications of error in the Appeal, first, and then the Counter-Appeal, with the overall Decision being applicable to and inclusive of both.

History

Edmonds, then a Ruling Elder, was elected to the office of Stated Clerk of the Presbytery for a four-year term that began on March 1, 2004. In September 2006, Edmonds was then ordained as a Teaching Elder to the validated ministry position of Stated Clerk. He was elected to a second four-year term as Stated Clerk in September 2008.

On June 30, 2010, the Presbytery adopted recommendations from its Personnel Committee which were developed in response to a substantial financial crisis of the Presbytery. Those recommendations included the declaration that all staff positions would be considered vacant as of July 31, 2010, and that the position of the Stated Clerk would be reduced to 60% of a full-time call, with a commensurate reduction in compensation. Edmonds filed a remedial complaint concerning this action with the Synod of the Northeast on September 28, 2010. The SPJC conducted a trial on March 31 and April 1, 2011.

In a Decision and Order dated April 1, 2011, the SPJC found in Edmonds' favor, ordering that he receive full-time compensation at the terms he had received prior to the Presbytery's action from the date of that action (June 30, 2010) through the conclusion of the term to which he had been elected in 2008 (December 27, 2012). In reaching that decision,

however, the SPJC did not sustain Edmonds' claim that the reduction in his terms of call constituted a "constructive discharge." Rather, the SPJC found the Presbytery's action was "irregular." The SPJC subsequently deemed it unnecessary to answer counts Two, Three, and Four of the Complaint. Those counts alleged failure to provide Edmonds with "fundamental fairness" in the process that led to reduced terms of call and failure to abide by the two constitutional questions asked of the calling body during a service of installation (W-4.4006b).

The Presbytery filed a Notice of Appeal from the Decision and Order of the SPJC on May 5, 2011, objecting not only to the SPJC's Decision and Order regarding Edmonds' reduction in employment and compensation, but to the SPJC's failure to rule on the other allegations in Edmonds' Complaint. The Presbytery also requested a Stay of Enforcement which was granted on May 10, 2011, three members of the GAPJC certifying that in their judgment probable grounds existed for finding the decision erroneous and that harm would occur if the decision were not stayed.

On May 12, 2011, Edmonds filed a Counter-Appeal asking that, should this Commission find for the Presbytery in its appeal of the Decision and Order of the SPJC, three procedural decisions of the SPJC and three alleged irregularities in the SPJC's own proceedings should then be addressed by this Commission, or alternatively that a new trial should be ordered on the claims that were not addressed by the SPJC Decision.

An Objection to the Stay of Enforcement was received on June 3, 2011. On August 17, 2011, the Executive Committee of the GAPJC conducted a hearing which resulted in a continuation of the Stay.

On December 21, 2011, this Commission granted the request of the Presbytery, with the concurrence of Edmonds, that the case be decided on the record and briefs submitted to it without oral argument by the parties.

#### Specifications of Error of Appellant Presbytery

*Specification of Error No. 1: That there was injustice in the process or decision, specifically that the SPJC sustained the alleged irregularity of Count One for a reason not alleged in Count One of the Complaint, while at the same time finding that Presbytery's actions did not constitute a "constructive discharge."*

This specification of error is sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 2: That there was an error in constitutional interpretation, specifically that the SPJC erroneously concluded on Count One that the Presbytery did not have the power and authority to alter the terms of Edmonds' position as Stated Clerk and his call to that office, contrary to the arguments and evidence submitted by Presbytery at trial, instead erroneously finding that an irrevocable contract for a fixed term had been made with him that was breached by Presbytery.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 3: That there was an error in constitutional interpretation, specifically that the SPJC erroneously declined to reach and decide Counts Two, Three and Four of Edmonds' Complaint, as required by D-7.0402a-c, and further failed to find the irregularities alleged in Counts Two, Three and Four NOT sustained for the reasons articulated by Presbytery at Trial.*

This specification of error is sustained.

*Rationale:* As more fully discussed in the following Decision, this Commission notes that the SPJC entered a specific finding of fact that the Presbytery staff and Stated Clerk reductions in time, job functions, and compensation were the result of a serious financial crisis. The SPJC found that the facts and circumstances did not constitute a constructive discharge. Factual determinations made by a trier of fact are accorded a presumption of correctness. These determinations are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are "plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust" (*Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church v. National Capital Presbytery, Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 493, and Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes, 1983, Part I, p. 45*).

However, based on the record we disagree with the SPJC's conclusion that Edmonds' reduction in terms of call constituted an irregularity. Given its financial crisis, the Presbytery could constitutionally reassess its mission and amend the terms of call of its Stated Clerk (G-6.0201 and G-14.0522), and it afforded Edmonds fundamental fairness in its process. This Commission finds no support for the SPJC's decision that some otherwise undefined irregularity occurred in the reduction of Edmonds' terms of call, or that the process was fundamentally unfair.

#### Specifications of Error of the Edmonds' Counter Appeal

*Specification of Error No. 1: It was error for the Complainant's request for production of additional documents to be denied by the Executive Committee on March 25, 2011, and affirmed by the Permanent Judicial Commission on March 31, 2011.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 2: The refusal of a member of the SPJC to recuse herself for conflict of interest, which decision was supported by the SPJC, was in error.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 3: The SPJC refused to grant the motion for a change of venue.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

The following irregularities in proceedings by the SPJC are appealed:

*Specification of Error No. 4: The SPJC refused to allow Edmonds to present the case in the sequence and manner he believed necessary to prove it, thereby seriously prejudicing his ability to introduce evidence in a logical and persuasive way (D-8.0105a).*

The Specification of Error is not sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 5: The SPJC refused to receive proper and relevant testimony and evidence, thereby excluding critical evidence (D-8.0105c).*

The Specification of Error is not sustained.

*See the following Rationale.*

*Specification of Error No. 6: The SPJC hastened to its decision by refusing to allow sufficient time for Edmonds to present his case or to present closing arguments (D-8.0105d).*

The Specification of Error is not sustained.

*Rationale:* The errors alleged by Edmonds in the Counter-Appeal concern trial procedures and related matters, but whether separately or collectively analyzed they did not prejudice Edmonds because the SPJC found in Edmonds' favor. Within its proper trial discretion, the SPJC ruled on each of these matters, and there is no basis in the record from which to conclude that any such decisions were other than harmless error, if that.

Similarly, given that this Commission reverses the SPJC on the grounds of constitutional misinterpretation, the errors alleged in Edmonds' Counter-Appeal, separately or collectively, could amount to no more than harmless error, and on this record cannot be seen as determinative of any injustice having been experienced.

#### Decision

As noted above, the SPJC determined that the restructuring of the Presbytery's Stated Clerk position and terms of call was part of a re-evaluation of its mission in response to a serious financial crisis. All existing staff of the Presbytery were affected by the restructuring, which included a number of terminations with severance packages. The SPJC further determined that the Stated Clerk's restructured position and reduced terms of call did not constitute a constructive discharge.

While stated clerks must be elected to specific terms of office in accordance with the *Book of Order*, the GAPJC determines that their elected terms and any agreed-upon remuneration are not irrevocable contracts for those fixed terms, but rather terms of call that may, in the case of a serious financial crisis and/or mission re-evaluation, be adjusted by the employing entity, so long as fundamental fairness is demonstrated (G-6.0201 and G-14.0522). Fundamental fairness was evident through the numerous efforts of the Presbytery's Personnel Committee to meet with all staff members and Edmonds and work with them in the process. It was ultimately demonstrated through Edmonds' opportunity to speak on the floor of the Presbytery to the motion that effected the change to his terms of call.

Edmonds argued that since his term of office was for "a term of years, not for a term of years *or* until a successor is elected," *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th Ed.* (RONR), the parliamentary authority then in effect, prohibits the Presbytery's action without a disciplinary procedure. The Presbytery responded that the provision of RONR relied upon by Edmonds does not apply since the exact wording of G-9.0302 is only that "*meetings* of governing bodies, commissions, and

committees shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order except in cases where this Constitution provides otherwise” (emphasis added), and the rule Edmonds cited does not refer to the conduct of a meeting.

Both the Presbytery and Edmonds are in error. The rules in RONR regarding terms of officers are applied by means of decisions of assemblies rendered in the course of their meetings. RONR’s provisions regarding officers clearly do apply in this case. The RONR rule relied upon by Edmonds, however, relates to the *removal* of officers. The Presbytery did not remove Edmonds from office. The directly applicable provision from RONR is not its provision on the removal of officers, but rather its provision regarding the amendment of a society’s own rules relating to its officers:

Amendments to the article on officers may raise difficulties in relation to the time at which adopted changes take effect, unless special care is taken. A society can, for example, amend its bylaws so as to affect the emoluments and duties of the officers already elected, or even to abolish an office; and if it is desired that the amendment should not affect officers already elected, a motion so specifying should be adopted before voting on the amendment, or the motion to amend can have added to it the proviso that it shall not affect officers already elected. There is virtually a contract between a society and its officers, and while to some extent action can be taken by either party to modify or even terminate the contract, such action must be taken with reasonable consideration for the other party (RONR p. 579, ll. 9-21).

In this provision, RONR clearly contemplates the possibility that even a society’s currently elected officers can be affected by changes to its own rules -- including both duties and emoluments (compensation) -- even though “there is virtually a contract between a society and its officers.” Additionally, this provision establishes the principle that in such cases, “reasonable consideration for the other party” must be demonstrated. The record reflects that such consideration was extended to Edmonds.

While the SPJC did not rule on Counts Two, Three, and Four of the Complaint, it nevertheless would have considered those matters in the overall course of the proceedings. In addition, as previously stated, this Commission concludes that the errors alleged in the Counter-Appeal, if any, are collectively harmless and did not substantially affect the outcome of the case. Thus, the Commission sees nothing to be gained by remanding the case for a new trial.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Northeast is reversed and the case is dismissed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this decision to the Synod of the Northeast at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of New York City report this decision to the Presbytery of New York City, at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appeances

Commissioner Margaret MacLeod was absent and did not take part in the deliberations or decision.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in *Remedial Case 220-09, Presbytery of New York City, Appellant/Counter Appellee v. Cornell A. Edmonds, Appellee/Counter Appellant*, made and announced at San Antonio, TX, this 20th day of February, 2012.

Dated this 20th day of February, 2012.

i. *Remedial Case 220-10*

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 Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, )  
 Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy )  
 Young, and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian )  
 Church, )  
 Appellants (Complainants), )  
 v. )  
 )  
 Presbytery of San Francisco, )  
 Appellee (Respondent). )  
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Decision and Order  
*Remedial Case 220-10*



## Arrival Statement

This remedial case before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal from the Decision on remand of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC) dated September 17, 2011.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young, and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church (Appellants) have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal required under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

The Appellants were represented by Mary Holder Naegeli and Bruce McIntosh. The Appellee, the Presbytery of San Francisco (Presbytery), was represented by Douglas Nave and Pamela Byers.

## History

In a stated meeting on November 10, 2009, the Presbytery validated the call of the Candidate, Lisa Larges (Candidate), to institutional service outside the jurisdiction of the church. The Presbytery then voted to approve her ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. In the ordination examination, there was extensive and elaborative discussion in which the Candidate presented both a Statement of Faith and a Statement of Departure, the latter in regard to provisions in the (then) Form of Government, G-6.0106b.

Appellants filed a remedial complaint against the Presbytery with the SPJC on December 21, 2009, citing errors in the Presbytery's acceptance of the Candidate's departure from G-6.0106b. A Stay of Enforcement was entered.

The trial before the SPJC was held on September 23, 2010. The record contains a comprehensive consideration of scriptural and confessional texts dealing with homosexuality as well as scholarly analysis by expert witnesses on the interpretation of these texts. This testimony reflected a spectrum of diverse theological and interpretive perspectives.

The SPJC Decision to affirm the action of the Presbytery was rendered on September 25, 2010. The SPJC at the same time ordered a continuation of the Stay of Enforcement, in anticipation that its Decision would be appealed. A Notice of Appeal was filed on November 9, 2010 (Remedial Case 220-03).

On July 15, 2011, Appellee filed a motion with the GAPJC to dismiss Appellants' remedial complaint, alleging that the Appellants' case was now moot because the *Book of Order* was changed on July 10, 2011, to amend G-6.0106b (now G-2.0104b). The motion was denied by the GAPJC on August 1, 2011.

The GAPJC Decision in *Remedial Case 220-03*, also rendered on August 1, 2011, affirmed the SPJC Decision on nine of the original Specifications of Error, primarily on the basis that the G-6.0106b arguments were moot. The GAPJC also determined that the record did not reflect whether the SPJC had ruled on Specification of Error No. 10, which read: "The SPJC erred by not correcting the doctrinal error and abuse of discretion exercised by the Presbytery of San Francisco in this ordination decision." Furthermore, the GAPJC sustained Specification of Error No. 11, which read: "The SPJC erred when it failed to rule on the constitutionality of the ordination decision itself, limiting its comments to presbytery process only." This Commission remanded the case to the SPJC "to rule on the matters which are the subject of Specifications of Error Nos. 10 and 11 above, and such other matters as may come before it."

In its rationale for remand, this Commission stated:

The record does not reflect that the SPJC ruled on the Appellants' contention that Scripture and the Confessions prohibit certain sexual behavior. While the Appellants' complaint was based primarily on G-6.0106b, the Appellants clearly and consistently presented arguments at trial on the basis of scriptural and confessional standards without objection by the Presbytery. Since the doctrinal issue is central to the Appellants' case, it was error for the SPJC not to expressly rule upon the issue.

Upon remand, the SPJC determined that the existing record was complete and did not require augmentation by the parties. On September 17, 2011, the SPJC rendered its final Decision not to sustain Specifications of Error Nos. 10 and 11, and to affirm the action of the Presbytery approving the ordination of the Candidate. The Appeal of this Decision was received on October 31, 2011.

## Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it failed to act according to its constitutional responsibility to warn and bear witness against error in doctrine within its bounds (G-3.0401c).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 2. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it presumed that it was the presbytery's prerogative to determine the essentials of Reformed faith and polity, when they are expressed in the Constitution (G-2.0105).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 3. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it failed to properly reconcile the Historic Principles of Church Order by giving effect only to F-3.0101 (Freedom of Conscience) at the expense of all the others.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 4. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it applied the concept of mutual forbearance (F-3.0105) to permit the candidate's conscientious objection to a scriptural and confessional standard to infringe upon the rights and views of others (G-2.0105).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 5. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it failed to apply and enforce the interpretation of Scripture found in the Confessions (G-2.0105) with regard to sexual conduct.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 6. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it failed to discipline and rebuke the Presbytery for its failure to admonish and instruct the candidate in correct doctrine (G-3.0301c).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 7. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it permitted the Presbytery to accept a candidate for ordination who could not, by her rejection of sound doctrine, provide an affirmative answer to each of the constitutional questions for ordination (W-4.4003, 4005b, 4006b).*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

*Specification of Error No. 8. The SPJC committed an error of constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) when it permitted mere authoritative interpretations - in this case, the PUP and Knox AI - to override constitutional provisions, including those found in the Book of Confessions.*

This specification of error is not sustained.

*See Decision below.*

#### Decision

This Commission holds that the SPJC both effectively answered the remanded items and appropriately ruled that the Presbytery acted within the bounds of the Constitution. This Commission finds that the eight Specifications of Error in the current Appeal deal with alleged errors in constitutional interpretation by the SPJC Decision on remand. These alleged errors can be subsumed under two categories: (1) doctrinal error by errant interpretation of Scripture and Confessions, and (2) the authority of the Presbytery in the examination of the Candidate for ordination. The Commission agrees with the SPJC

Decision that the Presbytery properly exercised its prerogative in determining that the Candidate did not depart from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity.

This Commission agrees with the SPJC assessment of the record that a vast diversity of interpretation of scripture and the confessions regarding human sexuality evident in the record is also manifest across the churches and members of the denomination. Such thoughtful disagreement among reasonable and faithful Presbyterians is itself an important and faithful part of the Reformed tradition.

This Commission agrees with the SPJC that, within this diversity of interpretation, the Presbytery did not commit “doctrinal error or abuse of discretion” and that the Presbytery acted within its constitutional authority in making the ordination decision challenged by the Appellants.

Beginning with the Adopting Act of 1729, as reaffirmed by the Swearingen Commission Report of 1926-1927, presbyteries have had full authority to determine whether a candidate for ordination adheres to the necessary and essential tenets of the Reformed faith. This tradition is currently articulated in the *Book of Order* at G-2.0105, which states that “persons who serve [the Church] in ordered ministries shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in this Constitution,” and the “decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member.”

*The Book of Confessions* reflects that the Church listens to a multitude of voices in shaping its beliefs. *The Book of Confessions* is hardly univocal, containing as it does eleven different creeds, catechisms, and confessions of faith written over millennia of Christian witness. They each “arose in response to particular circumstances within the history of God’s people...They are the result of prayer, thought and experience within a living tradition...They affirm a common faith tradition, while also from time to time standing in tension with each other” (F-2.01). Therefore, the confessional tradition is, itself, an instrument of reform. *The Book of Confessions*, much like Scripture itself, requires discernment and interpretation when its standards are to be applied in the life and mission of the church.

This Commission affirms the SPJC conclusion that the Presbytery acted within its constitutional authority to determine that in this ordination examination of the Candidate, she did not depart from the necessary and essential tenets of the Reformed faith as understood by the Presbytery.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific is hereby affirmed and the stay of enforcement is hereby vacated.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this decision to the Synod of the Pacific at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Pacific enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco report this decision to the Presbytery of San Francisco at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of San Francisco enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

#### Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Flor Vélez-Díaz was absent and did not take any part in the deliberations or decision. Commissioner Jeana Lungwitz did not participate in this case.

#### Concurring Opinion of Gregory A. Goodwiller, William E. Scheu, Tony M. Cook, and Yun Jin Kim

We concur with the result reached by the majority, but make the following observations. The Presbytery faithfully examined this Candidate and voted by a majority (157 to 138) to ordain her. At the time of the examination, it allowed a “scruple” which we believe to have then been unconstitutional. But since that occasion the constitutional language to which the Candidate objected has been removed and replaced. Although this Commission in its previous Order dated August 1, 2011, “encouraged” the SPJC “to direct the Presbytery to reexamine the candidate” under the new constitutional provision, it declined to do so and determined instead that:

This vast diversity of interpretation of scripture and the confessions regarding human sexuality evident in the record is also manifest across the churches and members of the denomination. Such thoughtful disagreement among reasonable and faithful Presbyterians is itself an important and faithful part of the Reformed tradition. This range of interpretations reached through thoughtful and prayerful discernment is, in itself, evidence that the candidate’s departure cannot be from an essential of Reformed faith and polity. Disagreements over particular passages of scripture and confessions, and their interpretation in light of scripture and confessions as a whole, preclude designating such passages as somehow uniquely

central to determining the fitness and faithfulness of a candidate for office. Rather, such disagreements call for the exercise of mutual forbearance toward one another (F-3.0105).

While we concur with this assessment of where the PC(USA) is as a denomination, we lament that it is in this place – where differences over matters of human sexuality have become so diverse and divisive, where slim majority votes create huge shifts in the communal life of the denomination, and where every decision the church makes in this area is a sweet victory for one side, and a bitter defeat for the other, ultimately causing entire congregations to determine that they can no longer remain in fellowship with the denomination. As Joe Small described in a recent article in *First Things*, our denomination has relied on polity instead of scriptural and theological discernment to decide particular manifestations of the dilemma in which we find ourselves.

In many respects the denomination has been transformed by a culture of sexual fixation rather than being transformative of that culture. What difference does it make to be “Christian” when it comes to our lifestyles? Have we spoken truth to power on issues such as promiscuity, premarital, extramarital and postmarital sex and the “soft” pornography that is rampant in our television shows and advertisements? Have we been willing to teach our children and each other on these matters? Or have we succumbed to the tyranny of cultural peer pressure? How can we discipline officers for sexual misconduct when we are unwilling to discipline ourselves generally? Have we been blinded by the “trees” of the homosexual issue, while overlooking the “forest” of the larger issues of sexual gluttony generally?

That said, dissent and division in our denomination are nothing new. In many ways, our predecessor church was in a similar place in the 1920s—when the General Assembly had in the previous decade adopted “five essentials” to which all ministers were required to subscribe. The reports of a Commission appointed by the General Assembly (the Swearingen Commission) are widely praised for restoring peace in the church after that time of upheaval.

The preliminary statements of the Swearingen Commission’s first report in 1926, however, include the following assessment of the church in their day:

There is practically no demand for change in the Constitution of the Church. Such suggestions to this effect as have been made, have not met with appreciable response throughout the Church. All parties appear to be willing to rest upon the Constitution of the Church as it stands. They are agreed that the remedies for our troubles are within the Constitution itself. This is an immense advantage. It leaves to be decided the question of interpretation only. If there were insistence upon alterations in the substance of our organic law, if it were proposed to add new articles, or to amend old ones, our difficulties would be multiplied greatly. So long as the Church is satisfied with the Constitution as it is, we have not broken the continuity of our history, and are in position to be guided by courses adopted in the past when the fathers faced conditions similar to those existing to-day.

The same assessment could not be given today, and it is precisely our arguments over the constitution – including acts of outright defiance of constitutional provisions by those on both “sides” in our various debates – that we believe threaten our continued existence and future vitality as a faith tradition. There was a time when our covenantal commitment to each other was strong, and when “mutual forbearance” meant a willingness to *abide* by our constitution even as we worked to change it. Because of our increasing differences regarding what the constitution *ought* to say, those days are gone – and we are therefore in the position described by the Swearingen Commission in which our difficulties are “multiplied greatly.”

The Swearingen Commission went on to say:

A spiritual revival and a reconsecration of every life to Christ are imperative if harmony is to prevail and our Church is to render full service. Doubtless everyone will assent to this statement. In all our discussions its truth should be assumed as a prime condition of accord. We must begin on our knees, with confession of our sins and sincere repentance, and must move forward in the spirit of renewed allegiance to the Master and of closer fellowship with [God] which will conquer our selfishness, pride and hardness, and will insure in us humility of mind and the purity of heart which yields a vision of God.

Our prayer is that all in our church would still affirm that statement, and that we would once again “begin on our knees” to rebuild the covenant community that we know as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

#### Concurring Opinion of Michael Lukens and A. Bates Butler III

As both this majority opinion and the SPJC have clarified, the matter of interpretation is central because in large part it is inevitable within scriptural and confessional authority. The necessary act of interpretation has been at the heart of the Reformed tradition from its inception. One may, in fact, claim that the Reformation in itself was an event of radical reinterpretation, i.e., a corrected interpretation of the Bible in a recovery of the priority of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the means of grace. The Confessions of the Reformation period stand as consummate expressions resulting from this interpretive turn. The necessary role of textual interpretation within the Reformed tradition is, for example, clearly summarized in the second chapter of the Second Helvetic Confession (“Of Interpreting the Holy Scriptures; and of Fathers, Councils, and Traditions”). This hermeneutic practice and process upon which the Reformation is grounded has continued in further confessional development and has retained a critical role in the modifications in Reformed church life and doctrine since.

In this case, the parties agree on the necessity of continuing interpretation in understanding the meaning of Scripture and Confession through the application of modern textual analysis. The record exhibits testimony and general agreement in a

number of interpretive conflicts in the church’s more recent history dealing with issues such as the role of women in the church, or in the matter of divorce and remarriage. The use of textual-critical methods, especially in the last century, has altered the range of interpretation to such an extent that scriptural and confessional texts in the arena of social and sexual relations areas have become open to alternate understandings.

Only in the matter of homosexuality do the Appellants claim an exception, i.e., pressing a univocal meaning and interpretation across vastly different historical periods and socio-cultural contexts. Although in other areas of contention there is an acceptance of the conditioning nature of radically altered historical-cultural situations, including differing social and scientific assessments, that may lead to the legitimacy of variant interpretation, in the argument of this Appeal homosexuality is an exception. It alone is held to be exempt from such interpretive analysis. The Appellants do not offer a convincing rationale in support of this exception. There is extended reference to a simple preponderance of pre-modern and early modern testimonies, but the argument remains rooted in an assumption of univocal constancy, with little reference to contemporary critical analysis or contextual differentiation. Absent such substantiation, the Appellants present no basis for rejecting the truth claim in variant interpretations.

Contention over scriptural and confessional texts is both inevitable and common. However, it is not for this Commission or the judicial process overall to test the value or judge the truth of variant interpretations of particular texts, excepting egregious refutation or abuse of primary or first order creedal affirmations, to which level the issue in this case does not rise. The majority decision affirms the historic tradition about the appropriate and traditional place for such evaluation in councils of the church. It is, then, for this Commission to adjudge whether a council is within its authority to evaluate and determine the fitness of persons for ordination. The majority decision speaks clearly to this matter.

Further, there is an assumption in this Appeal that the doctrinal issue herein deals with an “essential and necessary” dimension of Reformed doctrine. Although the church has long resisted and does not have a listing of specific doctrines or moral practices that fulfill this character, there exists a valuable conception for illuminating the nature of “essential and necessary” in the Swearingen Commission Report of 1927. That which is “essential and necessary” is that which must be present in the doctrinal system of the church in order to uphold its central witness and maintain its distinctive character. Absent such doctrine, the system collapses. The test then becomes whether a particular doctrine or practice is necessary for the integrity of the system of doctrine as a whole. The record in this case does not sustain the notion that the ordination of a gay or lesbian person to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament is so critical that it would compromise or undermine the “essential and necessary” character of Reformed doctrine.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 220-10, Eric Parnell, Bruce McIntosh, Cordelia Shieh, Margaret Gelini, Greg Roth, Marsha Roth, Randy Young and the Session of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, Appellant (Complainants) vs. The Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Complainant), made and announced at Indianapolis, IN, on April 29, 2012.

Dated this 29th day of April, 2012.

j. Remedial Case 220-11

-----	)	Decision and Order
Sandra M. Thomas,	)	<i>Remedial Case 220-11</i>
Appellant (Complainant),	)	
v.	)	
Presbytery of Philadelphia,	)	
Appellee (Respondent).	)	
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Headnote

The *Book of Order’s* initial time requirement for filing a remedial complaint in D-6.0202a is jurisdictional and can be raised at any time prior to a final decision.

Arrival Statement

This remedial case before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an Appeal from the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity (SPJC) dated September 12, 2011.

## Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction to review the SPJC Decision, that the Appellant, Sandra M. Thomas (Thomas), has standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal required under D-8.0105.

## Appearances

Thomas was present and represented herself. The Appellee, Presbytery of Philadelphia (Presbytery), was represented by Keith D. Lawrence and Greg Heller, members of the Committee of Counsel of Presbytery.

## History

In a Statement of Complaint (Complaint) filed with the SPJC, signed on June 8, 2010, by Thomas and on June 11, 2010, by her counsel, Archibald Wallace, III, Thomas complained that the Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill (Church) had committed irregularities in the dissolution of her pastoral relationship with the Church and the honoring of certain agreements reached by Thomas and the Church concerning the dissolution. The Complaint sought the following specific relief from the SPJC:

1. Determine that the Church failed to honor the agreements it made that were part of the consideration for the dissolution.
2. Determine that the actions of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery (Stated Clerk), acting as the agent of the Church and Presbytery, were an abrogation of the powers of the Church and the Presbytery, and were not authorized by the Church or the Presbytery.
3. Determine that the Presbytery committed an irregularity by not preventing the usurpation of its powers and responsibilities by the Stated Clerk.
4. Determine that the Presbytery failed to cure the irregularity of allowing the Stated Clerk to act as he did without specific authority.

Presbytery filed an Answer to the Complaint on July 28, 2010. On August 9, 2010, the officers of the SPJC determined not to accept the case for trial because the Complaint was not timely filed, and it failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted. On September 9, 2010, Thomas challenged that decision of the SPJC officers. On November 22, 2010, the SPJC as a whole sustained the challenge, stating as to the issue of timeliness that a letter from the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery dated April 15, 2010, was within the 90-day filing period. In rendering that decision the SPJC stated, "Assuming that everything alleged by the Complainant can be proved at trial as true, we find that this case is initiated by the letter of April 15, 2010 ..." The SPJC also said that the action of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery in writing the April 15, 2010, letter constitutes a "potential irregularity" upon which relief could be granted.

The SPJC trial of this case began on September 12, 2011. After Thomas rested her case, but before Presbytery had begun putting on evidence, Presbytery moved for a "nonsuit" (dismissal) based on timeliness, arguing that Thomas had not proved that any actions complained of occurred within 90 days before the Complaint was filed and that the *Book of Order* required a filing within such period. Thomas then added that, "[T]he 90 days should be counted from the time my contract ended when I sold my house, February 28, 2010."

The SPJC recessed to consider Presbytery's motion, after which it announced that it had voted unanimously "to grant the motion of nonsuit." The SPJC entered its Decision dismissing the case, finding that Thomas "failed to present any evidence of an irregularity that occurred within the 90 day time limit." In doing so the SPJC reconsidered its prior decision and found that Thomas did not prove that the April 15, 2010, letter contained language upon which a complaint could be based, and therefore did not advance the time within which a complaint could be filed.

Subsequently, Thomas filed a Notice of Appeal to this Commission.

## Specifications of Error

The Notice of Appeal raised the following Specifications of Error:

1. *There were irregularities in the proceedings (D-8.0105a):*
  - a. *Motions were not delivered to Thomas.*
  - b. *Thomas did not receive materials made available to others.*
  - c. *Thomas was disadvantaged because she was not represented by counsel.*

*d. Witnesses were not effectively segregated.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained. See the following Decision.

2. *There were restrictions on Thomas' ability to provide proper evidence or testimony (D-8.0105c):*

*a. A civil court injunction barred Thomas from speaking to the PC(USA).*

*b. An irregular and unconstitutional "confidential agreement" was forced upon Thomas by the Church session.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained. See the following Decision.

3. *There was a manifestation of prejudice in the conduct of the case (D-8.0105e):*

*a. There was no person of color or woman on the SPJC.*

*b. The extreme wealth of the Church and the session's willingness to use it in the conduct of the case resulted in a disadvantage and severe financial hardship to Thomas.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained. See the following Decision.

4. *There was injustice in the process or decision (D-8.0105f):*

*a. It was unjust to require that Thomas end her wage and hour case in civil proceedings while the Church's civil injunction remained in place.*

*b. The SPJC erred by not imposing a financial remedy upon the Church.*

*c. To make "recommendations" for reconciliation rather than ordering reconciliation makes it difficult for the parties to reconcile.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained. See the following Decision.

5. *There was error in constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g):*

*a. The SPJC erred by dismissing the Church from the case.*

*b. The SPJC erred by not imposing a financial remedy upon the Church.*

*c. The continuing civil injunction against Thomas is an offense to the Constitution.*

This Specification of Error is not sustained. See the following Decision.

#### Decision

This Commission affirms the SPJC Decision that the Complaint was not timely filed and was properly dismissed. The SPJC found that no irregularity occurred within 90 days of the Complaint being filed and that the 90-day period required by the Constitution had expired (D-6.0202a). In doing so, the SPJC reconsidered its prior Decision as to timeliness and concluded Thomas had not proven that the April 15, 2010, letter was an irregularity, and therefore could not advance the date so as to bring it within the 90-day filing requirement. This Commission agrees. Because of the untimely filing of the Complaint, which is jurisdictional, this Commission does not rule on the procedural and substantive claims in the Specifications of Error. Since the *Book of Order's* initial time requirement for filing a remedial complaint in D-6.0202a is jurisdictional, it can be raised at any time prior to a final decision.

None of Thomas' Specifications of Error address the timeliness issue which is jurisdictional. Therefore, none of the Specifications of Error is sustained.

#### Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Trinity is hereby affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Trinity report this decision to the Synod of the Trinity at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Trinity enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Philadelphia report this decision to the Presbytery of Philadelphia at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Philadelphia enter the full decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Flor Vélez-Díaz was absent and did not take any part in the deliberations or decision.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 220-11, Sandra M. Thomas, Appellant (Complainant) vs. the Presbytery of Philadelphia, Appellee (Respondent), made and announced at Indianapolis, IN, on April 29, 2012.

Dated this 29th day of April, 2012.

k. Remedial Case 220-12

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Claire Cubbin-Will,	)	
	)	
Appellant (Complainant),	)	Decision and Order
v.	)	Remedial Case 220-12
	)	
Presbytery of Tropical Florida,	)	
Appellee (Respondent).	)	
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Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal dated March 11, 2012, by Appellant Claire Cubbin-Will (Cubbin-Will) from a decision by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of South Atlantic (SPJC) dated November 15, 2011.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Cubbin-Will has standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal enumerated in D-8.0105.

Appearances

Cubbin-Will appeared in person, joined by Albert Will and Ronald Weir as Co-Counsel. Appellee Presbytery of Tropical Florida (Presbytery) was represented by George McIlrath.

History

Presbytery appointed two Administrative Commissions between 2006 and 2008 with authority to determine the viability of the Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida (SPC), and to respond to difficulties between SPC and another congregation sharing the building. The pastor of SPC retired in 2007. SPC was not able to afford a full-time called pastor after that point and subsequently had multiple temporary pastors.

The Presbytery Committee on Ministry (COM) recommended to the Coordinating Council that a new Administrative Commission (AC) be appointed. At a Presbytery stated meeting held on November 20, 2010, the following motion was adopted:

Council recommends to Presbytery that an Administrative Commission be appointed with original jurisdiction over Second Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, with the charge of providing pastoral care and developing a process for closing and celebrating the ministry of the church in consultation with their members, with plenary authority including but not limited to the administration and management of the church. This process will include determining all the correct steps for said closing in consultation with the office of the stated clerk of the General Assembly.

Three days later, the SPC session moderator, who was later appointed moderator of the AC, met with the session of SPC and stated that the session was dissolved by the November action of the Presbytery. That dissolution led to the filing of the Complaint in this case.

At the Presbytery meeting on February 26, 2011, after full notice and opportunity for discussion and debate, Presbytery adopted a motion identical to and ratifying the November 20, 2010, action.



## Preliminary Matters

During the week of the hearing, Cubbin-Will submitted a “Motion to Strike Two Members of Appellee’s Committee of Counsel and Silence Appellee’s Advisors,” and a “Formal Request for Presence of Court Reporter during Oral Argument,” both of which were denied.

## Specifications of Error

*Specification of Error No. 1: The SPJC erred in improperly considering actions of the Presbytery at its February 26, 2011, meeting which occurred after the original Complaint was filed, as curing the deficiencies of the Presbytery action on November 20, 2010.*

This specification of error is not sustained. See Decision below.

*Specification of Error No. 2: The SPJC erred by receiving evidence of events and Presbytery action that occurred after the Presbytery meeting on November 20, 2010.*

This specification of error is not sustained. See Decision below.

*Specification of Error No. 3: The SPJC erred by determining that the Presbytery Administrative Commission had taken control of the Session of the Second Presbyterian Church as of February 26, 2011, rather than November 20, 2010.*

This specification of error is not sustained. See Decision below.

*Specification of Error No. 4: The SPJC committed an error in constitutional interpretation by holding that the action of Presbytery on February 26, 2011, could “render moot” the Complainant’s requested remedy of reinstatement of the Session of SPC as it was on November 20, 2010.*

This specification of error is not sustained. See Decision below.

## Decision

During the February 26, 2011, meeting the Presbytery approved a motion regarding the AC for SPC. The motion was styled as a motion to “ratify” the Presbytery’s earlier November action. However, the February motion incorporated an expanded notice and discussion procedure, to meet the requirements of *Book of Order* G-11.0103s. Members of the November 2010 Session were specifically invited to the Presbytery meeting and given the opportunity to speak. Opportunity was afforded other congregational members as well. As such, whether it is viewed as a continuation of the November action, or as a new action, the fulfillment of due process in the February meeting is sufficient to overcome any objection to that action. Further, the February action was not challenged by Cubbin-Will.

After the meeting on February 26, 2011, an AC had been properly created with original jurisdiction to move forward to consider the proper course of “administration and management” of SPC. By then, it was not clear that closing the church was necessary. Both parties now refer to changes that have subsequently occurred in the life of the congregation which obviate closure. The goals of Cubbin-Will, albeit achieved by the AC with the prospect of a changed Session, are similar to the goals of the present AC. SPC is apparently ready to move on and away from the prospect of closure.

This Commission affirms the Synod decision in full. The cases cited by Cubbin-Will, *Janet E. Wolfe v. Presbytery of Winnebago* (Minutes, 2009, p. 398), and *Daniel O. Hennigan v. Presbytery of Charlotte* (Minutes, 2000, p. 583), are different from this case. Judicial economy and other practicalities dictate that in limited circumstances, such as those in this case, it is appropriate to allow evidence of events subsequent to the filing of a remedial complaint. In *Wolfe* and *Hennigan*, the GAPJC found that it would be improper to consider evidence of actions by the respondent subsequent to the filing of a complaint. However, where there is subsequent and properly accomplished action which achieves the remedy that might otherwise be imposed by a judicial commission, it is appropriate to receive such evidence. This Commission therefore draws a narrow distinction in this case that is consistent with *George R. Stewart v. Mission Presbytery* (Minutes, 2008, p. 316), where the remedy sought had already been achieved.

Although Cubbin-Will’s argument is based on her objection to the admission of the minutes of the February 26, 2011, Presbytery meeting, Cubbin-Will and Presbytery have both repeatedly referred to events in the life of SPC and the work of the AC that are central to the selection of an appropriate remedy. This Commission does not interpret the prior cases to impose a rule which would discourage repair of procedural errors at the Presbytery level. The *Hennigan* decision obviously permitted consideration of post-complaint events in fashioning an appropriate remedy. This Commission determines that such an approach is necessary in the limited circumstances presented here.

For these reasons, this Commission accepts the SPJC conclusion that the relief sought by Appellant can no longer be achieved.

## Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of South Atlantic is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of South Atlantic report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Tropical Florida report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

## Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Flor Vélez-Díaz was absent and took no part in the deliberations for this case. Commissioner William Scheu did not participate in this case.

## Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 220-12, Claire Cubbin-Will, Appellant (Complainant) vs. the Presbytery of Tropical Florida, Appellee (Respondent), made and announced at Indianapolis, IN, on April 29, 2012.

Dated this 29th day of April 2012.

*C. Vote of Presbyteries on Proposed Amendments.***PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Approved By The 219th General Assembly (2010)  
Approval of Belhar requires 116 affirmative votes;  
all other amendments require 87 affirmative votes.

			Affirm.	Neg.	No Action
<b>Part 1</b>	<b>10-1</b>	<b>New Form of Government</b>	90	81	2
<b>Part 2</b>	<b>10-2</b>	<b>Confession of Belhar</b>	108	63	2
<b>Part 3</b>	<b>10-A</b>	<b>Gifts and Requirements—On Amending G-6.0106b</b>	97	74	2
	<b>10-B</b>	<b>Removing Stated Clerk or Clerk of Session—On Amending G-9.0203b</b>	165	4	4
	<b>10-C</b>	<b>Requiring Sexual Misconduct Policy—On Amending G-9.0404e</b>	165	4	4
	<b>10-D</b>	<b>Nominating Committees—On Amending G-9.0801a</b>	164	5	4
	<b>10-E</b>	<b>Presbytery Rolls and Registers—On Amending G-11.0407</b>	160	9	4
	<b>10-F</b>	<b>Certified Christian Educators—On Amending G-11.0407 and G-14.0730</b>	152	17	4
	<b>10-G</b>	<b>Synod Function—On Amending G-12.0100</b>	165	4	4
	<b>10-H</b>	<b>Nominations Process—On Amending G-13.0108, G-13.0111a, and G-13.0202b</b>	164	5	4

<b>10-I</b>	<b>Prayer Added to Ordination and Installation Services—On Amending W-4.4003, W-4.4004 and W-4.4006</b>	161	8	4
<b>10-J</b>	<b>Stay of Enforcement—On Amending D-6.0103</b>	165	4	4
<b>10-K</b>	<b>Preliminary Questions—On Amending D-6.0306, D-8.0302, and D-13.0302</b>	167	2	4
<b>10-L</b>	<b>Reviewing Work of Investigating Committee—On Amending D-10.0202</b>	168	1	4
<b>10-M</b>	<b>Time Limit—On Amending D-10.0401</b>	131	39	3
<b>10-N</b>	<b>Appeal of “Not Guilty” Verdict—On Amending D-13.0102 and D-13.0106</b>	148	22	3
<b>10-O</b>	<b>Decision of Permanent Judicial Commission—On Amending D-13.0404</b>	155	14	4

To see how a presbytery voted on each amendment, see oga-voting-on-amendments-by-pby (or see pages 664–68).



Elizabeth	A	A	A	A	A	N	N	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Flint River	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Florida	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Foothills	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A
Genesee Valley	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Geneva	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Giddings-Lovejoy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Glacier	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Grace	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Grand Canyon	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Greater Atlanta	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Great Rivers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Hanmi	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Heartland	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Holston	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Homestead	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Hudson River	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Huntingdon	N	N	N	A	A	N	N	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Indian Nations	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Inland Northwest	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
James	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
John Calvin	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
John Knox	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kendall	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Kiskiminetas	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Lackawanna	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Lake Erie	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Lake Huron	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Lake Michigan	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Lehigh	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Long Island	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Los Ranchos	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Mackinac	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Maumee Valley	N	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Mid-South	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Miami Valley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N
Middle Tennessee	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Mid-Kentucky	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Midwest Hanmi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Milwaukee	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Minnesota Valleys	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Mission	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Mississippi	N	N	N	A	N	N	A	N	A	N	N	N	A	A	N	N	N
Missouri River Valley	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Missouri Union	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Monmouth	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Muskingum Valley	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
National Capital	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N
Nevada	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
New Brunswick	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
New Castle	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
New Covenant	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
New Harmony	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
New Hope	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
New York City	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Newark	A	A	A	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	A	NA
Newton	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
North Alabama	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
North Central Iowa	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
North Puget Sound	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Northeast Georgia	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Northern Kansas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Northern New Eng.	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Northern New York	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Northern Plains	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N
Northern Waters	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Northumberland	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Northwest PR	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Ohio Valley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Olympia	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Pacific	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Palisades	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Palo Duro	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Peace River	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Peaks	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Philadelphia	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Pines	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Pittsburgh	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Plains and Peaks	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Prospect Hill	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Providence	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Pueblo	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Redstone	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Redwoods	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Riverside	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sacramento	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
St. Andrew	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
St. Augustine	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Salem	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
San Diego	N	N	N	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
San Fernando	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
San Francisco	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
San Gabriel	N	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
San Joaquin	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
San Jose	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N	A
San Juan	A	A	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Santa Barbara	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N
Santa Fe	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Savannah	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Scioto Valley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Seattle	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Shenango	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N
Shenandoah	A	A	N	N	A	N	N	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Sheppards/Lapsley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sierra Blanca	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	N
South Alabama	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
South Dakota	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A
South Louisiana	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Southeastern Illinois	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Southern Kansas	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Southern New Eng.	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Stockton	N	N	N	A	A	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Suroeste	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Susquehanna Valley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Tampa Bay	A	N	N	A	A	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A
Transylvania	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Tres Rios	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A
Trinity	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	N	N	A
Tropical Florida	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N
Twin Cities Area	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Upper Ohio Valley	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N	A

Utah	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Utica	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Wabash Valley	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Washington	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	N																																		
West Jersey	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
West Virginia	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A																																		
Western Colorado	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Western Kentucky	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A																																		
Western New York	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Western NC	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A																																		
Western Reserve	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Whitewater Valley	A	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
Winnebago	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	N	A	A																																		
Wyoming	A	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A																																		
Yellowstone	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	N	A	A																																		
Yukon	N	N	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A																																		
	90	81	2	108	63	2	97	74	2	165	4	4	165	4	4	164	5	4	160	9	4	152	17	4	165	4	4	164	5	4	161	8	4	165	4	4	167	2	4	168	1	4	131	39	3	148	22	3	155	14	4



## Item 07-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-01. See p. 52.]

*On Amending G-2.0104b to Make It Consistent with the Constitutional Questions in W-4.4003—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas.*

The Presbytery of Kiskiminetas overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). ~~Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.~~ *When examining those being presented for ordination and or installation, the council shall do so in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our confessions.*”

### *Rationale*

Section G-2.0104b requires a candidate for ordination/installation to be able and committed to “fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003).”

The constitutional questions require “obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and ... continually guided by our confessions” (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003d).

We affirm that our confessions are standards in the church, they are subordinate standards to the Scriptures (*Book of Order*, F-2.02).

Therefore, we propose the above amendment to make the language internally consistent by reiterating the authority of Scripture over our confessions.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-01

*Advice on Item 07-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) with the following comment concerning Item 07-01:

The overture proposes to replace the final sentence of the recently adopted language of G-2.0104b with new language. The new language to be inserted is drawn directly from the questions for ordination and installation in W-4.4003d. The avowed purpose of the proposed amendment is to “make the language [of G-2.0104b] internally consistent by reiterating the authority of Scripture over our confessions.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the present F-2.02 already guarantees that “confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him” (*Book of Order*, F-2.02). Thus the Constitution elsewhere accomplishes the avowed purpose of this overture.

The final sentence of G-2.0104b currently provides that, “Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.” The present language creates a relationship between the guidance of Scripture and the confessions on the one hand and the determination of readiness of an individual candidate on the other, by indicating that the guidance of Scripture and the confessions is to be sought in the process of applying standards in each individual examination. The session or presbytery seeks the guidance of Scripture and the confessions as part of *each examination discussion*. Examinations are thus a conversation between a candidate for ordination and/or installation and a session or presbytery, in which are brought to bear the resources of Scripture and the confessions on the question of whether that particular candidate is ready for the ordered ministry under the standards of the Constitution. Removal of this sentence weakens the clarity of the present requirement that the application of standards is an essential element of the examination of each individual candidate.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that the constitutional questions of W-4.4003, including the portion of W-4.4003d proposed for inclusion in this overture, bind individuals seeking admission to the church’s ordered ministry, rather than the actions of councils of the church. By contrast, the proposed language for insertion in this overture would apply this individual standard to the council, so that its examination would be conducted “in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and guided by the confessions.” It is unclear precisely what conducting an examination in

this manner entails. Moreover, it would appear to stand in tension with the church’s long-established standard for the conduct of examinations, found in *Rankin v. National Capital Union Presbytery* (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p.113, *Remedial Case 193-10*). Under the *Rankin* decision, examinations are to be conducted “reasonably, responsibly, and deliberately within the Constitution of the Church.”

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL FOR ITEMS 07-01 AND 07-12

#### *Advice and Counsel on Items 07-01 and Item 07-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Item 07-01 from the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend G-2.0104b by replacing language related to the guidance of Scripture and the confessions with the specific language of the constitutional question in W-4.4003: “obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our confessions.” Item 07-12 from the Presbytery of Wyoming overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend G-2.0104b to specify examination of a candidate’s willingness to “lead a life in obedience to Scripture. . .” It also adds that a council’s ordination decision must meet the same standards.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises Item 07-01 and Item 07-12 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Both Items 07-01 and 07-12 state the intent to amend G-2.0104b to clarify the primary authority of Scripture as the basis for standards of ordination and the discernment process of ordaining councils. However, this principle is already well-established in the Constitution of the PC(USA): “confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him” (*Book of Order*, F-2.02).

Item 07-12 attempts to emphasize the priority of Scripture by inserting language from The Confession of 1967 that relates to living one’s life in obedience to Scripture. Yet that language does not achieve the stated purpose of clarifying the unique authority of Scripture as the basis for ordination standards and the decisions of councils.

Item 07-01 would replace the sentence that directs examining councils to “be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates” with language from the constitutional questions asked of candidates for ordination. It is unclear what is gained from this.

While ACSWP does not advise the necessity of any amendments to G-2.0104b, if the 220th General Assembly (2012) concludes that G-2.0104b needs to be amended to emphasize the unique authority of Scripture, ACSWP advises that the language proposed by Item 07-01 is less disruptive of the purpose of G-2.0104b.

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## Item 07-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-02. See p. 52 .]

#### *On Amending G-2.0104b to Clarify Standards for Ordination—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). *These standards are found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as interpreted by the confessions of the church and include the commitment to live a chaste and disciplined life, whether in holy marriage between a man and a woman or in single life (The Book of Confessions, 4.108).* The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s *commitment to these standards*, calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). ~~Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.~~ *Only those who affirm a desire to adhere to the standards for ordained service and who make an affirmative answer to the constitutional questions shall be ordained or installed.”*

#### *Rationale*

The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) currently states that the manner of life of those called to ordained office in the church “should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” (G-2.0104a).

It is vital to clarify that this gospel we are called to demonstrate is not whatever one wishes it to be, but is, rather, the faith “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). This gospel is found in the Scriptures as interpreted by our confessions.

Further, the Form of Government currently states that “Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02)” (G-2.0104b). This affirmation begs the question of what the Lordship of Jesus Christ means. The answer includes that we have no knowledge of Jesus Christ other than as he is revealed to humanity in the written Word of God. Therefore joyful submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ means to seek obedience to the way of life that is commended to us in the Scriptures as interpreted by our confessions.

This amendment gives necessary definition to terms used in the Form of Government and removes ambiguity in the present wording that is causing grievous disruption to the peace, unity, purity, and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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**Concurrence to Item 07-02 from the Presbyteries of Charleston Atlantic, Kiskiminetas, and Upper Ohio Valley.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-02**

*Advice on Item 07-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-02 presents issues that the assembly should consider.

The overture proposes an amendment to G-2.0104b that (1) would add a new second sentence to the paragraph, (2) would insert the phrase “commitment to these standards” in the resulting third sentence, and (3) would strike the current final sentence and replace it with a new sentence. The new second sentence indicates that the “standards for ordained service” are found in the Scriptures and the confessions and include “the commitment to live a chaste and disciplined life whether in holy marriage between a man and a woman or in single life.” The sentence to be added in place of the current final sentence reads: “Only those who affirm a desire to adhere to the standards for ordained service and who make an affirmative answer to the constitutional questions shall be ordained or installed.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly of the following concerns:

1. Introducing the language of “holy” marriage may confuse the issue by raising questions of whether the marital relationship permitted under the proposed addition is exclusively a “Christian” marriage, and thus whether someone married in a civil ceremony would qualify for ordination or installation. If the assembly is satisfied with the intent of this overture, it may wish to consider using “the covenant of marriage” in place of the proposed “holy marriage.”

2. The insertion of the phrase “commitment to these standards” in the current second (proposed third) sentence of the paragraph is at least partly repetitive, since the next sentence mandates that the examination shall “include ... a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003).” Since a candidate must affirm the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as “the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church Universal and God’s Word to [the candidate],” a commitment to these as standards is implied in the required affirmation.

3. The proposed requirement of an affirmation of a “desire to adhere to these standards of ordained service,” may limit a candidate’s right of freedom of conscience under G-2.0105. A candidate may declare an objection of conscience to one or more provisions of the Constitution, which might include a “standard of ordained service” as envisioned in this overture. It would then be the responsibility of the examining body to determine whether the objection constitutes a departure from an essential of Reformed faith and polity. Requiring an affirmation of a candidate’s desire to adhere to a standard to which he or she has objection raises the desire to adhere itself to the status of a necessary and essential article.

4. The final sentence to be added by the overture is at least partly repetitive of language already present in G-2.0104b. The text of the present statement contains the sentence that the examination shall “include but not be limited to a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003).” The implication of the existing sentence is that a candidate who does not make an affirmative answer to the constitutional questions would not sustain his or her examination. The addition of the new final sentence serves to make explicit what is already implied in the previous sentence; the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the explication is unnecessary and could be deleted without loss of meaning.

5. The approval of this amendment would in substance reverse the decision of the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the subsequent approval of a majority of the presbyteries to remove the specific behavioral standard of “fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness” from the Form of Government. The assembly should weigh carefully whether it believes the majority of the church took that action in error before proposing this amendment.

07 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY  
**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, AND 07-16**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 from the Presbyteries of Stockton, Central Florida, Washington, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to reinstate, as a standard for ordination, the requirement that candidates live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or to live in chastely in singleness.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The effect of Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06 and 07-16 would be to reverse the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), which has since been ratified by ninety-seven presbyteries, ten more than needed. Essentially, presbyteries would be asked to vote again on the same issue. While the 220th General Assembly (2012) can choose to do that, the current Constitution places the decision of a candidate's suitability for ordination within the ordaining body.

Since 1978, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and its predecessors have recognized that ordination issues are justice issues. The history of the church's struggle to embrace equality in ordination for women and racial ethnic men is a clear example of this connection. The action of the 217th General Assembly (2006), to approve Paragraph 5 of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report, was intended to provide a way by which we could live together in mutual forbearance and respect our differences regarding ordination of homosexual persons. In response to a decision by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved two authoritative interpretations intended to return to governing bodies the responsibility to determine what is "essential" and to avoid rigid and legalistic standards, particularly ones that highlight certain sexual sins while not naming many other forms and categories of serious sin.

The first stated: "Section G-6.0108 requires examining bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards. ..." The second affirmed that categorical statements by PC(USA) predecessor bodies, which declared that the ordination of a "self-affirming, practicing homosexual person to ministry" would be contradictory to Scripture and the will of Christ, would no longer be in effect.

The effect of the actions of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) is to allow a governing body, based on their careful case-by case consideration of the candidate, to determine that a candidate's departure from the specific standard of fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness is not a departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. These actions attempt to balance the relationship between a council's identification of the essentials of faith in the Reformed tradition and the individual's right of conscience. They also strive to respect the diversity of theological views and methods of biblical interpretation that exist within our unity in Christ. Ultimately, these actions continue to place the responsibility for determining an individual's readiness for ordination with sessions and presbyteries: "The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member (*Book of Order*, G-2.0105).

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-02.

*Rationale*

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

## Item 07-03

[The assembly answered Item 07-03 by the action taken on Item 07-02. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Amending G-2.0104a to Include Standards Regarding Sexual Behavior—From the Presbytery of Central Florida.*

The Presbytery of Central Florida overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0104a be amended as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. To those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders—God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world, *including living either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness.* They must have the approval of God’s people and the concurring judgment of a council of the church.”

### *Rationale*

Ordained persons who have abused the power of their office have harmed many in the church. This sends a strong message that such behavior will not be tolerated.

The removal of clear standards regarding sexual behavior is harmful not only to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but also to many of our ecumenical relationships.

The removal of clear standards about appropriate sexual behavior has created misrepresentation of our beliefs and persecution of Christians in parts of the world where Christians are in the minority.

The passage of Amendment 10-A has been destructive to the peace, purity, and unity of the church.

In a world filled with confusion about sexual ethics and commitment, the church needs to emphasize the importance of fidelity within the bonds of marriage.

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### **Concurrence to Item 07-03 from the Presbyteries of Holston and Central Nebraska.**

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-03**

*Advice on Item 07-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-03 presents issues that the assembly should consider.

The proposed language would amend G-2.0104a by adding a clause at the end of the third sentence. Under the added language, that a candidate’s “manner of life” is “a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” would be determined, at least in part, by whether or not the candidate lives in “fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness.” Inasmuch as the amended sentence of G-2.0104a is governed by the word “should,” approving this language would lift up a particular manner of life—sexual behavior and practice—as “a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.” It would have the force of establishing a strongly recommended practice, but would not establish a required standard for service in the church’s ordered ministry. A session and presbytery would be expected to ascertain whether a candidate lives in the aforesaid fidelity and/or chastity as a partial determination of whether the candidate is ready for the ministry to which he or she has been elected.

The General Assembly will, of course, be aware that the language proposed for addition is part of the wording of the former G-6.0106b (*Book of Order, 2009–2011*) that was removed by majority vote of the presbyteries in favor of the current contents of G-2.0104b.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 07-03 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

07 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY  
**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, AND 07-16**

*Advice and Council on Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 from the Presbyteries of Stockton, Central Florida, Washington, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to reinstate, as a standard for ordination, the requirement that candidates live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or to live in chastely in singleness.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The effect of Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06 and 07-16 would be to reverse the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), which has since been ratified by ninety-seven presbyteries, ten more than needed. Essentially, presbyteries would be asked to vote again on the same issue. While the 220th General Assembly (2012) can choose to do that, the current Constitution places the decision of a candidate's suitability for ordination within the ordaining body.

Since 1978, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and its predecessors have recognized that ordination issues are justice issues. The history of the church's struggle to embrace equality in ordination for women and racial ethnic men is a clear example of this connection. The action of the 217th General Assembly (2006), to approve Paragraph 5 of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report, was intended to provide a way by which we could live together in mutual forbearance and respect our differences regarding ordination of homosexual persons. In response to a decision by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved two authoritative interpretations intended to return to governing bodies the responsibility to determine what is "essential" and to avoid rigid and legalistic standards, particularly ones that highlight certain sexual sins while not naming many other forms and categories of serious sin.

The first stated: "Section G-6.0108 requires examining bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards. ..." The second affirmed that categorical statements by PC(USA) predecessor bodies, which declared that the ordination of a "self-affirming, practicing homosexual person to ministry" would be contradictory to Scripture and the will of Christ, would no longer be in effect.

The effect of the actions of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) is to allow a governing body, based on their careful case-by case consideration of the candidate, to determine that a candidate's departure from the specific standard of fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness is not a departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. These actions attempt to balance the relationship between a council's identification of the essentials of faith in the Reformed tradition and the individual's right of conscience. They also strive to respect the diversity of theological views and methods of biblical interpretation that exist within our unity in Christ. Ultimately, these actions continue to place the responsibility for determining an individual's readiness for ordination with sessions and presbyteries: "The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member (*Book of Order*, G-2.0105).

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-03.

*Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 07-02 is applicable here as well:

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

## Item 07-04

[The assembly disapproved Item 07–04. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Amending the Book of Order Concerning the Titles Used for Those in Ordered Ministries—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.*

The Presbytery of Santa Fe respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. That in the Form of Government (newly approved, 2011) the terms “ruling elder” and “teaching elder” used for those in ordered ministries be replaced throughout the with the former terms “*elder*” and “*minister of Word and Sacrament*” being substituted.

2. Amend F-3.0202 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“This church shall be governed by presbyters, that is, ~~ruling elders and teaching elders~~ *ministers of the Word and Sacrament*. ~~Ruling Elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they~~ *Elders* are chosen by the congregation to discern and ~~measure~~ *guide* in its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. ~~Teaching elders~~ *Ministers of the Word and Sacrament* shall be committed in all their work to *teaching the faith in word and in deed* and equipping the people of God for their ministry and witness.”

3. Amend G-2.0301 follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“~~Ruling~~ Elder Defined

“As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God’s Spirit and governance of God’s people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. ~~Ruling elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they~~ *Elders* are chosen by the congregation to discern and ~~measure~~ *and guide* in its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. ~~Ruling elders, together with teaching elders~~ *Elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament*, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ~~ruling elders~~ participate and vote with the same authority as ~~teaching elders~~ *ministers of the Word and Sacrament*, and they are eligible for any office.”

4. Amend G-2.05 and G-2.0501 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“~~Teaching Elders~~—The Ministry of the Word and Sacrament: *Teaching Elder and Pastor*

“G-2.0501 ~~Teaching Elder~~ *Minister of the Word and Sacrament* Defined

“~~Teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament)~~ *Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (also called teaching elders and pastors)* shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith *in word and deed* and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). They may serve in a variety of ministries as authorized by the presbytery. When they serve as preachers and teachers of the Word, they shall preach and teach the faith of the church, so that the people are shaped by the pattern of the gospel and strengthened for witness and service. When they serve at font and table, they shall interpret and ‘show forth’ the mysteries of grace and ~~lift~~ *in word and action, lifting* the people’s vision toward the hope of God’s new creation. When they serve as pastors they shall support the people in the disciplines of the faith amid the struggles of daily life. When they serve as presbyters, they shall participate in the responsibilities of governance, seeking always to discern the mind of Christ and to build up Christ’s body through devotion, debate, and decision.”

### *Rationale*

Language is important. As humans we easily adapt to the descriptors used for us; and people’s expectations of us are built around those same descriptors. Despite its historical provenance in the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition, the change in the PC(USA)’s new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government of the titles used for those called to “ordered ministry” falls short of providing a sufficient and accurate description of the offices of elder and minister of the Word and Sacrament. The shift to the designations of “ruling” and “teaching” elders as the primary titles is descriptively

misleading and inadequate to the scope of the roles and functions associated with those offices. The new language also seems more institutional than communal and relational in its focus.

The change from “elder” to “ruling elder” is both restrictive and negative in its implications. It was apparently of sufficient concern to the authors of the new Form of Government to cause them to write a disclaimer into their text (“*Ruling elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation...etc.*”) in two places (F-3.0202 and G-2.0301). The need for this is understandable, as the word “ruling” evokes an authoritarianism that is foreign to the “ministry” of elders in the current church. In historical Presbyterian practice in Britain and the U.S., the “ruling elders” truly ruled, primarily as a disciplinary court. Old session minutes are often dominated by cases of Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, swearing, adultery, fornication, and other infractions by members of congregations, answered by various forms of public repentance imposed by the local session. The “ruling elders” of old even ruled on who was deemed to be duly prepared and ready to receive the Lord’s Supper every time (annually or quarterly) that it was dispensed. The word “ruling” carries troubling echoes of the “discipline” of former times, over against the vision of church as “a covenant community of disciples” set forth in the new Form of Government (F-1.0303).

The simple biblical term “elder” has broader implications without the negative aspect. The word evokes the elders of ancient Israel, and those of the early church. The elder is not, as the new Form of Government’s disclaimer says, someone who “lords it over” others; but who (hopefully) is a wise and faithful leader from whom one seeks counsel and guidance. The godly elder, in our tradition, is to be a person of prayer, a person grounded in Scripture, and ideally a memorable figure who—often more than the ministers—guides and shapes the local community across the generations. The Christian elder is, like Christ, more a servant than a ruler.

Comparable concerns arise in relation to the title “teaching elder.” Vocational ministry encompasses many functions. There is, of course, a “teaching” aspect, but even there the current terminology of “spiritual formation” may better convey the reality of what is intended for “teachers” of the gospel. A primary focus on the “teaching” role can too easily direct us toward old tendencies of focusing on the intellect at the expense of the heart and habits of life. It also raises the question of how the designation “teaching elder” encompasses the pastoral aspect of the vocational minister’s function.

Another, presumably unintended, consequence of the change to “teaching elder” from “minister of the Word and Sacrament” is that the emphasis on “teaching” may too easily focus on “the Word” at the expense of “Sacrament.” Presbyterians assert a balance of “Word” and “Sacrament” but in practice we have often emphasized the “Word” to the neglect of “Sacrament.” The former designation of “minister of the Word and Sacrament” constantly reminds us of the intended balance, and hopefully of the importance of experiencing the “sacred mysteries” of the faith in conjunction with our study and reasoning.

The role of a vocational minister is to minister the Word and the Sacraments to and with the people of God. The minister does this not, primarily, as a social worker, or psychologist, or administrator, or (even) teacher. The minister’s primary function is to bring the Word and the Sacraments to the community of faith “truly” and “rightly” so that they may be used by the Holy Spirit to do God’s work within and among us. Thus, the title “minister of Word and Sacrament” conveys—not only to those who bear the office, but to members of the community of faith, and even to those with no church affiliation—a clearer descriptive summary of what the role and function is.

A return to the nomenclature of “elder” and “minister of Word and Sacrament” is particularly appropriate in light of the new Form of Government’s repeated emphasis on the three historic “marks” of the Reformed church as being a body that “proclaims and hears the Word of God ... administers and receives the Sacraments ... and nurtures a covenant community of disciples of Christ” (F-1.0303).

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**Concurrence to Item 07-04 from the Presbytery of Newton.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-04**

*Advice on Item 07-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-04 presents issues that the assembly should consider.

The proposed amendment would require editing the entire *Book of Order*, so that wherever the current text reads “ruling elder” or “teaching elder,” those terms would be replaced by “elder” and “minister of the Word and Sacrament,” respectively. In addition, it would alter the wording of F-3.0202 concerning the governance of the church by presbyters, G-2.0301 concerning the definition of the ordered ministry of the ruling elder, and G-2.0501 concerning the definition of the ordered ministry of the teaching elder. The terms “elder” and “minister of the Word and Sacrament” are those used in the *Book of Order* prior to the revision approved by the church in 2011.



The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes as a preface to this discussion that the title “minister of the Word and Sacrament” is not absent from the Form of Government; it appears in both G-2.0501 and G-4.0301. Historically, both the terms, “teaching elder” and “minister of the Word and Sacrament,” have been important in the language of the church. Both terms continue to have validity and currency. Thus the title, “minister of the Word and Sacrament,” is still in use and may be employed by the church in various contexts. This fact may eliminate the need for this overture.

As the rationale for this overture notes, “language is important.” It is through our language that we communicate to each other—and indeed, shape in our own minds—what we think. It is therefore vital that the terminology we use reflects as accurately as possible the theological commitments we make as a people of God. It is for this reason that the Form of Government employs the titles “teaching elder” and “ruling elder.”

The Form of Government as adopted by the church in 2011 understands that “the basic form of ministry is the ministry of the whole people of God, from whose midst some are called to ordered ministries, to fulfill particular functions” (G-2.01). In establishing this principle, the Form of Government seeks to counteract the tendency abroad in the church toward clericalism. Clericalism is the habit of the religious communities to rely mainly or even exclusively on a limited number of leaders—often professional leaders—to carry out the work of ministry. There are at least two ways in which clericalism poses a danger for Reformed communities.

First, clericalism suggests an unwarranted limitation on the call to ministry. Using the term “minister” to apply particularly to those ordained as teaching elders suggests that “ministry” is the work of the “minister of the Word and Sacrament” rather than the work of the whole people of God and of every baptized person individually.

Second, clericalism undermines the basic parity between ruling and teaching elders in the governance of the church. The Form of Government uses the terms “Teaching Elder” and “Ruling Elder” to suggest that, while the particular orders of ministry of the two are different, they are united in the shared responsibility as elders to govern and guide the ministry of God’s people. It is the unique gift of the Reformed community that there is a basic parity in the governance of the church between ruling and teaching elders.

The terms “teaching elder” and “ruling elder” point to vital functions that lie at the heart of these orders of ministry. The Form of Government lifts up teaching as the primary function through which the ministry of the Word and Sacrament is exercised. Section G-2.0501 states: “Teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament) shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12). . . .”

The paragraph then goes on to elucidate the ways in which this teaching function is expressed through the various pastoral activities of proclamation, sacramental celebration, pastoral care, and service in the councils of the church.

The Form of Government lifts up this teaching function because it is central to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. In so doing, it follows the tradition established early in the history of the Kirk of Scotland. In Chapter 4 of the *Second Book of Discipline* (1621), the Kirk of Scotland describes as a central function of the minister the “teaching of the word of God . . . publicly and privately, always traueiling [travailing] to edifie, and discharge his [sic] conscience, as God’s word prescribes him.” That same section notes the minister’s responsibility for the administration of the Sacraments, “for both are appointed by God, as meanes to teach us, one by the ear and the other by the eyes, and other senses, that by both knowledge may be transferred to the minde.” By virtue of the educational requirements of those ordained to this ministry, the teaching elder is nearly always the best prepared, and in many communities uniquely prepared, to serve as the teacher of the faith.

The order of ruling elder is so named in recognition of the ministry of discernment and governance. Again, in the early polity of the Kirk of Scotland, the ruling elder is called to “be diligent in admonishing all men of their dutie according to the rule of the Evangell (*Second Booke of Discipline*, 1621, Chapter 6). The title “ruling elder” preserves this significant function. Section G-2.0301 states: “. . . Ruling elders are so named not because they ‘lord it over’ the congregation (Matt 2:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. . . .”

Finally, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the overture as proposed would introduce an inconsistency in the descriptions of the three orders of ministry in Chapter II. Currently, the titles of G-2.02, G-2.03, and G-2.05 exhibit a basic consistency of form, meant to suggest that each order has a name and then a defined function in ministry. Thus, G-2.02 describes “Deacons: The Ministry of Compassion and Service”; G-2.03 describes “Ruling Elders: The Ministry of Discernment and Governance”; G-2.05 describes “Teaching Elders: The Ministry of the Word and Sacrament.” The overture would alter this pattern. It does not propose a change in the title of G-2.03 but would change the text of G-2.0301 in a way that would be inconsistent with the title (preserving “Ruling Elder” in the title of G-2.03 but not in the title or text of G-2.0301). The proposed title in G-2.05 would abandon this form in favor of an apposition between the terms “Minister of Word and Sacrament” and “Teaching Elder and Pastor.”

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 07-04 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly to instruct the Stated Clerk to make the changes in section titles as follows:

“G-2.03 ~~Ruling Elders~~ Ruling Elders: The Ministry of Discernment and Governance”

“G-2.05 ~~Teaching Elders~~ Minister of the Word and Sacrament: The Ministry of the Word and Sacrament *Teaching and Pastoral Care*”

## Item 07-05

[The assembly approved Item 07-05. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Amending G-2.0104a to Include “Repentance of Sin” and “Means of Grace”—From the Presbytery of San Jose.*

The Presbytery of San Jose overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104a of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“a. To those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders—God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. *This includes repentance of sin and diligent use of the means of grace.* They must have the approval of God’s people and the concurring judgment of a council of the church.”

### *Rationale*

Section G-2.0104 of the *Book of Order* states:

a. To those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders—God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. They must have the approval of God’s people and the concurring judgment of a council of the church; and

The Westminster Larger Catechism, 7.305 states:

Q. 195. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A. In the sixth petition (which is, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”), acknowledging that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations, but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them; we pray: that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation; or, when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof; that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil forever. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Larger Catechism, 7.305)

When a church member is found guilty of an offense because of acting contrary to the Scriptures and/or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), that person is censured and the following is part of the public rebuke:

“We urge you to use diligently the means of grace to the end that you may be more obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Book of Order*, D-12.0102).

We respectfully overture for the above specified amendment to G-2.0104a.

**Concurrence to Item 07-05 from the Presbytery of Pueblo.**

### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-05

*Advice on Item 07-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-05 presents the following issues that the assembly should consider.

The overture would amend G-2.0104a by inserting as the fourth sentence the following: “This includes repentance of sin and diligent use of the means of grace.” The effect of the insertion of this sentence is to define the requirement of the third sentence that those called to the church’s ordered ministry exhibit a manner of life that is “a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” by requiring repentance and diligent use of the means of grace.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that G-2.0104a bears the title “Gifts and Qualifications.” While the titles are not, of themselves, constitutional, they do provide important clues in the interpretation of the content of the text. In this paragraph, the Constitution affirms that God gives “suitable gifts” for the various duties of ordered ministry. In addition to these gifts, those who undertake these ministries should be persons possessed of certain qualifications. There is, therefore, a relationship between the “suitable gifts” and the qualifications of those who serve in the church’s ordered ministry. This relationship should stand as a caution to the church against quantifying behaviors that demonstrate the qualifications for ordered ministry, and against devising metrics or arbitrary standards by which the presence or absence of these qualifications should be measured.

The additional qualifications envisioned in this overture bear comment. “Repentance of sin” is a broad phrase that may be open to considerable interpretation, especially when it is seen as a qualification for ordered ministry. Renunciation of evil is a part of the profession of faith made by all active members of the church (*Book of Order*, W-3.3603b). Moreover, since “... all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3.23), the commitment to renounce sin and rely on God’s grace is a continuing one applicable to all believers, candidates included. Neither the language of profession nor that proposed here lifts one sin above others as especially requiring repentance (e.g., sexual behavior), nor does it differentiate between sins as to their magnitude or implication for service in the church’s ordered ministries. Care must be taken not to use the proposed sentence as the basis for establishing minimum standards of sins to be repented. The question is not “Has one repented of a particular sin?” but “Does the life of this individual show evidence of the humility required for repentance?”

The “means of grace” are well-defined in our confessional tradition as the “outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption ...” Those means are “especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer, all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation” (*The Book of Confessions*, 7.088; see also 7.264). A manner of life that demonstrates the Christian gospel in the church and the world would, under this sentence, show evidence of regular participation in the proclamation and hearing of the word, regular participation in the church’s observation of the sacraments, and regular participation in worship (“prayer”). Whether a particular candidate’s participation in the means of grace is sufficiently “diligent” might be a matter for discussion within a congregational nominating committee or presbytery committee charged with care of candidates, and might also be a subject to be addressed in the candidate’s examination. It might also be subject to nuanced consideration in light of the candidate’s physical limitations, family circumstances, or employment requirements.

Although it is not clear from the rationale, the intent of this overture may be to restore in substance, if not in precise wording, the prohibition from ordination and/or installation for those sexually active outside heterosexual marriage. The phrase “repentance of sin” is reminiscent of the phrase, “repent of any self-acknowledged practice the confessions call sin” that was removed from the *Book of Order* by action of the assembly and presbyteries in 2010–2011. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the insertion of the phrase “repentance of sin” will not have the effect of restoring the recently removed prohibition. Whether a candidate’s manner of life demonstrates the Christian gospel in the church and the world ultimately remains a matter for the council responsible for the ordination and/or installation to determine, under the provisions of G-2.0104b.

Finally, the advisory committee notes the similarity between the qualifications to be added to this paragraph and the commitments undertaken at profession of faith and/or Baptism (see *Book of Order*, W-4.2003, especially b and c). The committee suggests that any active member of the church, having made or reaffirmed such commitments, might reasonably be deemed to have met the qualifications proposed for addition by this overture. Since active membership in the church is a prerequisite for ordination and/or installation to the church’s ordered ministries (*Book of Order*, G-1.0402), the inclusion of these items in G-2.0104a is consistent and appropriate, if perhaps redundant.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) agrees with the intent of Item 07-05, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language is consistent with the church’s Constitution.

## Item 07-06

[The assembly answered Item 07-06 by the action taken on Item 07-02. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Replacing G-2.0104b. with the Language of G-6.0106b in the Former Form of Government—From the Presbytery of Washington.*

The Presbytery of Washington overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104b be amended by striking the current text and inserting the text from G-6.0106b of the former Form of Government so that it will read as follows: [Text to be stricken is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F 1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G 2.0402; G 2.0607; G 3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W 4.4003). Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates. Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders.”~~

### ***Rationale***

We urge this change back to the historical language not only based on our individual consciences, but more importantly upon the timeless truth found in Scripture—our only infallible rule of faith and practice. Both the Old and New Testaments proclaim clearly that practiced homosexuality is outside God’s design laid out both in Creation as well as in the moral Law. As part of the moral law, these expectations are affirmed by Christ who came “not to abolish but to fulfill [the law]” (Mt. 5:17).

Those who argue that Christ has not given words of guidance in this matter and therefore we should lean to the side of tolerance, make an argument from silence, and therefore it is invalid from the very premise. Christ upheld the sacredness of sexuality as outlined in the Old Testament Law. We make these assertions not out of a spirit of exclusion or prejudice, but a conviction to remain true to the spirit of Scripture as well as to the letter. We are all sinners saved by grace, but we are still called to recognize what is outside God’s law and to respond in obedience.

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### **Concurrence to Item 07-06 from the Presbytery of Yukon (with Additional Rationale).**

We hold the following statements to be true:

- Presbyterians know it is essential to uphold the authority of Scripture,
- The historical witness of the church through our confessions condemns same-sex behavior,
- Christians must recognize God’s call through Scripture for Christians to be holy and set apart,
- It is necessary for us to be uncompromising when standing for God’s truth, and
- We remember the biblical teaching for Christians to be “in the world and not of it.”

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-06**

*Advice on Item 07-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-06 presents issues that the assembly should consider.

The proposed overture would delete current G-2.0104b and in its place add the text of former G-6.0106b.

The Advisory Committee advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the effect of this change would be directly to rescind the amendment of this passage in 2011 and to restore the previous standard of “fidelity within marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001) or chastity in singleness” to the Constitution.

The committee refers the assembly to its advice to the 219th General Assembly (2010) on Items 06-04 and 06-09. Specifically, the committee advised the assembly on Item 06-09:

This overture seeks to restore the ordination practice and principles affirmed in the Adopting Act of 1729, the paradigm through which the tension between the differing points of view and the unity of the church have been maintained through much of our denomination’s history. Examining bodies are required not only to examine “... *each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office.*” but are also required to judge the candidate’s “... *ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003)*” (Item 06-09, emphasis added). These questions require that the candidate affirm the authority of scripture, adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as contained in our confessions, and submit to the polity and discipline of the church. Moreover, the overture specifically states, consistent with the Adopting Act, that the examining bodies “... *shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates...*” (Item 06-09, emphasis added). ...

The effect of reversing the approval of Item 06-09 (subsequently Amendment 10-A; now G-2.0104b) would be to rescind the more broadly stated language of current G-2.0104b, and to eliminate the connection our ordination standards and the principles of dissent upheld in the Adopting Act. It would restore the prohibition against the ordination of persons “who refuse to repent of any self-acknowledged practice the confessions call sin.” The effect of this restoration, if taken at face value, is to invite the creation of a list of “practices the confessions call sin” against which the behavior of the candidate might be compared. Such a list would likely be both long and onerous to use. The focus of the second sentence on sexual practice would have the effect of lifting sexual practice to a position of special prominence—a sin somehow more important than other sins—in the examination process of candidates for ordered ministry. The elevation of one sin above others runs counter to Reformed theology and its refusal to “grade” sins according to their “cardinal” or “venal” status.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that the approval of revisions to the Form of Government would necessitate certain editorial changes in the text of the overture as proposed; specifically, “ordered ministry” for “office,” “ruling elder” for “elder,” and “teaching elder” for “minister of the Word and Sacrament.”

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) believes that the intent of Item 07-06 is appropriate, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed language can be made clearer and more consistent with that intent by being revised to:

“Those who are called to [~~office~~] [ordered ministry] in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001.), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders.”

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, AND 07-16

*Advice and Council on Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 from the Presbyteries of Stockton, Central Florida, Washington, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to reinstate, as a standard for ordination, the requirement that candidates live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or to live in chastely in singleness.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The effect of Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06 and 07-16 would be to reverse the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), which has since been ratified by ninety-seven presbyteries, ten more than needed. Essentially, presbyteries would be asked to vote again on the same issue. While the 220th General Assembly (2012) can choose to do that, the current Constitution places the decision of a candidate’s suitability for ordination within the ordaining body.

Since 1978, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and its predecessors have recognized that ordination issues are justice issues. The history of the church’s struggle to embrace equality in ordination for women and racial ethnic men is a clear example of this connection. The action of the 217th General Assembly (2006), to approve Paragraph 5 of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report, was intended to provide a way by which we could live together in mutual forbearance and respect our differences regarding ordination of homosexual persons. In response to a decision by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved two authoritative interpretations intended to return to governing bodies the responsibility to determine what is “essential” and to avoid rigid and legalistic standards, particularly ones that highlight certain sexual sins while not naming many other forms and categories of serious sin.

The first stated: “Section G-6.0108 requires examining bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards. ...” The second affirmed that categorical statements by PC(USA) predecessor bodies, which declared that the ordination of a “self-affirming, practicing homosexual person to ministry” would be contradictory to Scripture and the will of Christ, would no longer be in effect.

The effect of the actions of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) is to allow a governing body, based on their careful case-by case consideration of the candidate, to determine that a candidate’s departure from the specific standard of fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness is not a departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. These actions attempt to balance the relationship between a council’s identification of the essentials of faith in the Reformed tradition and the individual’s right of conscience. They also strive to respect the diversity of theological views and methods of

biblical interpretation that exist within our unity in Christ. Ultimately, these actions continue to place the responsibility for determining an individual's readiness for ordination with sessions and presbyteries: "The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member (*Book of Order*, G-2.0105).

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-06.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 07-02 is applicable here as well:

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

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## Item 07-07

**[The assembly approved Item 07-07 with amendment. See pp. 52, 53.]**

*On Reevaluating the Process by Which Ordination Exams Are Written, Administered, and Graded—From the Presbytery of Cascades.*

**The Presbytery of the Cascades overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:**

- 1. Reexamine the viability of testing as a way of discerning a candidate's suitability for ministry.**
- 2. Reevaluate and reassess the process by which the exams are written, administered, and graded.**
- 3. Assess the exams' assumed cultural neutrality and revise exams as needed to address disparities in pass rates.**
- 4. Work with councils to develop effective, alternative methods of examination, and to encourage their use to grow the pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.**
- 5. Request the assembly fund an expanded study of the overall process of preparation for ministry including the standard ordination examinations with recommendations to be reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

**[Financial Implications: 2013: \$17,660; 2014: \$10,260 (Per Capita—OGA)]**

#### *Rationale*

It has been forty-four years since the standard ordination exams were established for candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament (teaching elder). Times have changed and we as a society have discovered that people today learn and process knowledge in different ways, especially those persons with learning disabilities as well as those who come to us from whom English is a second language. Many of our candidates are failing to pass the exams on the first, second, or even third attempts.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly approve Item 07-07 as amended:

Insert new Recommendations 3 and 4 to read as follows:

“[3. Assess the exams’ assumed cultural neutrality and revise exams as needed to address disparities in pass rates.

“[4. Work with councils to develop effective, alternative methods of examination, and to encourage their use to grow the pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.]”

*Rationale*

Research demonstrates disparities in pass rates between African American, Hispanic/Latino, and EuroAmerican candidates. African American and Hispanic/Latino readers have suggested revisions are needed to move the exams toward more cultural neutrality and a fairer examination process. As demographics shift, the church requires a diverse pool of trained leaders; thus, we must strive for the most effective process of assessment.

Additionally, alternative methods of examination are often more effective in cases where disability or a lack of English fluency render the standard exams difficult to use fairly.

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 07-07**

*Comment on Item 07-07—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly supports the presbyteries in the preparation for ministry process, which includes staff support for the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) in administering the standard ordination examinations. The Office of Vocation and the PCCEC are in the midst of a multiyear effort to update the technological basis for administering the examinations and to provide the presbyteries with an effective tool for assessment of candidates’ readiness for ministry in today’s diverse contexts.

Both the overall preparation for ministry process and the role of the standard examinations within it were designed decades ago in response to the needs of the church and its ministry context at the time. The wide range of changes in the church, our ministry context, and in candidates preparing for ministry requires adaptive change in the process of formation of leadership. To that end, the Office of Vocation plans to bring together diverse leaders from across the church to consider the process of preparing persons for ministry as teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In order to build upon on the “Special Committee to Study the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century” and the “General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils” reports before this assembly, the plan calls for having this group to meet in the second half of 2012. The goal is to perform a ground-up review of the process, not only responding to changing needs but also learning from innovative approaches to ministry formation both within our church and among other denominations.

Rather than focus narrowly on the standard ordination examinations in isolation from the overall preparation for ministry process, we would ask that commissioners consider responding to Item 07–07 by requesting the assembly fund an expanded study of the overall process of preparation for ministry including the standard ordination examinations with recommendations to be reported to the 221st General Assembly in 2014.

Financial implications: \$27,680

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## Item 07-08

**[The assembly disapproved Item 07-08. See pp. 52, 53.]**

*On Adding G-2.0104c Allowing Operational Manuals to Require Adherence to Certain Theological and/or Behavioral Expectations—From the Presbytery of South Alabama.*

The Presbytery of South Alabama overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G. 2.0104 be amended by adding a new paragraph “c.” to read as follows:

*“c. Councils may publicize in their operational manuals any theological, ethical, and behavioral expectations that reflect prevailing biblical and confessional interpretations of that governing body. These guidelines may be used to inform and instruct nominating and examining committees of a particular council.”*

*Rationale*

The Constitution of the PC(USA) now requires councils such as sessions and presbyteries to make their own determination of the faith, giftedness, capacity, and general fitness for ordained leadership in the church. The governing body qualified to make such a determination for elders and deacons in a congregation is the session; for ministers of Word and Sacrament, the Presbytery. Based upon the principle of fairness and transparency, operational manuals for these councils should publi-

cize guidelines to inform and instruct nominating and examining committees, as well as candidates for ordination, on issues that might be considered in the nominating and examining process.

The newest paragraph in the *Book of Order* pertaining to gifts and qualifications (G. 2.0104b) requires the use of the Scriptures and the confessions as guidelines, but needs clarification as to whether councils may use these guidelines to require adherence to certain theological and/or behavioral expectations. The intent of this overture is to clarify that a given council's interpretation of Scripture or the confessions is to not only inform the process, but require adherence to standards based upon those interpretations.

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-08

*Advice on Item 07-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-08 raises issues best addressed by the following authoritative interpretation of G-2.0104:

“Councils may impose other requirements on those in ordered ministries, after ordination and installation, such as requirements to abide by ethics or sexual misconduct policies. These policies may be used to inform nominating and examining committees of a particular council. Nominating and examining bodies may inform potential nominees or candidates of the existence of these policies, but the policies may not be used to establish prejudicial barriers. They do not excuse a council or its examining body from its responsibility to ‘examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry,’ nor do they prevent a council from determining that a waiver of one or more aspects of such policies may be warranted in light of the candidate’s examination.”

#### *Rationale*

The overture would add a new section G-2.0104c to the section “Gifts and Qualifications” to provide that “councils may publicize in their operational manuals any theological, ethical, and behavioral expectations that reflect prevailing biblical and confessional interpretations of that governing body,” and that “these guidelines may be used to “inform and instruct nominating and examining committees of a particular council.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the overture correctly understands the restriction placed on councils lower than the General Assembly with regard to ordination standards. In *Bush v. Pittsburgh Presbytery* (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p.319, *Remedial Case 218-10*), referring to the authoritative interpretation of (then) G-6.0108 by the 217th General Assembly (2006), the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GA PJC) determined:

The Authoritative Interpretation correctly states that the standards for ordination of officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are set forth in the *Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government. Section “b” of the Authoritative Interpretation states that “these standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries” (emphasis added). The constitutional process for amending ordination standards (or any other provision of the Constitution) is defined in Chapter 18 of the Form of Government. While the General Assembly and the GAPJC may interpret these standards, the Authoritative Interpretation did not (and constitutionally could not) change any ordination standard, including the requirements set forth in G-6.0106b. Similarly, no lower governing body can constitutionally define, diminish, augment or modify standards for ordination and installation of church officers.

The commission attached to this statement a footnote, which reads: “Governing bodies may impose other requirements on church officers, after ordination and installation, such as requirements to abide by ethics or sexual misconduct policies.”

The clear requirement of this decision is that no session or presbytery (or synod) can establish its own standards for ordination and installation, such standards serving as potential prejudicial barriers to candidates and thereby precluding individual examination and determination of readiness for ministry. At the same time, as the aforementioned footnote makes clear, a session or presbytery may establish ethics policies and to require adherence to them, provided that such policies are understood to apply to persons already ordained and installed in the ordered ministries of the church. This power is inherent in the right of any council, from the session to the General Assembly, to “frame statements of faith, bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in life,” etc (*Book of Order*, G-3.0102).

It is reasonable that, having adopted such ethics policies, a session or presbytery may wish to inform potential candidates, as well as those who nominate candidates and examine them of the existence of such policies. Such policies cannot be used to preclude individual examination of candidates, and their existence cannot relieve a session or presbytery of responsibility to hear objections to one or more aspects of the policy on the part of a candidate. Instead, having heard candidates regarding their objections, the examining council must determine whether to waive part or all of the policy in light of the rationale offered by the candidate.

The ACC notes that “Instruct” does not include instructing a nominating committee whom it may nominate or a congregation whom it may elect. In order to avoid confusion, the ACC advises that the word is essentially redundant, and could lead to confusion; it should be deleted.



The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that, if it agrees with the intent of Item 07-08, that intent can better be accomplished by authoritative interpretation of G-2.0104, rather than by the addition of a new section of the Constitution.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 07-08 overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to add to G.2.0104 a new paragraph permitting ordaining councils to establish interpretations of Scripture and the church's confessions and to require that judgments about a candidate's adherence to ordination standards be based upon such interpretations.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 07-08 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 07-08 violates a Foundation of Presbyterian Polity: F-1.04 Openness to the Guidance of the Holy Spirit. This section clearly defines our Christian unity as embodying our many diversities: "In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or *theological conviction*" (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403, italics added). In contrast, Item 07-08 would impose upon individual members of a council (sessions and presbyteries) a particular interpretation of Scripture or the confessions that they must apply as they try to discern a candidate's adherence to the standards of ordination. Such a requirement ignores the responsibility of council members to be open to the movement of the Spirit.

Furthermore, Item 07-08 violates G-2.0105 Freedom of Conscience, which states: "So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained." As stated in the overture's rationale, the clear intent of Item 07-08 is to "... require adherence to certain theological and/or behavioral expectations."

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-08.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC understands this item as motivated by a desire to reinsert on a local level the ordination requirement that was just removed from the *Book of Order* relating to living "either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness." Approval of this item would essentially allow a locally based reinsertion of the discriminatory language that was just removed from the *Book of Order*. Thus, ACWC's rationale for Item 07-02 is appropriate here:

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

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## Item 07-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-09. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.*

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306:

“Because members of an examining council are to assess the fitness of officers-elect on a case-by-case basis, in light of each person’s faith, life, and witness, and because such assessments are to be made in collective discernment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, an elder-elect may not be required to commit during examination to how he or she might assess the fitness of other officers-elect in the future.”

### *Rationale*

Following recent amendment of the church’s ordination standards, some have expressed concern that they may be disqualified from service given their opposition to ordained service by persons who are in same-sex relationships. This authoritative interpretation is meant to defuse apparent tensions over the potential misuse of abstract questions about this in examination.

The Constitution vests sole authority for the election of church officers in congregations, and sole authority for assessing the fitness of officers-elect in sessions and presbyteries. When they gather together to examine officers-elect, sessions and presbyteries “are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ” (F-3.0204).

As authoritatively interpreted by General Assembly, the Constitution (G-2.0105) also makes clear that all examinations must be conducted on a case-by-case basis, in light of each officer-elect’s faith, life, and witness. Accordingly, it would be improper for any person to commit (or be asked to commit) to a particular view on matters relating to the fitness of other officers-elect outside the context of the actual examinations of such persons. Abstract questions about whom an incoming elder might or might not find fit for ordained service in the future are inconsistent with these basic principles, and may contribute to a climate of intimidation and mistrust. This authoritative interpretation is intended to make clear that such questioning during examination is improper.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-09**

*Advice on Item 07-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 07-09.

The overture proposes an authoritative interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306, the former pertaining to the preparation and examination of deacons- and ruling elders-elect, and the latter pertaining to the examination of candidates for ordination or installation as teaching elders. The proposed interpretation anticipates that, in the course of the examination of a candidate for ordered ministry, the candidate might be asked to declare how he or she would vote in assessing the fitness of a subsequent candidate. The interpretation seeks to determine that all such questions concerning the fitness of persons not presently under examination are prohibited.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that it should be extremely cautious in placing limits on what a session or presbytery may or may not ask in the context of examining candidates for ordered ministry. Section G-2.0104b establishes only *minimum* limits—a candidate’s “ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003)”—and does not set boundaries in exploring a candidate’s theology or practice. The committee believes it would be unwise of the assembly to move beyond this minimal standard, and advises that the content of examinations is best left to the particular council responsible for ordination and installation.

The advisory committee is aware that there may be considerable tension and anxiety in the church over the question of whether dissent from the recently adopted revision of G-2.0104b may result in a constitutional bar to the ordination and/or installation of the dissenter. It may be that the intent of this overture is to prevent the application of the principles of the *Maxwell v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh* case (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I p. 254, *Remedial Case 1*) to candidates who express objections of conscience to the provisions of G-2.0104b. If so, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the proposed interpretation will not offer such protection.

At stake in *Maxwell* (the so-called “Kenyon” case) was the candidate’s refusal to participate in the ordination of women, whom he understood Scripture to bar from ordained service. The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Council found that the then-Constitution of the UPCUSA contained a positive requirement that “the office of ruling elder shall be open to all members regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, or age” (then 39.03), and “Every congregation shall elect persons from among its members, giving attention to a fair representation of both the male and female constituency of that congregation...” (then 47.01). It determined that, on the basis of that requirement, “refusal to ordain women on the basis of their sex is contrary to the Constitution.”

The *Book of Order* contains no positive requirement that persons sexually active outside the bounds of heterosexual marriage *shall* be ordained or installed in the ordered ministry of the church. The decision as to whether a candidate’s stated objection to the ordination or installation of such persons is or is not acceptable remains the prerogative of the examining council (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104b). Section G-2.0105 protects the right of a candidate to declare an objection of conscience to

provisions of the Constitution, provided that such objections neither infringe upon the rights and views of others nor obstruct the constitutional governance of the church. It vests the examining council with the ultimate responsibility to determine, after hearing the objection and rationale, whether the objection constitutes a departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. Given the absence of a positive requirement to ordain or install persons sexually active outside the bounds of heterosexual marriage, a council would be within its rights either to sustain or decline to sustain the examination of a person expressing an objection to such ordinations, as it was guided by Scripture and the confessions to do.

The committee further notes that the limitation of G-2.0105 prohibiting “obstructing the constitutional governance of the church” would require that a moderator of a session bears certain responsibilities toward that session (see G-3.0104). A refusal to carry out these constitutionally-mandated responsibilities would amount to obstruction of the church’s constitutional governance. The committee refers the assembly to its advice on this point in response to Item 06-19.

If it is the desire of the assembly to provide protection of conscience for those who cannot in good conscience participate in the ordination of one whose “manner of life,” in their opinion, “is not a demonstration of the gospel in the church and in the world,” then a more appropriate avenue would be to approve an authoritative interpretation that addresses the issue directly, such as the following interpretation of G-2.0104 and G-2.0105:

“The right of individual conscience to refrain from participation in an act of ordination or installation of a particular candidate for ordered ministry whose manner of life, in the judgment of the individual, does not constitute a demonstration of the gospel may not be abridged, provided that the constitutional governance of the church is not thereby obstructed.”

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-09 AND 07-13

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-09 and 07-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-09 and 07-13 from the Presbyteries of Genesee Valley and Albany overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve an authoritative interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 that would clarify that ordination examination by sessions and presbyteries may not require a current candidate to state how he or she might judge the fitness of future candidates.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-09 and 07-13 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The ACSWP agrees that examining councils must make judgments as to the fitness of candidates for ordination on a case-by-case basis and in a spirit of discernment that is open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We sympathize with the concern raised in these items: the reduction of examinations for ordination to one litmus test. However, the proposed authoritative interpretation could create greater problems by precluding more general inquiries into candidates’ understanding of Scripture, the confessions, and Christian theology if responses might reveal the candidate’s view on, for example, the ordination of persons in same-gender relationships.

The better response to the concerns expressed in the overtures’ rationale is not to limit types of questions that may be asked, but to adhere fully to the Foundation of Presbyterian Polity concerning the inclusion of theological diversities (F-1.0403) and the responsibilities of ordaining councils as stated in G 2-0104b: “The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.”

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 07-09

*Comment on Item 07-09—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

This overture may produce discussions of Kenyonization, a term arising from [\*Maxwell vs. Presbytery of Pittsburgh \(UPC, 1975\)\*](#). In *Maxwell*, Walter Wynn Kenyon, a candidate for ordination as a teaching elder, was asked whether he would ordain women elected to the congregation’s session. Kenyon answered “no,” citing biblical grounds. However, during the examination, Kenyon acknowledged he would be pleased to call in or have the presbytery send in another minister to ordain a duly elected woman to serve on the session. Kenyon also said he willingly would serve and work with ordained women. Following the examination, the presbytery voted to proceed to ordination and asked Kenyon the constitutional questions/ordination vows including, “Do you endorse our church’s government, and will you honor its discipline?” Kenyon answered all the questions affirmatively and the Presbytery ordained him. On appeal, the synod overturned Kenyon’s ordination. This decision was appealed to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC), the denomination’s highest court.

As a remedial case, the presbytery's decision to ordain Kenyon was clearly the main issue up for GAPJC review. In reading the decision, it also seems that prior to making this determination, the GAPJC first had to determine the constitutionality of Kenyon's refusal to ordain women on the basis of whether this violated the candidate's vows of ordination, particularly endorsing the church's government and honoring its discipline. Citing the Form of Government at the time, the GAPJC noted that men and women may be called as officers and that "every congregation shall elect persons from among its members, giving attention to fair representation of both the male and female constituency of that congregation" (then 47.01). The GAPJC further noted that the *Book of Order* contained numerous requirements "that the leadership of our church be open to all regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, or age" (*Maxwell*, UPC, 1975, p. 258). The GAPJC held that Kenyon's refusal to ordain women on the basis of their sex was contrary to the Constitution and acknowledged that:

to permit ordination of a candidate who has announced that he cannot subscribe to the cited constitutional provisions has implications for the Church far beyond that one instance. The precedent, if applied generally, would affect every session, presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly, and more than one-half of our Church's members. The challenged decision of Presbytery was not unique or of but minimal significance. The issue of equal treatment and leadership opportunity for all (particularly without regard to considerations of race and sex) is a paramount concern of our Church. Neither a synod nor the General Assembly has any power to allow a presbytery to grant an exception to an explicit constitutional provision.

Accordingly, the GAPJC held that the decision of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh to ordain Kenyon was not in conformity with the requirements set-out under the Form of Government on the ordination of ministers.

Underlying this overture seems to be two basic questions:

1. Can a presbytery deny someone membership because they are not willing to ordain someone in a same-gender relationship?
2. Can a presbytery deny someone membership because they are willing to ordain someone in a same-gender relationship?

Commissioners are thus encouraged to consider and reflect upon these questions in light of *Maxwell vs. Pittsburgh (Kenyon)* as well as how to balance this with the right that a body has to determine its own membership (*Book of Order*, F-3.0106, F-3.0102, G-2.0102, G-3.0306).

## Item 07-10

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-10 with comment. See pp. 52, 53.]

*On Adding New Section G-2.0106 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Pertaining to Ordinations—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Insert a new section "G-2.0106" after the present section G-2.0105 in order to clarify the right to freedom of conscience for governing bodies, to read as follows:

*"G-2.0106 Freedom of Conscience for Councils*

*"Councils shall have the same freedom of conscience in their ordination decisions as that expressed for individuals in G-2.0105. This includes the decision to refuse ordination and/or installation of a candidate who, upon examination, does not desire or is unwilling to lead a chaste and disciplined life, whether in holy marriage between a man and a woman or in single life (The Book of Confessions, 4.108). No disciplinary action shall be taken against any council that decides, by majority vote, not to uphold the candidacy of an individual for ordination and/or installation to the office of deacon, ruling elder, or teaching elder on the grounds set forth above."*

**Comment: Recognizing that some councils fear being reviewed for decisions they make regarding ordination, we remind those who would file complaints against, and the higher councils who will review those complaints, to bear in mind the previously adopted standards of review contained in the interpretation of G-6.0108/G-2.0105:**

**"Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515, and action, pp. 28–29).**

### *Rationale*

The current Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) fails to address freedom of conscience for governing bodies, now called councils. At a time when many governing bodies are trying to establish guidelines and procedures for implementing the new G-2.0104b, it is more necessary than ever to affirm and guarantee their freedom of conscience—to

clarify that governing bodies will continue to be free from compulsion when making decisions about whether or not to uphold the candidacy of any individual for ordained office, following examination of that person.

This amendment guarantees that governing bodies will be permitted to exercise their freedom of conscience as they make decisions regarding ordination of any individual, including a practicing homosexual person, to all of the offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-10

*Advice on Item 07-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 07-10.

The overture would add a new section G-2.0106 pertaining to freedom of conscience for examining councils (sessions and presbyteries) in decisions regarding ordination and installation.

Providing “freedom of conscience” to councils represents a new and potentially problematic right to be granted within the constitution. Heretofore, G-2.0105 (and its predecessor, G-6.0108) guaranteed freedom of conscience only to individual candidates under examination. Additionally, such freedom is bounded by three important limitations: “without serious departure from . . . standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church.” This view of freedom of conscience as pertaining to an individual under examination makes the application of this language to a council difficult. In the case of the individual, the conscience under examination is singular and presumably clear; in the case of the council the “conscience” is not singular at all, but the majority will of a body composed of multiple consciences. The remedy for those whose individual consciences cannot be accommodated is voluntarily to leave the church. This is not an option for councils, which exist in organic relation to the whole. The organic unity of the church, expressed through the Principles of Presbyterian Government (F-3.02) requires councils to adhere to a single constitution. For this reason, the Constitution has never guaranteed such freedom to councils.

The matter raised by the overture pertains to a potential decision by a council not to ordain or install someone who is unwilling to lead a “chaste and disciplined life, whether in holy marriage between a man and a woman or in single life (*The Book of Confessions*, 4.108).” The citation from the Heidelberg Catechism does not contain the phrase “marriage between a man and a woman,” but rather uses the term “wedlock” (the advisory committee notes that the wording of this section of the Heidelberg Catechism may be altered to employ term “marriage” if the proposed retranslation of the confession is approved and adopted). The proposed phraseology thus depends not so much on the Catechism as on the definition of marriage in W-4.9001 of the *Book of Order* (a section also under consideration for amendment at the 220th General Assembly (2012)). Moreover, the inclusion of this language in this section appears to seek to reinsert language similar to the former “fidelity and chastity” language of G-6.0106b, removed by action of the church in 2011. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the reintroduction of this language as proposed in this overture would *not* constitute the definition of “chaste and disciplined life” as an ordination standard, but rather would serve as an example of the sort of reason a session or presbytery might adduce for declining to ordain or install a candidate.

The final sentence of the proposed section states that “No disciplinary action shall be taken against any council that declines to ordain or install a candidate “on the grounds set forth above.” There are two problems with this language.

First, this language conflicts with the previously adopted interpretation of G-6.0108/G-2.0105:

d. Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office *is subject to review by higher governing bodies.* (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515, and action, pp. 28–29).

Since judicial action is one form of review, by eliminating the possibility of remedial challenge to the action of a session or presbytery, the General Assembly would be exempting from review a significant responsibility of sessions and presbyteries. The principle of review and control by higher councils is essential to the organic unity of the church as expressed in the Principles of Presbyterian Government (F-3.0203 and F-3.0206).

Second, the antecedent referent of terms, “on the grounds stated above,” is both unclear and problematic. Is the intent of the overture to exempt sessions and presbyteries from remedial challenge to *any decision* regarding ordination and installation decisions (the content of sentence 1 of the proposed addition), or only to those decisions made concerning a candidate’s willingness or unwillingness to live a “chaste and disciplined life, whether in holy marriage . . . or single life (sentence 2)?” If the former, this provision constitutes a sweeping limitation on the rights of members to raise remedial challenges to actions of the councils of which they are members; if the latter, it raises a candidate’s sexual practices to a position of prominence not accorded any standard otherwise stated in the Constitution.

Finally, the advisory committee notes that the standards of review for a council in dealing with decisions regarding ordination and/or installation are established in *Rankin v. National Capital Union Presbytery* (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I,

p.113, *Rem. 193-10*): that the council acts “reasonably, responsibly, and deliberately within the Constitution of the Church.” The General Assembly affirmed this standard in its actions in 2006 as part of the recommendations of the Peace, Unity, and Purity Task Force:

Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately, in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 515).

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-10 AND 07-11

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-10 and 07-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-10 and 07-11 from the Presbyteries of Stockton and Santa Barbara overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to add a section to G-2.0106 that would permit councils to refuse ordination to “practicing homosexual persons,” without incurring disciplinary action, as an expression of a council’s freedom of conscience.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Items 07-10 and 07-11 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Items 07-10 and 07-11 propose to create a new “freedom of conscience for councils,” particularly as it would apply to councils’ freedom to deny ordination to “practicing homosexual persons,” or others, in order to protect ordaining councils from being compelled in ordination decisions. The ACSWP advises disapproval for several reasons.

First, in the Reformed Tradition, the concept of “freedom of conscience” has been understood as a right of individuals because of our understanding that an individual’s relationship with God may lead to unique and sincere views not recognized by the majority of good and well-meaning Christians. One might think of an early abolitionist or the authors of the Barmen Confession as examples. However, the individual’s right of freedom of conscience has never been understood as an absolute right. For example, in our Constitution, it is balanced with a concern that those in ordained ministry “adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in this Constitution.” The ultimate decision about that is placed in the hands of the ordaining council (G-2.0105).

Similarly, the decision of an ordaining council, guided by Scripture and the confessions with sincere openness to the Holy Spirit, is also not absolute. Councils of the church are subject to the review of a higher governing body. This principle of review by higher bodies is essential to the just administration of the serious duties of the church’s councils. Particularly in the case of examining and ordaining individuals, the deliberations of councils are to be reasonable, responsible, deliberate, and prayerful. Without higher review, there would be no check on the abuse of power, no remedy of appeal for the misuse of power.

The ACSWP concurs with the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these items and urges serious consideration of the constitutional issues they raise.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-10.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns would lift up the advice given on this item by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and would note that this overture would reverse the progress made by the 219th General Assembly (2010). The rationale ACWC gave for Item 07-02 is also suited for this overture:

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

## Item 07-11

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-11 with comment. See pp. 52, 53]

*On Adding G-2.0106, Freedom of Conscience for Councils—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.*

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall a new section, G-2.0106, be inserted to read as follows:

*“G-2.0106 Freedom of Conscience for Councils*

*“In addition to the freedom of conscience expressed in G-2.0105 for individuals, councils shall have the same freedom of conscience in their ordination decisions, including the decision to refuse ordination and/or installation following the examination of a candidate who does not desire or is unwilling to lead a chaste and disciplined life whether in holy marriage between a man and a woman or in single life (The Book of Confessions, 4.108). No action shall be brought against any council that makes a decision by majority vote to not uphold the examination of any candidate for ordination and/or installation to the office of deacon, ruling elder, or teaching elder, on the grounds set forth above.”*

**Comment: Recognizing that some councils fear being reviewed for decisions they make regarding ordination, we remind those who would file complaints against, and the higher councils who will review those complaints, to bear in mind the previously adopted standards of review contained in the interpretation of G-6.0108/G-2.0105:**

**“Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 515, and action, pp. 28–29).**

### *Rationale*

The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) currently is silent on the freedom of conscience for governing bodies, now called councils. It is vital to clarify that governing bodies will continue to be free from compulsion in making decisions on whether or not to uphold an examination of any candidate for ordained office. At a time when many governing bodies are trying to establish guidelines and procedures for implementing the new G-2.0104b, it is necessary to affirm and guarantee their freedom of conscience.

This amendment gives the necessary affirmation that governing bodies will be permitted to exercise their freedom of conscience as they make decisions regarding ordination of practicing homosexual persons to all of the offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-11

*Advice on Item 07-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer Item 07-11 with its response to Item 07-10.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-10 AND 07-11

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-10 and 07-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-10 and 07-11 from the Presbyteries of Stockton and Santa Barbara overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to add a section to G-2.0106 that would permit councils to refuse ordination to “practicing homosexual persons,” without incurring disciplinary action, as an expression of a council’s freedom of conscience.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Items 07-10 and 07-11 be disapproved.

### *Rationale*

Items 07-10 and 07-11 propose to create a new “freedom of conscience for councils,” particularly as it would apply to councils’ freedom to deny ordination to “practicing homosexual persons,” or others, in order to protect ordaining councils from being compelled in ordination decisions. The ACSWP advises disapproval for several reasons.

First, in the Reformed Tradition, the concept of “freedom of conscience” has been understood as a right of individuals because of our understanding that an individual’s relationship with God may lead to unique and sincere views not recognized

by the majority of good and well-meaning Christians. One might think of an early abolitionist or the authors of the Barmen Confession as examples. However, the individual's right of freedom of conscience has never been understood as an absolute right. For example, in our Constitution, it is balanced with a concern that those in ordained ministry "adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in this Constitution." The ultimate decision about that is placed in the hands of the ordaining council (G-2.0105).

Similarly, the decision of an ordaining council, guided by Scripture and the confessions with sincere openness to the Holy Spirit, is also not absolute. Councils of the church are subject to the review of a higher governing body. This principle of review by higher bodies is essential to the just administration of the serious duties of the church's councils. Particularly in the case of examining and ordaining individuals, the deliberations of councils are to be reasonable, responsible, deliberate, and prayerful. Without higher review, there would be no check on the abuse of power, no remedy of appeal for the misuse of power.

The ACSWP concurs with the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these items and urges serious consideration of the constitutional issues they raise.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-11.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns would lift up the advice given on this item by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and would note that this overture would reverse the progress made by the 219th General Assembly (2010). The rationale ACWC gave for Item 07-02 is also suited for this overture:

After more than thirty years of debate on this issue, the 219th General Assembly (2010), followed by a majority vote of the presbyteries, passed a resolution that removed the very language this resolution suggests reinserting into the *Book of Order*. The language now affirmed by the majority of the denomination moves us forward in this debate, calling for high standards for ordination that no longer single out a particular group of people for exclusion. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns believes that the Holy Spirit works in and through our denomination and is present in all of our processes of discernment, including that of the last General Assembly and the presbyteries over the past two years. The language we now have in the *Book of Order* as a result of that process reflects a movement of our church ever further in the direction of the grace and love expressed to us by the One in whose image we are all created. To reinsert the suggested language would be a reversal in both process and progress.

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## Item 07-12

**[The assembly disapproved Item 07-12. See pp. 52, 54.]**

*On Amending G-2.0104b to Clearly State the Authority of Scripture as the Most Important Basis for the Ordination of an Office of the Church—Presbytery of Wyoming.*

The Presbytery of Wyoming overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104b be amended as follows: (Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.)

"Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully *and obediently* to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life.(F-1.02) The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.2.0402; G.2.0607; G.3.03060) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, ~~the candidate's willingness to lead a life in obedience to Scripture whereby his or her faith and obedience are nourished and regulated (Confession of 1967, 9.27), and the~~ determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Councils shall be ~~guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates~~ *held to the same standards as the candidates as a basis for their decision to ordain and/or install an officer of the church.*"

#### *Rationale*

The present G-2.0104b does not state clearly that the Scriptures are the most important basis for the standards for the ordination/installation of an officer of the church. This needs to be clarified.



The present G-2.0104b does not emphasize the authority of Scripture, and this needs to be strengthened in this portion of *Book of Order* to be consistent with the second ordination question.

Our Confession of 1967 spells out a wonderful understanding of the Bible. Using Section 9.27 to guide us, and also borrowing from the first ordination question, G-2.0104b needs to clarify the importance of Scripture by stating that “the candidate’s willingness to lead a life in obedience to Scripture whereby his or her faith and obedience are nourished and regulated.”

Our Rules of Discipline, D-2.0203b, states:

“b. An offense is any act or omission by a member or person in an ordered ministry of the church that is *contrary to the Scriptures* or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [emphasis added].” Since the Scriptures are a central basis for the discipline of a church officer, so should they be just as vital in the ordination of a church officer.

The present G-2.0104b does not hold the councils to the same standards as the persons to be ordained/installed. Councils need to be held to the same standards.

### *Authority of Scripture*

A simple definition:

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the primary and foundational writings and teachings of the Christian faith. No other writings or teachings can be held to be more important or powerful because they have been given to us by God and have been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

### The Confession of 1967:

The one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, to whom the Holy Spirit bears unique and authoritative witness through the Holy Scriptures, which are received and obeyed as the word of God written. The Scriptures are not a witness among others, but the witness without parallel. The church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as prophetic and apostolic testimony in which it hears the word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated.

The New Testament is the recorded testimony of apostles to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, and the sending of the Holy Spirit to the Church. The Old Testament bears witness to God’s faithfulness in his covenant with Israel and points the way to the fulfillment of his purpose in Christ. The Old Testament is indispensable to understanding the New, and is not itself fully understood without the New.

The Bible is to be interpreted in the light of its witness to God’s work of reconciliation in Christ. The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless the words of men, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the places and times at which they were written. They reflect views of life, history, and the cosmos which were then current. The church, therefore, has an obligation to approach the Scriptures with literary and historical understanding. As God has spoken his word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that he will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture.

God’s word is spoken to his church today where the Scriptures are faithfully preached and attentively read in dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit and with readiness to receive their truth and direction. (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.27–9.30)

### Second ordination question:

“Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, *the unique and authoritative witness* to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?” (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003b)

*I do.*

### The Confession of 1967:

#### 1. PREACHING AND TEACHING

*God instructs his church and equips it for mission through preaching and teaching. By these, when they are carried on in fidelity to the Scriptures and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the people hear the word of God and accept and follow Christ.* The message is addressed to men in particular situations. Therefore, effective preaching, teaching, and personal witness require disciplined study of both the Bible and the contemporary world. All acts of public worship should be conducive to men’s hearing of the gospel in a particular time and place and responding with fitting obedience. (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.49, emphasis added)

### The Scots Confession:

#### CHAPTER XIX

##### The Authority of the Scriptures

*As we believe and confess the Scriptures of God sufficient to instruct and make perfect the man of God, so do we affirm and avow their authority to be from God, and not to depend on men or angels.* We affirm, therefore, that those who say the Scriptures have no other authority save that which they have received from the Kirk are blasphemous against God and injurious to the true Kirk, which always hears and obeys the voice of her own Spouse and Pastor, but takes not upon her to be mistress over the same. (*The Book of Confessions*, 3.19)

### The Second Helvetic Confession:

## CHAPTER I

## Of The Holy Scripture Being The True Word of God

*CANONICAL SCRIPTURE. We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true Word of God, and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men. For God himself spoke to the fathers, prophets, apostles, and still speaks to us through the Holy Scriptures.*

*And in this Holy Scripture, the universal Church of Christ has the most complete exposition of all that pertains to a saving faith, and also to the framing of a life acceptable to God; and in this respect it is expressly commanded by God that nothing be either added to or taken from the same.*

*SCRIPTURE TEACHES FULLY ALL GODLINESS. We judge, therefore, that from these Scriptures are to be derived true wisdom and godliness, the reformation and government of churches; as also instruction in all duties of piety; and, to be short, the confirmation of doctrines, and the rejection of all errors, moreover, all exhortations according to that word of the apostle, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof," etc. (II Tim. 3:16–17). Again, "I am writing these instructions to you," says the apostle to Timothy, "so that you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God," etc. (I Tim. 3:14–15). SCRIPTURE IS THE WORD OF GOD. Again, the selfsame apostle to the Thessalonians: "When," says he, "you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God," etc. (I Thess. 2:13.) For the Lord himself has said in the Gospel, "It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of my Father speaking through you"; therefore "he who hears you hears me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Matt. 10:20; Luke 10:16; John 13:20). (The Book of Confessions, 5.001–5.003, emphasis added)*

## The Westminster Confession of Faith:

10. *The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.*(*The Book of Confessions*, 6.010, emphasis added)

## A Brief Statement of Faith:

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,

everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,  
and binds us together with all believers  
in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit

who inspired the prophets and apostles  
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
engages us through the Word proclaimed,  
claims us in the waters of baptism,  
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

In a broken and fearful world

the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,

we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
and to live holy and joyful lives, (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4. Lines 52–74)

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-12**

*Advice on Item 07-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 07-12.

The overture would amend the language of G-2.0104b in two places:

1. By adding to the third sentence the expectation that the examination of a candidate shall include "the candidate's willingness to lead a life in obedience to Scripture . . .," and
2. By deleting from the final sentence language about the examining council being "guided by Scripture and the confessions" and replacing it with the requirement that councils shall be "held to the same standards as candidates" in their decisions about ordination and installation.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes the following concerns:

1. The material proposed for addition to the third sentence of G-2.0104b appears to alter the meaning of the cited passages from *The Book of Confessions*, 9.27. This section of the Confession of 1967 deals with the nature of the Bible itself, and not directly with the use of Scripture as a standard for the behavior of those elected to ordered ministry. The entire paragraph reads:

The one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, to whom the Holy Spirit bears unique and authoritative witness through the Holy Scriptures, which are received and obeyed as the word of God written. The Scriptures are not a witness among others, but the witness without parallel. The church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as prophetic and apostolic in which it hears the word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated. (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.27; emphasis added)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the proposed addition to G-2.0104b alters the language of the confession in a small but significant way by substituting “his or her” for “its” in the final clause, thereby rendering the possessive antecedent as the candidate, rather than the “church” as the confession states. The alteration of the confessional language individualizes and personalizes the hearing of Scripture that then leads to the individualization of faith and obedience that are nourished by Scripture. By contrast, in each of the confessional citations adduced in the rationale in support of the overture, it is the church—and not the individual believer—that hears, is instructed by, believes, and confesses Scripture.

2. The proposed addition to the final sentence of G-2.0104b applies to councils (sessions and presbyteries) the “same standards as candidates as a basis for their decisions to ordain or install an officer of the church.” The proposed language is, at best, unclear. What “standards” are intended? The present paragraph, G-2.0104b, states that the examination is to include, at minimum, on the candidate’s “ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions” in W-4.4003. Sessions and presbyteries, as councils, do not answer the questions for ordination and installation; these questions are framed as required affirmations on the part of individuals *prior* to their ordination or installation into service on a council. The previous paragraph, G-2.0104a, lists as “qualifications” given to those who consider answering the call to ordained service “strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,” and a “manner of life” that is “a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.” Once again, this passage is framed as a description of an individual believer and candidate, rather than of a council as a body.

The Advisory Committee also notes that the *Book of Order* no longer uses the term “officer” to describe persons called, ordained, and installed in one of the orders of ministry described in Chapter Two of the Form of Government.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL FOR ITEMS 07-01 AND 07-12

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-01 and Item 07-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Item 07-01 from the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend G-2.0104b by replacing language related to the guidance of Scripture and the confessions with the specific language of the constitutional question in W-4.4003: “obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our confessions.” Item 07-12 from the Presbytery of Wyoming overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend G-2.0104b to specify examination of a candidate’s willingness to “lead a life in obedience to Scripture. . . .” It also adds that a council’s ordination decision must meet the same standards.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises Item 07-01 and Item 07-12 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Both Items 07-01 and 07-12 state the intent to amend G-2.0104b to clarify the primary authority of Scripture as the basis for standards of ordination and the discernment process of ordaining councils. However, this principle is already well-established in the Constitution of the PC(USA): “confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him” (*Book of Order*, F-2.02).

Item 07-12 attempts to emphasize the priority of Scripture by inserting language from The Confession of 1967 that relates to living one’s life in obedience to Scripture. Yet that language does not achieve the stated purpose of clarifying the unique authority of Scripture as the basis for ordination standards and the decisions of councils.

Item 07-01 would replace the sentence that directs examining councils to “be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates” with language from the constitutional questions asked of candidates for ordination. It is unclear what is gained from this.

While ACSWP does not advise the necessity of any amendments to G-2.0104b, if the 220th General Assembly (2012) concludes that G-2.0104b needs to be amended to emphasize the unique authority of Scripture, ACSWP advises that the language proposed by Item 07-01 is less disruptive of the purpose of G-2.0104b.

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## Item 07-13

[The assembly answered Item 07-13 by the action taken on Item 07-09 See pp. 52, 54.]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 to Clarify the Appropriateness of Questions to Officers-elect—From the Presbytery of Albany.*

The Presbytery of Albany respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306:

“Because members of an examining council are to assess the fitness of officers-elect on a case-by-case basis, in light of each person’s faith, life and witness, and because such assessments are to be made in collective discernment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, an elder-elect shall not be required to commit during examination as to how he or she might assess the fitness of other officers-elect in the future.”

### *Rationale*

Following recent amendment of the church’s ordination standards, some have expressed concern that they may be disqualified from service given their opposition to ordained service by persons who are in same-sex relationships. This authoritative interpretation is meant to defuse apparent tensions over the potential misuse of abstract questions about this in examination.

The Constitution vests sole authority for the election of church officers in congregations, and sole authority for assessing the fitness of officers-elect in sessions and presbyteries. When they gather together to examine officers-elect, sessions and presbyteries “are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ” (*Book of Order*, F-3.0204).

As authoritatively interpreted by General Assembly, the Constitution (G-2.0105) also makes clear that all examinations must be conducted on a case-by-case basis, in light of each officer-elect’s faith, life, and witness. Accordingly, it would be improper for any person to commit (or be asked to commit) to a particular view on matters relating to the fitness of other officers-elect outside the context of the actual examinations of such persons. Abstract questions about whom an incoming elder might or might not find fit for ordained service in the future are inconsistent with these basic principles, and may contribute to a climate of intimidation and mistrust. This authoritative interpretation is intended to make clear that such questioning during examination is improper.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-13**

*Advice on Item 07-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer Item 07-13 with its response to Item 07-09.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-09 AND 07-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-09 and 07-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-09 and 07-13 from the Presbyteries of Genesee Valley and Albany overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve an authoritative interpretation of G-2.0402 and G-3.0306 that would clarify that ordination examination by sessions and presbyteries may not require a current candidate to state how he or she might judge the fitness of future candidates.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-09 and 07-13 be disapproved.

### *Rationale*

The ACSWP agrees that examining councils must make judgments as to the fitness of candidates for ordination on a case-by-case basis and in a spirit of discernment that is open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We sympathize with the concern raised in these items: the reduction of examinations for ordination to one litmus test. However, the proposed authoritative interpretation could create greater problems by precluding more general inquiries into candidates’ understanding of Scripture, the confessions, and Christian theology if responses might reveal the candidate’s view on, for example, the ordination of persons in same-gender relationships.

The better response to the concerns expressed in the overtures’ rationale is not to limit types of questions that may be asked, but to adhere fully to the Foundation of Presbyterian Polity concerning the inclusion of theological diversities (F-1.0403) and the responsibilities of ordaining councils as stated in G 2-0104b: “The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.”

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### **OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 07-13**

*Comment on Item 07-13—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

This overture may produce discussions of Kenyonization, a term arising from [Maxwell vs. Presbytery of Pittsburgh \(UPC, 1975\)](#). In *Maxwell*, Walter Wynn Kenyon, a candidate for ordination as a teaching elder, was asked whether he would ordain women elected to the congregation’s session. Kenyon answered “no,” citing biblical grounds. However, during the

examination, Kenyon acknowledged he would be pleased to call in or have the presbytery send in another minister to ordain a duly elected woman to serve on the session. Kenyon also said he willingly would serve and work with ordained women. Following the examination, the presbytery voted to proceed to ordination and asked Kenyon the constitutional questions/ordination vows including, “Do you endorse our church’s government, and will you honor its discipline?” Kenyon answered all the questions affirmatively and the Presbytery ordained him. On appeal, the synod overturned Kenyon’s ordination. This decision was appealed to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC), the denomination’s highest court.

As a remedial case, the presbytery’s decision to ordain Kenyon was clearly the main issue up for GAPJC review. In reading the decision, it also seems that prior to making this determination, the GAPJC first had to determine the constitutionality of Kenyon’s refusal to ordain women on the basis of whether this violated the candidate’s vows of ordination, particularly endorsing the church’s government and honoring its discipline. Citing the Form of Government at the time, the GAPJC noted that men and women may be called as officers and that “every congregation shall elect persons from among its members, giving attention to fair representation of both the male and female constituency of that congregation” (then 47.01). The GAPJC further noted that the *Book of Order* contained numerous requirements “that the leadership of our church be open to all regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, or age” (*Maxwell*, UPC, 1975, p. 258). The GAPJC held that Kenyon’s refusal to ordain women on the basis of their sex was contrary to the Constitution and acknowledged that:

to permit ordination of a candidate who has announced that he cannot subscribe to the cited constitutional provisions has implications for the Church far beyond that one instance. The precedent, if applied generally, would affect every session, presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly, and more than one-half of our Church’s members. The challenged decision of Presbytery was not unique or of but minimal significance. The issue of equal treatment and leadership opportunity for all (particularly without regard to considerations of race and sex) is a paramount concern of our Church. Neither a synod nor the General Assembly has any power to allow a presbytery to grant an exception to an explicit constitutional provision.

Accordingly, the GAPJC held that the decision of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh to ordain Kenyon was not in conformity with the requirements set-out under the Form of Government on the ordination of ministers.

Underlying this overture seems to be two basic questions:

1. Can a presbytery deny someone membership because they are not willing to ordain someone in a same-gender relationship?
2. Can a presbytery deny someone membership because they are willing to ordain someone in a same-gender relationship?

Commissioners are thus encouraged to consider and reflect upon these questions in light of *Maxwell vs. Pittsburgh (Kenyon)* as well as how to balance this with the right that a body has to determine its own membership (*Book of Order*, F-3.0106, F-3.0102, G-2.0102, G-3.0306).

## Item 07-14

[Item 07-14 became Item 06-17. There is no Item 07-14.]

## Item 07-15

[Item 07-15 was withdrawn by the Presbytery of Grace on June 9, 2012.]

## Item 07-16

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-16. See pp. 52, 54.]

*On Affirming Statements in the Book of Order to Guide Councils in Examining Candidates for Ordination or Installation—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.*

The Presbytery of the Foothills overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the following resolution:

“Be it resolved that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in order to clarify and guide councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in their responsibility to examine candidates for ordination and/or installation, maintaining the standards of the church (G-2.0104b), does hereby affirm the following statements contained in the *Book of Order*:

“1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God written, witnessing to God’s self-revelation (W-2.2001);

“2. The Confessions guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures, but they are also subordinate to the Scriptures (F-2.01 and F-2.02);

“3. The character, qualifications, and authority of ruling and teaching elders are laid down in the Holy Scriptures (F-3.0106);

“4. All are called to obey the Scriptures, which teach us of Christ’s will for the Church (F-1.0203);

“5. Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith (W-4.9001).”

### ***Rationale***

The 219th General Assembly (2010) and a majority of the presbyteries approved Amendment 10A, which altered wording regarding the gifts and qualifications of candidates for ordination and/or installation. The newly adopted statement affirms the importance of standards in the church. Such statement makes clear that the appropriate council is responsible for determining a candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill those standards and it is important for the General Assembly to guide those councils by reaffirming certain central standards set in the *Book of Order*. Although the statements of this resolution are already contained in the *Book of Order*, they are scattered in various places and therefore it is important to reaffirm, in one place, these central standards of the church as a guide to the councils when examining candidates.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-16**

*Advice on Item 07-16—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 07-16.

### ***Rationale***

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that Item 07-16 does not pose a question requiring interpretation of the Constitution. Although the item states that the purpose of the proposed resolution is to “clarify and guide” ordaining councils, it does not indicate what lack of clarity or need for additional guidance exists. In the absence of a specific question being asked or answered, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) not to respond to this item in a manner that might be thought binding upon the whole church.

Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that a comment is in order.

Item 07-16 calls on the 220th General Assembly (2012) to affirm together five statements drawn from passages in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or the Directory for Worship. Statements 1–4 are partial quotations or paraphrases of passages from W-2.2001, F-2.01, F-2.02, F-3.0106, and F-1.0203. Statement 5 is the full text of W-4.9001.

By extracting these quotes or paraphrases from their full contexts, nuances are lost and meanings are changed. For example, in F-1.0203, the paraphrase indicates that Scripture is to be obeyed, but in the provision cited, it is Christ’s will in Scripture that is to be obeyed. Partial citations such as these may lead to the impression that only the “affirmed” portions are significant, thereby diminishing the importance of the rest of the context from which each is drawn.

The process of examining persons elected for ordered ministry is provided in G-2.0104b. If the intent of the overture is to supplement the process of examination, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that this must be done by means of constitutional amendment.

Finally, as passages from the *Book of Order*, all five provisions cited are already binding on the whole church, and thus the “affirmation” of these statements is unnecessary.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, AND 07-16**

*Advice and Council on Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 from the Presbyteries of Stockton, Central Florida, Washington, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to reinstate, as a standard for ordination, the requirement that candidates live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or to live in chastely in singleness.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06, and 07-16 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

The effect of Items 07-02, 07-03, 07-06 and 07-16 would be to reverse the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), which has since been ratified by ninety-seven presbyteries, ten more than needed. Essentially, presbyteries would be asked to vote again on the same issue. While the 220th General Assembly (2012) can choose to do that, the current Constitution places the decision of a candidate's suitability for ordination within the ordaining body.

Since 1978, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and its predecessors have recognized that ordination issues are justice issues. The history of the church's struggle to embrace equality in ordination for women and racial ethnic men is a clear example of this connection. The action of the 217th General Assembly (2006), to approve Paragraph 5 of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church report, was intended to provide a way by which we could live together in mutual forbearance and respect our differences regarding ordination of homosexual persons. In response to a decision by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in *Bush v. Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10)*, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved two authoritative interpretations intended to return to governing bodies the responsibility to determine what is "essential" and to avoid rigid and legalistic standards, particularly ones that highlight certain sexual sins while not naming many other forms and categories of serious sin.

The first stated: "Section G-6.0108 requires examining bodies to give prayerful and careful consideration, on an individual, case-by-case basis, to any departure from an ordination standard in matters of belief or practice that a candidate may declare during examination. However, the examining body is not required to accept a departure from standards. ..." The second affirmed that categorical statements by PC(USA) predecessor bodies, which declared that the ordination of a "self-affirming, practicing homosexual person to ministry" would be contradictory to Scripture and the will of Christ, would no longer be in effect.

The effect of the actions of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) is to allow a governing body, based on their careful case-by case consideration of the candidate, to determine that a candidate's departure from the specific standard of fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness is not a departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity. These actions attempt to balance the relationship between a council's identification of the essentials of faith in the Reformed tradition and the individual's right of conscience. They also strive to respect the diversity of theological views and methods of biblical interpretation that exist within our unity in Christ. Ultimately, these actions continue to place the responsibility for determining an individual's readiness for ordination with sessions and presbyteries: "The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member (*Book of Order*, G-2.0105).

**Item 07-17**

[The assembly approved Item 07-17 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 52, 54.]

*On Honoring Christ in Our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of Sacramento.*

The Presbytery of Sacramento respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the following statement:

**"Because**

**"• Jesus taught that our highest ethical obligation is to '... love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself' (Lk. 10:27); and this is how 'everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (Jn. 13:35);**

**"• having experienced Christ's gracious love for us while we are yet sinners, we are called to 'welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God' (Rom. 15:7);**

**"• we affirm the solemn commitments expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination, installation, and commissioning, including that we intend to fulfill our ministries 'in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and ... continually guided by our confessions'; that that we will be friends among our colleagues in ministry; that we 'seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love [our] neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world' (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003);**

**"• '... we hold that interpretation of the Scripture to be orthodox and genuine which is gleaned from the Scriptures themselves (from the nature of the language in which they were written, likewise according to the circumstances in which they were set down, and expounded in the light of like and unlike passages and of many and clearer passages) and which agree with the rule of faith and love, and contributes much to the glory of God and man's salvation' (*The Book of Confessions*, Second Helvetic Confession, 5.010);**

**"• the larger Catechism lifts up the duty of holding '... a charitable esteem of our neighbors,' and forbids the sin of '... misconstruing intentions, words, and actions' (*The Book of Confessions*, 7.254–255)."**

**“The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed, same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we [~~decline to take an action that would have the effect of imposing on the whole~~] acknowledge that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [~~does not have~~] one interpretation of Scripture in this matter. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment.**

**[Comment: We request that this statement be brought before each presbytery at a stated meeting in which the report from the 220th General Assembly (2012) is given.]**

### *Rationale*

Some Presbyterians read the Scriptures to condemn all forms of same-gender sexual intimacy, and sometimes accuse other Presbyterians of abandoning the authority of Scripture, ignoring the need for repentance, and leading persons into serious sin.

Some Presbyterians read the Scriptures to bless committed same-gender relationships, and sometimes accuse other Presbyterians of bigotry, responsibility for bullying and suicides, and other harm caused by anti-gay attitudes.

All Presbyterians acknowledge that we are sinners in need of repentance, but we disagree about whether all homosexual intimacy is sinful, and over the best way to love our LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) neighbors.

Each “side” perceives the other to be harming the cause of the Gospel.

Although the Scriptures contain a variety of patterns of sexual relationships without condemnation, most Presbyterians believe that intimate sexual expression is to be restricted to a committed partnership between two consenting adults who regard one another as equals and seek to honor God, community, and each other in their covenant relationship. While some believe that the partners must be a man and a woman, and others are convinced that the gender of the two partners is not of concern to God, all share the conviction that relationships should be life-giving, responsible, and a blessing to family, church, and community.

While it is incumbent on all to continue to seek God’s will for sexuality, no human being has a full understanding of God’s Truth and all are called to humility before the Lord and charity toward one another. Questioning the faithfulness of those who in good conscience disagree with our interpretation does not bring honor to Christ or build up his church.

Nothing in current Presbyterian polity or policy, including the ordination standard in G-2.0104, takes one side or another in the conflict over the morality of same-gender relationships. A variety of views is now allowed to coexist in the PC(USA), consistent with the historic Presbyterian principles of freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture and mutual forbearance (*Book of Order*, F-3.01). Until God blesses the church with a clear consensus, continued attempts to impose uniformity are detrimental to the peace, unity, and purity of the church.

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### **Concurrence to Item 07-17 from the Presbyteries of Des Moines, Ohio Valley, San Francisco, and Western Reserve.**

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-17**

*Advice on Item 07-17—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 07-17 does not seek constitutional interpretation and is, on its face, a request of the assembly to take certain actions to acknowledge differences among faithful Presbyterians concerning the morality of same-gender relationships. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution offers no advice to the assembly on this matter.

The advisory committee notes that the assembly has a duty to respond to all business before it. Requesting the assembly “to decline to take an action that would have the effect of imposing on the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one interpretation of Scripture” places the assembly in the position of determining which of its actions might impose such limited interpretative possibilities. If the assembly chooses to respond affirmatively to this request, it will be answered by the actions of the 220th General Assembly (2012).

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-17 AND 07-18**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-17 and 07-18—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Items 07-17 and 07-18 from the Presbyteries of Sacramento and Chicago overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to acknowledge the differences that exist among Christians regarding committed, same-gender relationships; to decline to im-



pose any one scriptural interpretation of such relationships on the whole church; to continue in respectful dialogue, welcoming one another; and to call upon the whole church to join in this commitment.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 07-17 and 07-18 be disapproved.

*Rationale*

While the ACSWP supports the spirit of tolerance and the promotion of respect between diverse views apparently intended by these overtures, we advise that these items as formulated may create unintended consequences in their implementation. For example, it is unclear how a determination regarding the effect of a proposed action would be determined and by whom. The very tolerance of differences called for here is interpreted by some as a rejection of biblical standards.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-17**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-17—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-17.

*Rationale*

While the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns affirms the need for respectful dialogue and the importance of treating one another as sisters and brothers in Christ even in disagreement, this overture has the potential to stand in the way of a continuation of the progress the church has made in removing discriminatory and marginalizing practices in the ordination process that target a specific group of people.

Even if God has not blessed the church with a clear consensus on the issue of same-sex marriage, God has blessed us with a clear call to do justice. To call for waiting for clear consensus to do justice is to lift a standard of acceptance of discrimination while we wait. This particular issue on which we do not yet all agree is not simply an abstract theological principal or doctrine, but a community of people living, moving, and serving in our churches while being denied full inclusion.

The dialogue must certainly continue, but to take a general stand on not taking any action that imposes one interpretation of Scripture in this matter has the potential to be used down the road to impede the progress we have made toward just treatment of LGBTQ members of the PC(USA).

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## Item 07-18

[The assembly answered Item 07-18 by the action taken on Item 07-17. See p. **52, 54.1**]

*On Committing Ourselves to Respectful Dialogue with Those Who Hold Differing Convictions—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

The Presbytery of Chicago respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to make the following statement:

“Because

- “• Jesus taught that our highest ethical obligation is to ‘love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself’ (Lk. 10:27); and ‘this is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other’ (Jn. 13:35);
- “• having experienced Christ’s gracious love for us while we are yet sinners, we are called to ‘welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God’s glory’ (Rom. 15:7);
- “• we affirm the solemn commitments expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination, installation, and commissioning, including that we intend to fulfill our ministries in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and continually guided by our confessions; that that we will be friends among our colleagues in ministry; that we seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love our neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003);
- “• ‘we hold that interpretation of the Scripture to be orthodox and genuine which is gleaned from the Scriptures themselves (from the nature of the language in which they were written, likewise according to the circumstances in which they were set down, and expounded in the light of like and unlike passages ...) and which agree with the rule of faith and love, and contributes much to the glory of God and man’s salvation’ (*The Book of Confessions*, The Second Helvetic Confession, 5.010);

- the Larger Catechism lifts up the duty of holding ‘a charitable esteem of our neighbors,’ and forbids the sin of ‘misconstruing intentions, words, and actions’ (*The Book of Confessions*, 7.254–7.255);

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we decline to take an action that would have the effect of imposing on the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one interpretation of Scripture in this matter or preventing any teaching elder and/or congregation from providing the pastoral care and presence their consciences and faithful reading of the Scriptures tell them is necessary for them to fulfill ordination and baptismal vows. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment.”

### ***Rationale***

Some Presbyterians read the Scriptures to condemn all forms of same-gender sexual intimacy, and sometimes accuse other Presbyterians of abandoning the authority of Scripture, ignoring the need for repentance, and leading persons into serious sin.

Some Presbyterians read the Scriptures to bless committed same-gender relationships, and sometimes accuse other Presbyterians of bigotry, responsibility for bullying and suicides, and other harm caused by anti-gay attitudes.

All Presbyterians acknowledge that we are sinners in need of repentance, but we disagree about whether all homosexual intimacy is sinful, and over the best way to love our LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered) neighbors.

Each “side” perceives the other to be harming the cause of the Gospel.

Although the Scriptures contain a variety of patterns of sexual relationships without condemnation, most Presbyterians believe that intimate sexual expression is to be restricted to a committed partnership between two consenting adults who regard one another as equals and seek to honor God, community, and each other in their covenant relationship. While some believe that the partners must be a man and a woman, and others are convinced that the gender of the two partners is not of concern to God, all share the conviction that relationships should be life-giving, responsible, and a blessing to family, church, and community.

While it is incumbent on all to continue to seek God’s will for sexuality, no human being has a full understanding of God’s Truth and all are called to humility before the Lord and charity toward one another. Questioning the faithfulness of those who in good conscience disagree with our interpretation does not bring honor to Christ or build up his church.

Nothing in current Presbyterian polity or policy, including the ordination standard in G-2.0104, takes one side or another in the conflict over the morality of same-gender relationships. A variety of views is now allowed to coexist in the PC(USA), consistent with the historic Presbyterian principles of freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture and mutual forbearance (*Book of Order*, F-3.01). Until God blesses the church with a clear consensus, continued attempts to impose uniformity are detrimental to the peace, unity, and purity of the church.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-17 AND 07-18**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 07-17 and 07-18—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

Items 07-17 and 07-18 from the Presbyteries of Sacramento and Chicago overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to acknowledge the differences that exist among Christians regarding committed, same-gender relationships; to decline to impose any one scriptural interpretation of such relationships on the whole church; to continue in respectful dialogue, welcoming one another; and to call upon the whole church to join in this commitment.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 07-17 and 07-18 be disapproved.

### ***Rationale***

While the ACSWP supports the spirit of tolerance and the promotion of respect between diverse views apparently intended by these overtures, we advise that these items as formulated may create unintended consequences in their implementation. For example, it is unclear how a determination regarding the effect of a proposed action would be determined and by whom. The very tolerance of differences called for here is interpreted by some as a rejection of biblical standards.

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### **ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-18**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-18.

*Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 07-17 is applicable here as well:

While the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns affirms the need for respectful dialogue and the importance of treating one another as sisters and brothers in Christ even in disagreement, this overture has the potential to stand in the way of a continuation of the progress the church has made in removing discriminatory and marginalizing practices in the ordination process that target a specific group of people.

Even if God has not blessed the church with a clear consensus on the issue of same-sex marriage, God has blessed us with a clear call to do justice. To call for waiting for clear consensus to do justice is to lift a standard of acceptance of discrimination while we wait. This particular issue on which we do not yet all agree is not simply an abstract theological principle or doctrine, but a community of people living, moving, and serving in our churches while being denied full inclusion.

The dialogue must certainly continue, but to take a general stand on not taking any action that imposes one interpretation of Scripture in this matter has the potential to be used down the road to impede the progress we have made toward just treatment of LGBTQ members of the PC(USA).

**Item 07-19**

[The assembly approved Item 07-19. See pp. 52, 54.]

*Report of the Office of Vocation on the Process to Evaluate the Current Call System to the 220th General Assembly (2012).*

**The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, through the Office of Vocation, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following actions:**

- 1. That the Office of Vocation send a copy of this report to each presbytery encouraging their consideration of the findings as they create and update their presbytery call process.**
- 2. That in its resourcing, training, and consultation with presbyteries, the Office of Vocation share ways in which a pastoral search process can be shortened.**
- 3. That online resources be created for presbyteries and congregational pastor nominating committees that highlight the ways a pastoral search process can be shortened.**
- 4. That training for presbyteries regarding the call process includes information about ways a call process can be shortened.**
- 5. That the revision of the current Church Leadership Connection system includes changes that will assist in shortening the call process.**

*Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2010 Referral: Item 06-19. On Establishing a Process to Evaluate the Current Call System—From the Presbytery of New Covenant (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 47, 477).

*A. Introduction*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) referred Item 06-19 to the Office of Vocation, instructing them to provide the requested evaluation of the current call system. Specifically, the referred overture requested “a process to evaluate the current call system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and bring recommendations back to the 220th General Assembly in 2012 for changes that will shorten the length of time during which a church seeking a pastor is ordinarily without an installed pastor” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p.248 of printed *Journal*, p. 477 of electronic *Journal*).

The call system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) includes the process required by the *Book of Order*, policies and processes of each presbytery, processes of congregations and other calling bodies, and the national call referral system managed by the Office of Vocation. In responding to this item, the Office of Vocation considered each of those parts and how best to effect the change needed.

*B. Evaluation Process*

The PC(USA) Office of Vocation added the evaluation of the current call system for this stated purpose into its regular five-year review and update of Church Leadership Connection (CLC), the online matching and referral system of the denom-

ination. Beginning with the 2010 Fall Polity Conference, Office of Vocation staff used opportunities at conferences, meetings, and training events to gather insights, critiques, and suggestions about the current call system.

In 2010, Research Services surveyed users of CLC and compiled their feedback. Findings from the 2011 CLC survey will be also be compiled by Research Services in early 2012. Individuals and small groups of those with experience with the current call system were also consulted. Those consulted included:

- Presbytery and Synod Staff (approximately half of presbyteries)
  - Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) chairs, upon completion of a search process
  - Teaching Elders and Candidates who have recently completed a search process
  - Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers (APT)
  - Association of Presbyterian Interim Ministry Specialists (APIMS)
  - Presbytery committee on ministry moderators and members
  - Presbytery committee on preparation for ministry moderators and members
  - Seminary placement officers
  - PC(USA) Evangelism and Church Growth staff
  - PC(USA) Legal and Constitutional Services staff
  - PC(USA) Information Technology staff
- The results of these consultations have been compiled and summarized in this report.

### C. *Concerns Identified*

The concern expressed in the original overture highlighted the real problem that a long call process can present to congregations, especially in terms of the loss of momentum that congregations can ill afford. This same sentiment was expressed by a number of presbytery leaders.

In 2010, the median search time for churches that used CLC, from the time a Church Information Form (CIF) was submitted until a person was called, was ten months. However, in most cases there were already a number of additional months of pastoral vacancy before a CIF was submitted to CLC. At the end of the process, once a PNC has selected a candidate, presbytery and congregational approvals add additional time before the way is clear for the called pastor to end their current call and move to the new community. All of this together can leave a congregation with temporary leadership for as many as several years during which ministry may be in a holding pattern, newcomers fail to commit, and search committee members become weary.

#### 1. *Presbytery Process*

The section in the *Book of Order* on the call process (G-2.0803) begins with the phrase “According to the process of the presbytery...” While the Office of Vocation has the resource *On Calling a Pastor* to walk congregations and presbyteries through a “normal” call process, each presbytery has its own policies and processes. It is clear that there is no one standardized call process used by all presbyteries to assist congregations in calling a pastor. There are also many leadership positions that do not fit the norm.

Some presbyteries require an extensive congregational mission study before the search for a new pastor can begin. Others wait until after the new pastor has been in place for a year or two and involve pastor and people together in a process of discernment and engagement with their ministry context.

Some presbyteries use the shorter designated term call process for many of their congregations while others almost always use the “normal” process. In some presbyteries, ministry commissions have been empowered to approve calls on behalf of the presbytery while in others, call decisions, including the examination of teaching elders, must wait until regularly scheduled meetings of presbytery. With changing ministry needs and a new form of government that encourages flexibility, presbyteries are reviewing their call processes, especially with an eye toward shortening the length of time a congregation is without pastoral leadership.

#### 2. *The Current System*

The current online call referral system was designed primarily to address the needs of presbyteries and congregations seeking full-time, installed pastors. While it is used for tent-making, temporary, shared, parish clusters, and co-pastor positions, it is less effective and is challenging for all involved.

Although the matching and referral process of this current system is much improved over cumbersome paper system of the 1990s that took twenty-seven minutes for one computerized match, it is still dependent on prompt actions of staff and volunteers in several key roles to move the process along.

In order to ensure awareness and approval of the key parties involved in the call process, the online call referral system requires electronic signatures of congregational and presbytery leaders. Prompt action helps to move the process quickly.

Approximately half of PC(USA) presbyteries ask the staff of CLC, to do the matching and referral functions for their positions. The CLC staff usually complete matches for PNCs on the day they are requested. However, CLC staff do not know the climate and culture of each congregation and have only a limited view through the CIF. Presbytery staff have a better understanding of the congregation and ministry context so are able to make more informed referrals. They may not be able to do the matching as promptly due to many other demands.

### 3. *Supply and Demand Issues*

While there are far more ministers and candidates seeking to find a call by using CLC than there are positions posted, small congregations in more rural locations of the denomination still have a difficult time finding pastoral leadership. Over half of all PIFs in CLC limit their search geographically and almost half of all PIFs will not consider a congregation of less than 100 members or a congregation located in a rural community. PNCs of smaller congregations located away from major metropolitan areas complain that many of the individuals with PIFs that have been matched to their CIF are not really open to considering their positions, no matter what their PIF may say. PNCs waste much time and energy looking at PIFs of individuals who are not open to considering their call.

While there is a desire to shorten the time a congregation has a pastoral vacancy, there is a greater desire to find the right pastoral leader for a particular ministry context. Presbyteries and congregations want good leaders to choose from AND short searches. A shorter search process with a number of good, viable teaching elders and candidates to consider can allow a PNC to spend more time and energy in discernment.

A number of constituents expressed a desire for a call system that, rather than matching on preferences, would embody a more biblical theology of call, which invites leaders to offer themselves to service of Christ, being open to the movement of the Spirit knowing that God may call them to serve in roles and places they might not have imagined.

## D. *Findings*

There are particular steps that congregations, presbyteries, and the Office of Vocation through Church Leadership Connection, can take to help to shorten the length of time a congregation is without a pastor.

### 1. *Congregations*

- Consult with the presbytery as early as possible in a pastoral vacancy in order to understand presbytery processes in the calling of a new pastor.
- Consider completing a congregational mission study AFTER the new pastor has begun his or her ministry and can participate with the congregation in discernment.
- When given permission by presbytery, elect the PNC as soon as possible. The *Book of Order* allows the PNC to be elected as soon as presbytery has approved the effective date of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
- Elect a PNC that can work together well to discern God's call. Members should be open to be surprised by God and be able to commit time to frequent meetings. A search will be slowed by committee members who have their mind made up from the start or by those who cannot come to meetings. Members should be "representative of the whole congregation" but not factions within the congregation. A PNC made up of individuals each focused on one area of interest will have a hard time agreeing on a pastor to present to the congregation.
- Take time to meet with presbytery leaders for orientation to your task and build good working relationships. This will speed the process.
- Take advantage of technologies to speed up the work of the PNC, such as viewing sermons on-line, using a program like Skype for interviewing, and communicating through email and text messaging. Also, use the congregation's website to offer more information about the congregation to potential candidates.
- When considering PIF's, make contact with potential candidates by email or phone very early in the process to ascertain if they are open to a call to your particular congregation.

### 2. *Presbyteries*

- Develop call processes that identify ways congregations and presbytery can work together to shorten the length of time a congregation is without a pastor. Communicate these processes to congregations and PNCs.

- Facilitate a congregational mission study after a new pastor has begun his or her ministry with the congregation, and not as a step in calling the new pastor.
  - Allow the congregation to elect the PNC as soon as possible. The *Book of Order* allows the PNC to be elected as soon as presbytery has approved the effective date of the dissolution of the existing pastoral relationship.
  - Speed up timeline for presbytery approvals and permissions in the call process. Consider called meetings of ministry commissions or presbytery rather than waiting for regularly scheduled meetings that can sometimes stretch decisions out for a month or more. Ensure that those responsible for signing off on PIFs and CIFs and doing matching and referral understand their responsibilities to do so in a timely manner.
  - Consider a process that would offer congregations a way to “fast track” a call process, such as with pastors called for a designated term (see G-2.0504a).
3. *Office of Vocation—Church Leadership Connection*
- Encourage openness to God’s call by changing or removing some of the parameters on the PIF that identify “preferences” (community type, church size, geographic limitations).
  - Narrow referrals to active call seekers, by inviting those who put PIFs into CLC to designate whether they are “actively seeking” a call or “not actively seeking, but open to a call.”
  - Create the environment for the church to call forth needed leaders by allowing presbyteries to do their own discrete sorting of PIFs to find leaders with particular skills or experiences for a specific ministry setting within the presbytery.
  - Develop a way for PNCs to manage PIFs and individuals to manage CIFs within CLC that would allow for easier and quicker downloading, contacting, ranking, notes, etc.
  - Provide flexibility for a wide variety of positions that do not fit the parameters of a “normal” pastoral position.
  - Change from skills to ministry emphasis; provide definitions for uniform understanding.
  - Provide ability to attach sermons to PIFs for PNCs to listen.

## Item 07-20

[The assembly approved Item 07-20. See pp. 52, 54.]

*Clarification of Wording in G-2.0702—From the Interim Associate for Preparation for Ministry/Exams in the Office of Vocation, Office of the General Assembly/General Assembly Mission Council.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request with the following response:**

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following authoritative interpretation of G-2.0702:**

**The qualifier “ordinarily” in G-2.0702 applies to the word “presbytery.” Examination, ordination, and installation are “ordinarily” acts of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry of a teaching elder or candidate. The acts of examination and ordination are not optional in becoming a teaching elder (G-2.0104b; G-3.0306). A presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry may, at its discretion, invite the presbytery of care to conduct the ordination of a candidate on its behalf; in such cases the presbytery of care may, at its discretion, conduct its own examination of the candidate prior to ordination. The act of examination by the presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry is not optional in transferring the membership of a teaching elder from one presbytery to another. The presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry shall install a teaching elder in a pastoral position. Installations are optional in validated ministries, and are at the discretion of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry.**

### *Findings*

Pursuant to G-3.0501c, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the questions presented:

With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question presents a matter in which interpretation of the G-2.0702 is advisable.

There is a clear expectation in the *Book of Order* that candidates for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament shall be examined prior to being ordained, and that both candidates and previously ordained teaching elders shall be examined prior to being received as members of a presbytery (G-2.0104b, G-3.0109b3, and G-3.0306).

At the same time, the history of who conducts the examination and ordination of a candidate is varied. In antecedent polities, there was a difference of practice with regard to whether the ordination of a candidate was an act of the presbytery having supervised the preparation of the candidate or the presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry. At various times and in various traditions, candidates for ordination as teaching elders have been examined and ordained by either the presbytery of jurisdiction (as was the case in former PCUS polity) or the presbytery of care (as was the case with the former UPCUSA polity). After wrestling with this question for several years after reunion, in 1997 the church settled on a preference for ordaining candidates in the presbytery of care, but used the word “ordinarily” to indicate that the place of examination and ordination could be negotiated between representatives of the presbyteries of jurisdiction and care.

The current Form of Government reverses this preference, however, lodging responsibility for examination, ordination, and installation of a candidate with the presbytery having jurisdiction over the ministry, albeit with the qualifier, “ordinarily.” The effect of the current provision is to link the examination, ordination, and installation of a candidate together as acts of the presbytery of jurisdiction. This linkage is consistent with the theology of ordination and call expressed in G-2.0103, in which the call to ministry is a three-part act, culminating in the “concurring judgment of a council of the church”—in this case, the presbytery issuing the call to a candidate it deems prepared and ready for the ministry entailed therein.

Linking ordination and installation also clarifies the examination process. Under the provisions of the former Form of Government, a candidate was often examined twice in quick succession, first for membership in the presbytery of jurisdiction, and again for ordination by the presbytery of care, which then proceeded to ordain and transfer the new ordinand to the presbytery of jurisdiction. Under the current language, the presbytery of care certifies that the candidate is ready for examination for ordination (G-2.0607), and the presbytery of jurisdiction examines for ordination and membership (G-3.0306).

At the same time, because the locus of ordination is often an emotional matter as well as a theological and ecclesiastical one, the current language does provide that the presbyteries of jurisdiction and care may negotiate between them which shall conduct the service of ordination, with the option of decision belonging to the presbytery of jurisdiction. In these cases, the presbytery of care is understood to be acting on behalf of the presbytery of jurisdiction, whose examination for membership may be accepted by the presbytery of care as sufficient to substitute for its own examination for ordination. This understanding should not be seen as in any way abridging the right of the presbytery of care to conduct its own examination for ordination, should it so choose. But the presbytery of care should be aware that, if it exerts this privilege, it is subjecting its own candidate to two examinations over the same material within a short time span.

### ***Question Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution***

This request from the Office of the General Assembly presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

In G-2.0702, does the qualifier “ordinarily” apply to which presbytery (call or care) may perform the required actions (“shall ... examine, ordain, and install”) or does it qualify the actions themselves, making “examine, ordain, and install” usual but not constitutionally mandated actions?

## **Item 07-21**

**[The assembly approved Item 07-21. See pp. 52, 55.]**

*Authoritative Interpretation on 10-A. Pastor Will Not Moderate Session—From Associate Presbytery Pastor/Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Los Ranchos.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request with the following response:**

### ***Findings***

Pursuant to G-3.0501c, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the questions presented:

1. With respect to the first question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question does not present a question requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*, G-2.0105.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that G-3.0104 provides that, “If it is impractical for the pastor to moderate [a meeting of the session], he or she shall invite another teaching elder who is a member of the presbytery ... to

serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator.”

Under the circumstances envisioned in the request, the pastor would have responsibility to appoint a moderator in his or her stead, or, failing that, the presbytery would be responsible to appoint a moderator.

The committee notes that while the pastor may be excused from moderating the session under the terms of G-3.0104, he or she is not relieved of responsibility to appoint a moderator or to abide by and execute such duties as may be necessitated by decisions of the session.

However, the committee further notes that the clear intent of first sentence of G-3.0104 is that the pastor of a congregation shall serve as the moderator of the session. This is a constitutionally mandated function of the pastor. The third sentence of the paragraph, cited above, is intended to provide a means by which the pastor may be excused occasionally or “when it is impractical.” It should not be read as permitting a pastor permanently to excuse him or herself from moderating the session on grounds of conscience. The *Book of Order*, G-2.0105, provides for freedom of conscience within certain boundaries. The section states, in relevant part: “So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and *without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church*, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained” [Emphasis added].

A presbytery has the authority to determine that an examined candidate’s refusal to fulfill constitutionally mandated functions on a regular and/or permanent basis exceeds the freedom of conscience granted in G-2.0105 and obstructs the constitutional governance of the church.

2. With respect to the second question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question does not present a question requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*, G-2.0105.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the General Assembly has already addressed the constitutional issue at the heart of this complex hypothetical question. In 2006, the General Assembly rendered the following authoritative interpretation:

- a. *The Book of Confessions* and the Form of Government of the *Book of Order* set forth the Scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.
- b. These standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries. These standards may be interpreted by the General Assembly and its Permanent Judicial Commission.
- c. Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church, have the responsibility to determine their membership by applying these standards to those elected to office. These determinations include:
  - (1) Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and confessional standards for fitness for office,
  - (2) Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 [now G-2.0105] of the *Book of Order*, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation,
- d. Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and whether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.
- e. All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring another’s decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries’ approval, in setting standards. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 515)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that a candidate for ordination or reception into the membership of a presbytery has freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture, within certain bounds. The determination as to whether a candidate making a declaration of conscience has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity rests with the examining presbytery. In making this determination, the presbytery should be aware of the limitations on freedom of conscience as provided in G-2.0105 as discussed in the response to question #1 above.

A declaration of conscience in and of itself is not necessarily a violation of an essential of Reformed faith and polity or an obstruction of constitutional governance. A candidate who declares an objection to ordaining a person sexually active outside the covenant of heterosexual marriage may not, in the eyes of the presbytery, have violated an essential of Reformed faith and polity, particularly if that individual is willing to secure another moderator for the ordination under the provisions of G-3.0104. However, in light of the answer to #1 above, the presbytery must counsel the candidate under examination that, once ordained or installed, he or she has a duty to fulfill constitutionally mandated responsibilities, including serving as regular moderator of the session (G-3.0104), and that failure to do so could result in disciplinary process against the minister.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution further notes that Item 07-08 (Ovt 018) deals with somewhat similar matters, and the committee refers the assembly to its advice there.



*Questions Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution*

This request from the Presbytery of Los Ranchos presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

In light of the provisions of new G-2.0104: "... a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003)...."

1. How should a presbytery respond when a pastor refuses to moderate a session that includes a self-identified gay/lesbian individual in a public, long-term relationship, and concerning whose behavior the session has determined falls within the parameters of that congregation's scriptural understanding of the manner of life required for ordered ministry per the provisions of G-2.0105?

2. How should a presbytery respond if this question was posed to a candidate being examined for ordination—or to a pastor being examined for membership in the presbytery—and they answer as the above pastor does?

**Item 07-22**

[The assembly approved Item 07-22. See pp. 52, 55.]

*Question as to Whether G-2.0104b Has Been Amended—From the Session, First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tennessee.*

**The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request with the following response:**

*Findings*

Pursuant to G-3.0501c, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the questions presented:

With respect to the question presented, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question does not require interpretation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that ample and clear notice was provided to the presbyteries concerning the fact that, should both Amendment 10-A (amending then G-6. 0106b) and the Proposed Amendments Part 3 of 3 (the revision of the Form of Government) be approved, the newly approved language of 10-A would replace section G-2.0104b as published in the Proposed Amendments Part 3 of 3. The approved language of Amendment 10-A thus properly appears as the text of G-2.0104b, and as such it, and not the language of former G-6.0106b, is a standard for ordination of persons to the ordered ministries of the church.

Section G-6.01 of the *Book of Order* affirms that the amendment procedures of the Constitution are "understood as a means to faithfulness." Thus, the right of presbyteries to overture the General Assembly to amend the Constitution of the church may not lightly be abridged. Even when the General Assembly recommended to the presbyteries a complete revision of the Form of Government, it simultaneously placed before the church a number of other amendments, some to the then-current Form of Government for the affirmative or negative votes of the presbyteries. It did this in the expectation that, should the proposal to revise the entire Form of Government fail, the church still wished to consider amending the then-current Form of Government. In this context, Amendment 10-A, on amending G-6.0106b, was sent down. At the same time, the assembly and the Office of the Stated Clerk were aware that there needed to be a clear statement of the impact on the proposed new Form of Government of the adoption of any amendments, including Amendment 10-A. It provided that statement at the end of each amendment in italicized font. Upon passage of both a proposed amendment and the Form of Government revision as a whole, the Office of the General Assembly acted to revise the new Form of Government in a manner completely in accord with the published impact statements at the end of each amendment entry.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the rationale attached to the request presumes that there is a chronological sequence associated with the adoption and efficacy of the amendments proposed for adoption by the General Assembly. In point of fact, this is not accurate. As G-6.04 states, proposed amendments that meet the requirements of G-6.04 a–d "shall become effective one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment." All amendments approved by a General Assembly and receiving the positive votes of a majority of the presbyteries take effect simultaneously, rather than in chronological sequence. Thus the revisions to the Form of Government and to [then] G-6.0106b/now G-2.0104b took effect at the same time, and under the provisions recommended by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and approved by the General Assembly.

**Questions Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution**

This request from the session of First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, Tennessee, presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Since the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution, Part 3 of 3, amending the contents of the Form of Government, contained a section G-2.0104b whose wording was substantially identical to that of former G-6.0106b; and since the proposed revision of the Form of Government was approved by a majority of the presbyteries, thereby making it part of the *Book of Order*, is not the language of G-2.0104b as published in the proposed Amendments to the Constitution, Part 3 of 3 the present controlling language and as such is to be used as a guideline for standards of ordination?

**Item 07-23**

[The assembly approved Item 07-23. See pp. 52, 55.]

**The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) establish the following process for determining PCCEC membership and to include the "Guiding Principles" of the PCCEC (see Appendix A) in the *Manual of the General Assembly's* Guidelines and Policies:**

**MEMBERS: The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) will be composed of no fewer than twelve members and no more than twenty-four members who are ruling or teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any changes to this membership range will require a two-thirds majority vote of the PCCEC before submission to commissioners at a General Assembly for action on behalf of the presbyteries.**

- **Every two years, the PCCEC will review the number of members required to complete its work and will set a specific number of members within the range approved by the presbyteries by action of commissioners to the General Assembly.**

- **No more than half and no less than one-third of the members will be elected by the General Assembly to four-year terms on a staggered schedule. These members will be eligible to be reelected for an additional term. Candidates for these positions are nominated through the General Assembly Nominating Committee with consideration being given to areas of needed expertise, to gender and racial ethnic representation, to an approximate balance of ruling and teaching elders, and to various subcultures within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with regard to the overall composition of the PCCEC.**

- **Remaining members of the PCCEC will be elected from among and by examination readers designated by the presbyteries. To facilitate representation from across the church, the PCCEC will group presbyteries into regions. The reader representatives will be nominated from and voted on by readers from their respective regional groupings of presbyteries following procedures determined by the PCCEC. These members will be elected and serve on a staggered schedule in four-year terms, and will be eligible to be reelected for an additional term.**

*Rationale*

The Form of Government directs that examinations required as part of the final assessment of candidates' "fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination" as a teaching elder (*Book of Order*, G-2.0604) "shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0607d). Currently the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) serves in this capacity. The committee wishes to reorganize its membership in order to provide more structural flexibility in meeting these responsibilities. The most practical means for the presbyteries to exercise their proper control over this body is through their commissioners to a General Assembly.

In order to assure transparency and clarity regarding the processes whereby the PCCEC goes about its work and seeks approval from the presbyteries for substantive changes to its own organization or the standard ordination examinations, the committee also requests that its "Guiding Principles" document be included in the *Manual of the General Assembly* among its Guidelines and Policies.

## Appendix A

GUIDING PRINCIPLES  
PRESBYTERIES' COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE  
ON EXAMINATIONS FOR CANDIDATES

NAME: This permanent committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called the *Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates*. For convenience, the committee may be referred to as the PCCEC.

PURPOSE: The PCCEC's purpose was defined by the action of the 1965 General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in creating the committee:

## 07 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY

In order to assist and support the work of presbytery committees which are responsible for the examination of candidates for ordination, to provide a more equitable standard of expectation among all the presbyteries, and to offer candidates a more uniform basis for their preparation for ordination examination, there shall be a Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates which shall report regularly to the General Assembly. (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1965, Part I, p. 113; for the full report and action, see pp. 104–118)

Historical note: A similar committee was created by the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1976. At the time of the reunion of the PCUS and the UPCUSA in 1983, a successor committee was included in the Constitution of the re-united church.

The continuing work of the PCCEC is governed by the provisions of the most recent *Book of Order* as duly amended by the General Assembly and the several presbyteries. Its current commission derives from G-2.0607d that gives to the General Assembly the ability to approve standard ordination examinations that “shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.”

RESPONSIBILITIES: The PCCEC is charged with:

- Preparing those standard ordination examinations approved by the General Assembly. Currently these examinations are developed in five subject areas:
  - Bible Content
  - Open Book Biblical Exegesis (including Old Testament/Hebrew and New Testament/Greek texts)
  - Theological Competence
  - Worship and Sacraments
  - Church Polity

The PCCEC, in conversation with other bodies and representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), may propose changes to the examination areas, names, or forms of these standard ordination examinations. Such proposed changes require a two-thirds majority vote by the committee prior to submission to the General Assembly for approval. These changes will continue to uphold the importance of integrated and critical thinking in the life and work of a pastor with regard to Scripture, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*. Candidates taking examinations will be directed to answer questions within the tradition of Reformed Theology, understood as theology in broad agreement with *The Book of Confessions* and the theology of John Calvin.

- Maintaining the security of the examination questions until they have been administered and maintaining the security of the Bible Content examination questions indefinitely. Security entails making sure that no one other than committee members, consultants (e.g., sensitivity reviewers), or staff of the Office of Preparation for Ministry/Examinations have access to draft or final versions of the examination questions prior to their administration.
- Administering the examinations.
- Organizing and working with readers to evaluate examinations.
- Training the readers to evaluate the examinations reliably and to write constructive comments.
- Maintaining a record of the final evaluation of each examination.
- Distributing the evaluations to the candidate, seminary, and presbytery.
- Providing a *Handbook for Candidates* that describes each examination as well as the process for registering for and taking the examinations.
- Collaboration with units within the Office of Vocation and the Committee on Theological Education.
- Reviewing regularly the nature, format, and effectiveness of the standard examinations and the means by which they are administered and evaluated.

The PCCEC is assisted in carrying out these responsibilities by staff of the Office of Preparation for Ministry/Examinations within the Office of Vocation.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The PCCEC is accountable to the General Assembly that is mandated to regularly review the work of each permanent committee. In its on-going work, the PCCEC is accountable through the Office of Vocation to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and the General Assembly Mission Council. The PCCEC assists and supports the work of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in a number of ways—first and foremost through the examinations administered on behalf of the presbyteries. Presbyteries elect readers to evaluate the examinations, and these readers are strongly encouraged to report their experience to their respective presbyteries. Those who have experience with the evaluation process can be a valuable resource for their presbytery's committee overseeing inquirers and candidates.

MEMBERS: There shall be a total of twenty-four members who are ruling elders or teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any changes to this structure will require a two-thirds majority vote of the committee before submission to the General Assembly for approval.

- Twelve members are elected by the General Assembly to four-year terms and are eligible to be reelected for an additional term. Candidates for these positions shall be nominated through the General Assembly Nominating Committee with consideration being given to areas of needed expertise, to gender and racial/ethnic representation, and to an approximate balance of ruling elders and teaching elders on the PCCEC.

## 07 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH ORDERS AND MINISTRY

- Each of the six regional reading groups will elect (on a staggered schedule) two members to serve as co-conveners of the reading group and as members of the PCCEC, preferably a teaching elder and a ruling elder. Each convener/member will serve a four-year term and is eligible to be reelected for an additional term.

MEETINGS: The PCCEC meets at least once annually to develop and review the forthcoming examinations and to transact such other business as may be necessary. All members are expected to attend the annual meeting and at least one of the reading groups.

OFFICERS: The officers of the PCCEC are a moderator and a secretary, elected annually by the entire committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Executive Committee is composed of the moderator and secretary of the PCCEC and the chairs of the several task groups responsible for particular examinations. A designated General Assembly staff person is an *ex officio* member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee meets in conjunction with the PCCEC annual meeting and at such other times as may be necessary. The Executive Committee may conduct its business through conference calls or other electronic media. Decisions reached electronically need to be confirmed and entered into the minutes of the next face-to-face or conference call meeting.

TASK GROUPS: The members of the PCCEC are divided into task groups of approximately equal size. Each task group is responsible for the development of questions and evaluation standards for one or more of the standard ordination examinations. Members are assigned by the Executive Committee based upon personal interest and expertise of each member as well as upon the comparative needs of each task group.

Upon approval of the Executive Committee, volunteer consultants may be invited to augment a particular task group or reading group to provide expertise or capacity needed by that group.

- Bible Content Specialists: The Bible task group will be assisted by two Bible specialists with responsibility to create new Bible Content questions and to assemble two forms annually of the Bible Content exam for administration on-line.
- World Language Specialists: Appropriate members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be designated to translate the examinations into other languages (e.g., Korean, Spanish) designated by the General Assembly.

READING GROUPS: The readers who evaluate the examinations are elected by their presbyteries to serve the wider church (G-3.0302b). Each reading group elects its own leadership (conveners) who are also members of the PCCEC. The process and procedures for conducting the reading groups is described in the *Conveners' Handbook*.

ELECTIONS: The officers and chairs of the several task groups will normally be elected at the annual meeting of PCCEC upon nomination by a nominating committee formed of the members of PCCEC who are not eligible for reelection to service on PCCEC. If a vacancy occurs between annual meetings, such vacancy may be filled by an election conducted electronically upon nomination by the Executive Committee. The person so elected will serve until the end of the next annual meeting and is eligible to be elected to the same position through the usual election procedure at the annual meeting.

FINANCES: The work of the PCCEC is funded through two sources, the General Assembly *per capita* budget and the fees charged in conjunction with registration for the examinations. The PCCEC will regularly review these fees and decide on appropriate fees for subsequent years.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY: All meetings of the PCCEC will be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* except in those cases where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise.

AMENDMENTS: These guidelines may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the PCCEC at its annual meeting, except in those areas noted within these guidelines where additional approval is required by the presbyteries acting through their commissioners to a General Assembly. The executive committee, subject to review by the full PCCEC, is empowered to make editorial revisions to assure compliance with changes to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Adopted: April 16, 2010

Revisions: April 7, 2011

Editorial revision for compliance with *2011/2013 Book of Order*, August 2011

February 2012

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## Item 07-24

[The assembly answered Item 07-24 by the action taken on Item 07-17. See pp. 52, 55.]

*On Honoring Christ in our Relationships with One Another—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.*

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to make the following statement:

“Because

- “• Jesus taught that our highest ethical obligation is to ‘love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself’ (Lk. 10:27); and ‘this is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other’ (Jn. 13:35);

- “• having experienced Christ’s gracious love for us while we are yet sinners, we are called to ‘welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God’s glory’ (Rom. 15:7);
- “• we affirm the solemn commitments expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination, installation, and commissioning, including that we intend to fulfill our ministries in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and continually guided by our confessions; that that we will be friends among our colleagues in ministry; that we seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love our neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world (*Book of Order*, W-4.4003);
- “• ‘we hold that interpretation of the Scripture to be orthodox and genuine which is gleaned from the Scriptures themselves (from the nature of the language in which they were written, likewise according to the circumstances in which they were set down, and expounded in the light of like and unlike passages ...) and which agree with the rule of faith and love, and contributes much to the glory of God and man’s salvation’ (*The Book of Confessions*, The Second Helvetic Confession, 5.010);
- “• The Larger Catechism lifts up the duty of holding ‘a charitable esteem of our neighbors,’ and forbids the sin of ‘misconstruing intentions, words, and actions’ (*The Book of Confessions*, 7.254–7.255);
- “• All Presbyterians acknowledge that we are sinners in need of repentance, but we disagree about whether all homosexual intimacy is sinful. While it is incumbent on all to continue to seek God’s will for sexuality, no human being has a full understanding of God’s Truth and all are called to humility before the Lord and charity toward one another. Questioning the faithfulness of those who in good conscience disagree with our interpretation does not bring honor to Christ or build up his church.

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we decline to take an action that would have the effect of imposing on the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one interpretation of Scripture in this matter. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment.”

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-24

*Advice and Counsel on Item 07-24—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 07-24.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 07-17 is applicable here as well:

While the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns affirms the need for respectful dialogue and the importance of treating one another as sisters and brothers in Christ even in disagreement, this overture has the potential to stand in the way of a continuation of the progress the church has made in removing discriminatory and marginalizing practices in the ordination process that target a specific group of people.

Even if God has not blessed the church with a clear consensus on the issue of same-sex marriage, God has blessed us with a clear call to do justice. To call for waiting for clear consensus to do justice is to lift a standard of acceptance of discrimination while we wait. This particular issue on which we do not yet all agree is not simply an abstract theological principal or doctrine, but a community of people living, moving and serving in our churches while being denied full inclusion.

The dialogue must certainly continue, but to take a general stand on not taking any action that imposes one interpretation of Scripture in this matter has the potential to be used down the road to impede the progress we have made toward just treatment of LGBTQ members of the PC(USA).



**Item 08-01**

[The assembly approved Item 08-01 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 68–69.]

*Report of the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the Book of Order*

In accordance with the guidelines contained in the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order* recommends the following:

1. That the authoritative interpretations described below that are derived from decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission be removed as having no effect because the former Form of Government language on which they were based is no longer in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or The Form of Government, [☞] is contradicted by new language [ , or was previously removed]. [Reference guidelines # 4 & 5]

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
PJC 217-13: <i>Frye v. Session of First PC, Tecumseh, MI.</i>	2006	G-05.0302	G-03.0201c	A complaint filed within ninety days of the session’s response to an inactive member’s request for restoration to the active roll is timely filed.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 214-02: <i>Leslie v. First P C Manhattan, Kansas</i>	2002	G-05.0501 G-05.0502 G-05.0503	G-01.0402 G-03.0201c	In regard to instruction required of adult new members: 1) “Similar” means similar in content, ie: the meaning of this profession, the responsibilities of membership, and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but not necessarily identical to training provided for youth. (2) Session has discretion to determine the means, scope and duration of the adult instruction provided the content includes the content required for youth.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 205-04: <i>LeTourneau v. Pby of the Twin Cities Area</i>	1993	G-06.0106 By inference based on a position paper” (since repealed)	N/A	Policies relevant to ordination must be investigated by COPM—process is to prepare and evaluate candidates qualifications.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 205-05: <i>Sallade v. Pby of Genesee Valley</i>	1993	G-06.0106 By inference based on a position paper” (since repealed)	N/A	A self-affirmed practicing homosexual may not be invited to serve in a PCUSA position that presumes ordination.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 205-05: <i>Sallade v. Pby of Genesee Valley</i>	1993	G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b	A self-affirmed practicing homosexual may not be invited to serve in a PCUSA position that presumes ordination.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 215-08: <i>Pby of San Joaquin v Pby of Redwoods</i>	2003	G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b	G-6.0106b specifies that a candidate who refuses to repent of any self acknowledged practice that the confessions call sin is not eligible for ordination or installation.	Do Not Retain	

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
PJC 220-01: <i>White v. St. Paul</i>	2012	G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b	The Church has repeatedly distinguished between sexual orientation and sexual practice. There is no constitutional expectation that an individual would need to repent of sexual orientation.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 197-09: <i>UPC of Blasdell v. Pby of Western NY</i>	1985	G-06.0107	G-02.0102 G-02.0104b	It is unconstitutional for the Church to ordain any self-affirming, practicing, and unrepentant homosexual as elder, deacon, or minister of the Word; the GA has power to determine matters of interpretation.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 214-07: <i>Stimage- Norwood v. Pby of S. New England</i>	2002	G-06.0702	G-02.0407	In this case COM has power (on its own authority) to engage in required consultation on behalf of presbytery.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 203-02: <i>Anderson v. Pby of Central Florida</i>	1991	G-09.0505	G-03.0109	Notice of hearing must contain a short and plain statement on matters at issue.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 208-03: <i>Rice v. Pby of Philadelphia</i>	1996	G-09.0505d	G-03.0303d(3)	Administrative commission is subject to the requirements of former G-9.0505d .	Do Not Retain	
PJC 207-11: <i>Brown v. Pby of San Diego</i>	1995	G-09.0705	G-03.0110	Termination of Pby executive does not require a full trial, but requires certain specified procedure, including notice of reasons for termination and a hearing.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 198-04: <i>Pby of San Gabriel v. Jewett, et al</i>	1986	G-11.0404a	G-02.0505 G-03.0306 G-03.0109b(3)	Requires that a minister coming to this church from another denomination be submitted in person for examination before presbytery as a whole in theology, and at the discretion of presbytery in other subjects.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 217-07: <i>Williamson v. Pby of Western North Carolina</i>	2005	G-11.0411	G-02.0503b	Establishes various criteria for approval of validated ministries.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 208-03: <i>Rice v. Pby of Philadelphia</i>	1996	G-11.0502f G-14-0513 G-14.0550	G-2.0502 G-02.0504b G-03.0307	Presbytery is empowered to work with Session in the employment of temporary supply leadership. Session may disregard presbytery advice but any minister member needs presbytery approval to serve in a temporary capacity. Session has the authority to terminate temporary supply relationships.	Do Not Retain	



ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
PJC 212-12: <i>Sheldon, et al. v. Pby of West Jersey</i>	2000	G-14.0305 G-14.0405	G-02.0603 G-02.0604	G-6.0106b does not apply to inquirers and candidates as it only addresses those called to ordered ministry. Presumptive ineligibility may change over preparation process.	Do Not Retain	
PJC 212-03: <i>Congregation for Reconciliation and Graham v. Pby of Miami</i>	2000	G-16.0401r	G-05.05	Special provision for dissolution of a union congregation.	Do Not Retain	

**2. That the authoritative interpretations described below that are derived from actions of the General Assembly in formally declaring an authoritative interpretation under the constitutional positions formerly described at G-13.0112 c–d, be removed as having no effect because the former Form of Government language on which they were based is no longer in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or The Form of Government or is contradicted by new language. [Reference guidelines # 4 & 5]**

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
Com. 06-84	1984	G-09.0105a(6)	G-03.0103	Presbytery should use its own wisdom in defining minority (racial ethnic) group. A committee on representation cannot be combined with another committee or made a sub-committee. The committee must stand alone.	Do Not Retain	
Item 05-19	2010	G-09.0105a(6)	G-03.0103	“Different age groups are persons who are unlike each other due to the different stages of life they represent .... In order to assure greater inclusiveness in the church, persons from all different age groups are needed. The age groups and ages they contain are as follows: Youth—25 and under; Young Adults—26–35; Adults—36–55; Senior Adults—56 and up.”	Do Not Retain	
Com. 06-84	1984	G-09.0405	G-03.0106	For a pby, the required consultation in relation to a Manual is fulfilled by mailing manual or proposed changes to each session.	Do Not Retain	
Item 05-22	2010	G-09.0505b(1)	G-01.0504 G-03.0109	“Because the authority to moderate congregational meetings derives from the presbytery, the presbytery has the right to appoint a moderator other than the pastor for a hearing conducted under the provisions of G-9.0505b(1) and a congregational meeting called under the terms of G-9.0505b(2).	Do Not Retain	

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
Com. 6-84	1984	G-11.0101b	G-03.0301	Resident ministers are active members or members-at-large who live and work within the geographical bounds of presbytery	Do Not Retain	
GA (1998, 66, 392, 22.0243-.0246	1998	G-11.0101b	G-02.1103b	“Strongly encourage presbyteries to provide Certified Christian Educators ordained as elders a vote in presbytery.	Do Not Retain	
2000, 40, 54, 193, 22.187)	2000	G-11.0103n	G-03.0301a	Deleted language about “guidelines” for compensation and benefits for educators and adopted new language to require pby to set minimums for calls to educators as well as those to pastors.	Do Not Retain	
Item 05-04	2002	G-11.0103n	G-03.0301a	Added clarification for benefits requirements and guidelines and apply to “Certified Associate Christian Educator” as well.	Do Not Retain	
Req 95-6	1995	G-11.0404 G-14.0508	G-02.0505	Sections G-11.0404 and G-14.0508 regarding receiving ministers of other denominations are not in basic conflict.	Do Not Retain	
Ovt. 07	2000	G-11.0406c	G-02.0508	A minister under temporary exclusion from ordained office is placed in the category of an inactive member of presbytery.	Do Not Retain	
[Ref. 90-2	1990	G-13.0112d	G-06.02	<del>Proposals for significant change in <i>Book of Order</i> should not originate with ACC.</del>	Do Not Retain]	
Req. 94-9	1994	G-14.0203	G-02.0404	G-14.0203 means an ordination while unconstitutional is not null and void. A person may be removed from office through either a remedial or disciplinary case.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 90-18	1990	G-14.0223	G-02.0401	The words “chosen” and “elected” are synonymous as used in G-14.0201b.	Do Not Retain	
176, 15.103, Com.	1986	G-14.0403	G-02.0602	If the two year requirement of care is approved by the presbyteries it will apply only to candidates received under care after its effective date.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 91-20	1992	G-14.0470	G-02.0610	A candidate is deemed to be “extraordinary” if he or she is unusually or exceedingly qualified to receive a call but, because of some exceptional and unusual reasons he or she cannot or should not meet the ordinary requirements.	Do Not Retain	

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
Req. 94-8	1994	G-14.0313a  (pre-2007 reference number)	G-02.0610	AI interpreted language in Former G-14.0313a that was removed in 2007 in revision of entire chapter 14. Current Form of Government provides different requirements and exceptions.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 89-25	1989	G-14.0513	G-02.0504c	A current associate pastor is not eligible to become a co-pastor of that church.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 95-2	1995	G-14.0513	G-02.0504a, c	Associate may not be called as next pastor. Associate may not be called as designated pastor.	Do Not Retain	
15.062, Com.	1986	G-14.0531	G-01.0502	A congregation may hold a called meeting at the close of worship on the second Sunday of announcement.	Do Not Retain	
1992 Ref. Req. 92-14	1993	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	Presbyteries have considerable flexibility in working with congregations and ministers in the call process and filling in the appropriate lines in the call form.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 93-16	1993	G-14.0550	G-02.0504b, c	Distinguished between one-time pulpit supply and temporary pastoral relationships.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 98-4	1998	G-14.0550	G-02.0504b, c	Interim pastor may not become next installed pastor of larger parish that includes congregation served as interim.	Do Not Retain	
Item 05-15	2008	G-14.0550	G-02.0504b	This section “does not change the practice of allowing a commissioned lay pastor, a candidate or inquirer under care, or an elder to serve a congregation as a temporary supply pastor. Therefore, persons in such positions are still permitted to serve a congregation as a temporary supply pastor.”	Do Not Retain	
Com. 3-88	1988	G-14.0551	G-02.0504	An interim pastor, if shifted to the role of stated supply, does not thereby become eligible to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 91-7	1991	G-14.0551	G-02.0504	A person serving as a stated supply becomes an interim minister when the congregation begins seeking an installed pastor.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 92-6	1992	G-14.0551	G-02.0504c	A seminary student intern must wait six months before a call to that pastorate may be given, if that intern has been named as temporary supply.	Do Not Retain	

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend	Notes
Req. 95-9	1995	G-14.0551		Rejected request for exception to mandate barring a temporary pastor from becoming next installed pastor. Appropriate way to propose amendment is through overture.	Do Not Retain	
Item 04-10, Req 03-12	2003	G-14.0552	G-02.0504	No formal installation is anticipated when organizing pastor is first engaged, but “service of recognition” is permitted.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 89-18	1989	G-14.0553	G-02.0504	Referred to interim pastor and interim associate pastor. Titles are no longer in the Form of Government.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 90-15	1990	G-14.0553	G-02.0504	It is not permissible for an interim pastor to become the next installed pastor of a particular church as the designated pastor.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 92-7	1992	G-14.0553		A person who has been a parish associate may serve as an interim pastor in the same church.	Do Not Retain	
Item 05-28	2006	G-14.0553	G-02.0504b, c	Interpreting words of former G-14.0513b, the addition of the word “not” following the word “may” turns permitted practice into prohibited practice. The practice [of allowing interim to become next installed pastor] is not permitted. In fact, it is forbidden.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 90-21; Req. 2-88; Com. 12-87	1990	G-14.0562a	G-02.1001 G-02.0606	Commissioned lay pastor (preacher) who becomes a candidate may no longer administer the Lord’s Supper.	Do Not Retain	
Req. 90-9	1990	G-14.0570	G-02.0502	Any minister member of presbytery who is not serving in a local parish is eligible to become a parish associate of a particular church.	Do Not Retain	
Com.	1986	G-14.0620		There is no limit on how long a period may elapse before a person designated as honorably retired may be designated pastor emeritus or emerita, but it should take effect no earlier than the formal dissolution of the pastoral relationship.	Do Not Retain	

[Comment: In Recommendation 2, it was discovered that item reference 90-2 is not an authoritative interpretation.]

**3. That the authoritative interpretations described in the narrative report of the committee be acknowledged as retained because the language of the current text is identical to or essentially the same as the language previously interpreted. [Reference guidelines # 1 & 2.]**

**4. That the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order* be dismissed with admiration and thanks and commended for their gift to the church].**

***Rationale***

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Alternate Resolution to Item 07-11. Appoint Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the Book of Order, Composed of Six Members Recommended by the GAPJC, the ACC, and the OGA, Charged to Make Recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) Concerning the Status of Specific Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the Constitution Based on the Status of Authoritative Interpretation—From the 219th General Assembly (2010).* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 18, 26, 566ff of the electronic version, p. 299 of the print copy)

Interpretations of the Constitution provided by decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission or by the General Assembly itself upon the advice of the Advisory Committee of the Constitution are of great value to the church as leaders seek to make determinations in relation to matters of faith and practice. Such interpretations maintain their value over time and only cease to be of value when the language of the Constitution that they interpret is removed or so altered as to render them of no relevance. While the special committee evaluated all judicial decisions since 1983 and all official actions of the General Assembly over that time, the purpose of the committee was to determine those interpretations that would not be retained under the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and The Form of Government. Therefore, the recommendations above detail only those interpretations we determined to be no longer supported.

The column headed “Description” is intended to note the core or central point of an action and is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of the case or question at issue. Those authoritative interpretations determined by the committee to be supported in the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and The Form of Government are displayed in a similar chart format as a part of the narrative report of the special committee.

Narrative Report General Assembly Special Committee

*On Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the Constitution**Introduction*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed that should the proposed Revised Form of Government become the Form of Government (FOG) a committee be appointed to determine the status of statements of authoritative interpretation under the previous FOG. The committee was selected as directed. Serving as former General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) members were Ruling Elder Steven Taber and Teaching Elder Fane Downs. Serving as former members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) were Ruling Elder Alyson Janke and Teaching Elder Neal Lloyd. Ruling Elder Laurie Griffith and Ruling Elder Doska Ross (who subsequently moved to service as the executive of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii) were assigned by the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The committee met in Louisville on January 17–18, 2011. After the initial meeting, all work was conducted by conference call aided by “Go To Meeting” software. The committee held twenty conference call meetings, each of approximately two hours duration, to complete the assignment.

*The Task*

The shape and form of the task grew out of questions that were referred to the ACC prior to the 219th General Assembly (201) and the ACC response. Five guidelines were put forward to shape the committee’s work:

1. *If language approved in the Constitution explicitly restates the content of existing authoritative interpretations, it is no longer an authoritative interpretation but is incorporated into the Constitution.*
2. *If language is approved that is identical to, or essentially the same as the language of constitutional provisions that have already been interpreted, current authoritative interpretations would continue in force.*
3. *If language is approved that is substantively different from currently interpreted constitutional language, clarification from the General Assembly would be required as to the status and applicability of existing authoritative interpretations through the provisions of G-13.0103r (now G-6.02).*
4. *If language is approved that contradicts the substance of an existing authoritative interpretation, the current interpretation would have no effect.*
5. *If language is approved that totally removes a constitutional provision that has been authoritatively interpreted, the authoritative interpretations attached to that provision would be removed as well*

An authoritative interpretation (AI) of the Constitution is created when the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) renders a decision or the General Assembly itself approves an interpretation (*Book of Order*, G-3.0501c). However, there has not been a discrete repository of these authoritative interpretations. The only attempt to codify

has been the work done by the Office of the General Assembly in producing an *Annotated Book of Order*. Legal and historical scholars seeking to understand or use our Constitution would, of necessity, go directly to the *Minutes of the General Assembly* to determine the full context of any interpretive statement. For such persons, the *Annotated Book of Order* serves as an index of where to find the full record on any matter. In practice, the annotations are prepared as much for the amateur or casual user seeking general information. Thus, while some annotations may note the actual words of a decision or statement, in many instances interpolations are used to give the “intent” of the decision while condensing the words. Hence, it can be determined that an AI has been rendered in regard to a particular constitutional provision, but the precise wording may not be evident in the annotation.

The special committee determined that its task required examination of the complete record. Each PJC decision and each assembly action was reviewed to clearly establish what constitutional provision was interpreted and what the interpretation was. This work preceded any decision on its relationship to the new text.

Each PJC case is unique in its own setting. The decision gives an interpretation in regard to the specific unique facts of the case. Actions of the assembly itself are often less clear. Matters come to the assembly from any number of sources and the questions put before the ACC are typically more general or abstract in nature. Often requests made to the ACC are themselves less than clear and the particular situation of the questioner may be unknown or unstated. When the assembly “approves” the ACC material or wording of its own creation, an interpretation is thus rendered. Some of these interpretations lift broad general principles of our polity, while others interpret specific words or phrases in particular passages of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or The Form of Government. To decide which provisions of the Constitution are being interpreted is not always an easy task.

The ordination standards in the former G-6.0106b were changed by the amendment process at the same time the nFOG was adopted. The new standards for ordination are found in G-2.0104b. In its recommendations related to GAPJC decisions and General Assembly authoritative interpretations dealing with the subject matter of ordination affected by G-6.0106b, the special committee has recommended that they not be retained to the extent that an interpretation relates to qualification for ordination. However, to the extent that the interpretation relates to procedural matters or the manner or timing of determining qualification for ordination, the committee has recommended that such interpretation be retained, provided that such interpretation has not been affected by other changes in nFOG.

The special committee determined to use a tabular method of reporting our work. Each PJC decision recorded in the *Minutes* and each General Assembly action indexed in the *Annotated Book of Order* that contained relevant information has been entered into a table. Since the most recent authoritative interpretation is binding, based on the guidelines presented above, the committee is recommending that the General Assembly vote not to retain interpretations no longer in effect. All interpretations clearly reflective of current wording as in the past are presented at the conclusion of this report. The assembly is being asked to acknowledge these continuing interpretations. For information purposes, PJC decisions that interpreted no specific section of the Foundations or nFOG are listed in a separate table.

The committee wishes to thank the Reverend Mark Tammen (who was at the beginning of our task the Associate Stated Clerk and director of Constitutional Services) for his work and especially Joanne Green for her invaluable assistance.

#### Interpretations Rendered by the Permanent Judicial Commission That Are Retained

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 195-02: <i>Rodriguez-Morales et al v. Synod of Puerto Rico</i>	1983	<i>Book of Order</i> 1981–1982 UPC FOG, Chapter XXXIXA2, Sec.39 G-09.0500	G-03.0109 G-03.0111	A Synod may establish, dissolve, and replace its committees, in particular it may dissolve a committee that has not completed its work, is elected in part by constituent presbyteries, and is composed in accordance with procedures in the FOG including a Synod Exec nominating committee.	Retain
PJC 195-02: <i>Rodriguez-Morales et al v. Synod of Puerto Rico</i>	1983	<i>Book of Order</i> 1981–1982 UPC FOG, Chapter XIV, Sec.9	G-03.0105	A ruling of the chair cannot be overturned if remedies available at the time are not exhausted. (appeal to the body)	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 195-04: <i>Lightner v. Pby of Middle Tennessee</i>	1983	<i>Book of Order</i> 1981–1982 UPC FOG, Chapter XI, Section 15	G-03.0303	Presbytery may dissolve a local congregation after inquiry and deliberation.	Retain
PJC 195-04: <i>Lightner v. Pby of Middle Tennessee</i>	1983	<i>Book of Order</i> 1981–1982 UPC	G-03.0301	Geographic presbytery has Jurisdiction of congregation within its bounds after Synod and GA approved dissolution of one presbytery and transfer of congregations to remaining presbytery.	Retain
PJC 195-04: <i>Lightner v. Pby of Middle Tennessee</i>	1983	<i>Book of Order</i> 1981–1982 UPC FOG, Chapter XI, Sec. 15	G-03.0303e	Presbytery may assume original jurisdiction of session after giving session opportunity to be heard.	Retain
PJC 197-01: <i>Heartland Pby v. John Doe</i>	1985	G-09.0104	G-03.0103	Adoption of guidelines for pregnancy leave for clergywomen not violation of church’s commitment to inclusiveness or affirmative action hiring procedures but within the pby’s constitutional authority.	Retain
PJC 197-03: <i>Hardwick v. Session of Pearsall Church</i>	1985	G-05.0302	G-01.0103 G-03.0201c.	Notes the rights of every member to pastoral care and the responsibilities of pastor and session to provide such care.	Retain
PJC 197-04: <i>Simmons v. Pby of Suwannee</i>	1985	G-11.0403	G-02.0502	Re: pby’s examination of a Minister of Word & Sacrament (Teaching Elder): question is whether complainant has met its burden to prove that pby acted unreasonably in finding that examination disclosed no information that would disqualify examinee. Factual determination of pby entitled to great weight.	Retain
PJC 197-09: <i>UPC of Blasdell v. Pby of Western NY</i>	1985	G-13.0103r	G-03.0501c	The GA has power to determine matters of authoritative interpretation of the Constitution.	Retain
PJC 198-05: <i>Buonaiuto v. First Church, Greenlawn, NY</i>	1986	G-01.0300	F-03.01	The “right of conscience” to protest does not give an individual a right to dictate the manner by which a session discharges its responsibilities to higher governing bodies.	Retain
PJC 198-06: <i>Spangler v. Pby of Georgia</i>	1986	G-11.0502d G-14.0507	G-03.0303a G-3.0307	The presbytery has the responsibility for the oversight of the call process.	Retain
PJC 199-01: <i>Bedford-Central PC v. Pby of NYC</i>	1987	G-01.0308	F-03.0108 G-02.0609 G-03.0109	Presbytery followed clear and open procedures in evaluating candidate in that opportunity was given in committee and on the floor of presbytery for each interested person or group to be heard.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 199-01: <i>Bedford-Central PC v. Pby of NYC</i>	1987	G-14.0401 G-14.0412	G-02.06 G-02.0607 G-02.0701	The responsibility of making a judgment about the wisdom of a person remaining on the roll of candidates belongs to the candidate's presbytery.	Retain
PJC 200-07: <i>Campbell, Jr., et al. v. Pby of Atlantic</i>	1988	G-11.0103o	G-02.0904	Presbytery may dissolve the pastoral relationship without the request of either pastor or congregation, but upon recommendation of its COM, after the COM has met with the pastor and the session and has offered to be available to consult with the congregation.	Retain
PJC 202-01: <i>Baumann and Griffiths v. Session of Bellefield Church</i>	1990	G-11.0103n	G-03.0301c	Presbytery has the responsibility to "establish" and "dissolve" pastoral relationship.	Retain
PJC 202-01: <i>Baumann and Griffiths v. Session of Bellefield Church</i>	1990	G-06.0107 G-07.0304a(3)	G-02.0102, G-01.0503c	"Confidential Statement" changing terms of call requires approval by the congregation. Government of this church is representative.	Retain
PJC 202-01: <i>Baumann and Griffiths v. Session of Bellefield Church</i>	1990	G-11.0103o	G-02.0904	Error for session not to inform congregation of presbytery commission's recommendation to dissolve pastoral relation.	Retain
PJC 202-03: <i>Staffa v. Session of Hill UPC</i>	1990	G-10.0102d	G-03.0201a	Session authority to order worship affirmed.	Retain
PJC 203-01: <i>Hoy et al. v. Pby of Tropical Florida</i>	1991	G-09.0502	G-03.0109	When an administrative commission is established, it may exercise only those powers which are specifically granted to it.	Retain
PJC 203-02: <i>Anderson v. Pby of Central Florida</i>	1991	G-09.0505	G-03.0109	Members of an Administrative Commission are not barred from voting on the AC's final report because of absence from a meeting.	Retain
PJC 203-02: <i>Anderson v. Pby of Central Florida</i>	1991	G-09.0505	G-03.0109	Direction to AC to settle differences within church implies power to dissolve pastoral relationship, although this power should be explicitly stated.	Retain
PJC 203-03: <i>Santin v. Church Vocations Unit</i>	1991	G-04.0403 G-09.0104	F-01.0403 G-03.0103	All executive and administrative staff positions in all governing bodies above the session shall be filled in accordance with the principles of participation and representation.	Retain
PJC 203-04: <i>Matsuda v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1991	G-10.0102o	G-03.0201c	Pby exceeded its own authority and usurped the authority of the High Street Church Session to determine the use of the physical facilities of the church.	Retain



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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 204-05: <i>Session, Central Church v. Pby of Long Island</i>	1992	G-10.0102i	G-03.0205	Pby may not compel or punish a church whose session determines the distribution of the congregation's benevolences in a way contrary to the pby's approved policy of financing higher governing body mission with per capita. [Full ruling had several sub-points. All cited language carries forward into new text.	Retain
PJC 205-03: <i>Metherell v. GA</i>	1993	G-13.0103b	G-03.0501	Adoption of a report on problem pregnancies and abortion is well within the jurisdiction of the GA.	Retain
PJC 205-07: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1993	G-06.0702 G-09.0503	G-02.0509 G-03.0109	No PJC has the authority to declare sections of the <i>Book of Order</i> unconstitutional.	Retain
PJC 205-07: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1993	G-06.0702 G-09.0503	G-02.0509 G-03.0109	Pby must delegate specific powers to an administrative commission including the power to declare a minister has engaged in disapproved work.	Retain
PJC 205-12: <i>Wilson v. Pby of Donegal</i>	1993	G-4.0403	F-01.0403	Does not support relief from mandatory participation in benefits plan. One has right to express opinion, but once a decision is made, members must abide by it even if they continue to advocate change.	Retain
PJC 205-15: <i>Pby f W. Jersey v. Syn od of the NE</i>	1993	G-06.0108b	G-02.0105	Expression of an opinion, without action, does not constitute adoption of a policy contrary to PCUSA.	Retain
PJC 206-02: <i>Phinisee v. Pby of Grace</i>	1994	G-09.0503a(4)	G-03.0109(b)5	A presbytery's power to dissolve a pastoral relationship may be delegated to an administrative commission.	Retain
PJC 206-02: <i>Phinisee v. Pby of Grace</i>	1994	G-14.0600	G-02.0901	Pby has right to dissolve pastoral relationship regardless of who requests.	Retain
PJC 206-02: <i>Phinisee v. Pby of Grace</i>	1994	G-09.0505b(1)	G-03.0109	The right to be heard by presbytery is fulfilled when the matter is heard by an administrative commission authorized to resolve a matter.	Retain
PJC 206-03: <i>Hope Church v. Central Church</i>	1994	G-14.0203 (pre 2006)	G-02.0404	Although ordination was unconstitutional, parties failed to prove it is constitutional to remove deacon from office.	Retain
PJC 206-08: <i>Wilson v. Pby of Donegal</i>	1994	G-06.0702	G-02.0509	A governing body must take action to disapprove a work before "consultation and notice" that persistence in that work is grounds for presumption of renunciation.	Retain
PJC 206-12: <i>Phillippy v. Pby of Mid. TN</i>	1994	G-11.0413	G-03.0307	Restrictions on minister's relations with secular agencies following censure not part of the "care, oversight and discipline" powers of pby.	Retain
PJC 206-13: <i>Saurbaugh v. Pby of Great Rivers</i>	1994	G-07.0304a(3)	G-01.0503c	Continuation of compensation beyond date of dissolution requires vote of congregation.	Retain

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 207-01: <i>Bolton v. Alamance PC</i>	1995	G-04.0301i	F-03.0209	BOO is not a straightjacket which prevents a governing body from exercising its powers in a reasonable way so as to carry out its basic functions and duties with efficiency to avoid a waste of time of its members.	Retain
PJC 207-01: <i>Bolton v. Alamance PC</i>	1995	G-05.0102e	G-01.0304	Requiring consent of a nominee before election is not unconstitutional.	Retain
PJC 207-01: <i>Bolton v. Alamance PC</i>	1995	G-10.0102	G-03.0201	Session acted within its constitutional authority to provide an orderly process for the congregation to exercise its responsibility to elect an associate pastor nominating committee.	Retain
PJC 207-01: <i>Bolton v. Alamance PC</i>	1995	G-11.0502d	G-2.0500 G-03.0307	Presbytery's role in counseling with churches in regard to the calling of a pastor need not be done with the congregation as a whole.	Retain
PJC 207-05: <i>PCUSA v. Bryan</i>	1995	G-14.0201a (G-4.0222)	G-02.0404 G-03.0105 W-04.4004c	An elder who has been elected but not yet installed cannot be counted for a quorum.	Retain
PJC 207-07: <i>Broad Avenue Presbyterian Church v. GAC</i>	1995	G-06.0108b; G-13.0103	G-02.0105 G-03.0501	It cannot be a delinquency for a governing body or council simply to fail to adopt specific programs suggested by one or more Presbyterians out of their understanding of Christ's lordship.	Retain
PJC 207-08: <i>Mt. Auburn PC v. Pby of Cincinnati</i>	1995	G-09.0302	G-03.0105	<i>Robert's Rules of Order</i> enhance Pby's broad discretion as to appointments to an AC and support that it may appoint persons in favor of the Pby's action.	Retain
PJC 207-08: <i>Mt. Auburn PC v. Pby of Cincinnati</i>	1995	G-09.0503a	G-03.0109b	Judicial and administrative review processes are not sequential, but are alternatives.	Retain
PJC 207-13: <i>Lewis v. Pby of New York City</i>	1995	G-11.0103o	G-03.0301a	In deciding on termination of a pastor, the pby is exercising administrative powers, and not acting in judicial capacity; thus pby needs only treat all parties fairly and provide them an opportunity to present their positions.	Retain
PJC 208-03: <i>Rice v. Pby of Philadelphia</i>	1996	G-11.0408a	G-02.0502, G-02.0503a & b	Pby has right and responsibility to approve or disapprove ministerial tasks undertaken by its members.	Retain
PJC 208-04: <i>Session, Central Church v. Pby of Long Island</i>	1996	G-09.0408	G-03.0108b	Presbytery's Council has liberty to take cognizance of an alleged error. Council has discretion as to how, when, and whether it will respond to an alleged irregularity through an administrative review.	Retain
PJC 208-09: <i>Jackson v. Pby of Susq. Valley</i>	1996	G-11.0401a	G-03.0306	Oversight for work of a Minister of Word and Sacrament is responsibility of pby of membership when that work is not within the responsibility of pby within whose bounds it lies.	Retain

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 208-09: <i>Jackson v. Pby of Susq. Valley</i>	1996	G-11.0406c	G-02.0508	It is abuse of discretion for pby to remove minister from its roll so long as viable alternative exist.	Retain
PJC 208-09: <i>Jackson v. Pby of Susq. Valley</i>	1996	G-11.0411	G-02.0501 G-02.0502 G-02.0503 G-02.0509	Before entering into service outside jurisdiction of PCUSA, minister is required to obtain permission of pby of membership.	Retain
PJC 209-02 and 209-003: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1997	G-11.0412	G-02.0503c	The Constitution recognizes no category of retirement other than Honorable Retirement.	Retain
PJC 210-02: <i>Bevensee v. Pby of New Brunswick</i>	1998	G-14.0463	G-02.0609	A presbytery has authority to dismiss a candidate from preparation process on the recommendation of its Committee on Preparation.	Retain
PJC 210-02: <i>Bevensee v. Pby of New Brunswick</i>	1998	G-14.0463	G-02.0609	A candidate for ministry may be dismissed for failure to comply with directives.	Retain
PJC 210-06: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of SF</i>	1998	G-09.0306	G-03.0105	Upholds the right of dissent and protest of a PJC decision by a member of Governing Body to which the decision is reported.	Retain
PJC 210-10: <i>Dickson v. Synod of the Southwest</i>	1998	G-09.0702	G-03.0110	Governing Body must abide by terms of negotiated separation. GB may not withhold communication addressed to it requesting a hearing.	Retain
PJC 211-02: <i>Wier v. Second PC</i>	1999	G-14.0203 (now G-14.0210)	G-02.0404	An ordination cannot be annulled. Rather, once ordained, an officer can be removed only through a disciplinary case.	Retain
PJC 212-03: <i>Congregation for Reconciliation and Graham v. Pby of Miami</i>	2000	G-11.0103i	G-03.0301a	Defines the authority of presbytery to dissolve a congregation and the degree of consultation with members required.	Retain
PJC 212-10: <i>Bower v. Pby of Pittsburgh</i>	2000	G-09.0505d	G-03.0109b(5)	Administrative Commission not required to hold a hearing unless empowered to act.	Retain
PJC 213-02: <i>Session of Londonberry v. Pby of N. New England</i>	2001	G-04.0403 G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b F-01.0403	In the case of conflicts between constitutional texts, it is the task of governing bodies to resolve them to give effect to all provisions.	Retain
PJC 213-02: <i>Session of Londonberry v. Pby of N. New England</i>	2001	G-04.0403 G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b F-01.0403	No governing body or PJC may invalidate a provision of the constitution.	Retain
PJC 213-02: <i>Session of Londonberry v. Pby of N. New England</i>	2001	G-06.0108a	G-02.0105	A formal declaration by a governing body not to comply with an express constitutional provision exceeds the constitutional bounds of freedom of conscience.	Retain
PJC 213-02: <i>Session of Londonberry v. Pby of N. New England</i>	2001	G-18.0300	G-06.04	Rescinding a formal censure based on a violation of the <i>Book of Order</i> does not violate the <i>Book of Order's</i> amendment process.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 214-01: Mairi Hair/James McCallum v. 1 <sup>st</sup> PC Stamford,CT	2002	G-07.0304	G-01.0503	Installation of new officers effectively dissolves the former positions and renders claims to those positions moot.	Retain
PJC 214-02: <i>Leslie v. First P C Manhattan, Kansas</i>	2002	G-05.0501 G-05.0502 G-05.0503	G-01.0402 G-03.0201c	A session must exercise its discretion in determining the means, scope, and duration of the instruction [for membership], provided the content of the proposed instruction includes a discussion of the meaning of a profession of faith, the responsibilities of membership, and the faith and order of our denomination.	Retain
PJC 214-03: <i>Smart v. Pby of Baltimore</i>	2002	G-14.0610	G-02.0502	Congregation may request pby to dissolve relationship but a congregation does not have controlling authority; that authority belongs to the presbytery .	Retain
PJC 214-05: <i>Wier v. 2nd PC</i>	2002	G-06.0106b	G-02.0105 G-02.0104b	Since the ordaining and installing governing body best knows the life and character of the candidate, initial and further inquiry as to compliance with all the standards for ordination and installation belongs to that governing body.	Retain
PJC 214-05: <i>Wier v. 2nd PC</i>	2002	G-06.0108b	G-02.0105 G-02.0104b	If governing body has reasonable cause for inquiry based on its knowledge of the life and character of the candidate, it has the positive obligation to make due inquiry and uphold all the standards for ordination and installation. Consideration for inquiry is to be made solely on an individual basis.	Retain
PJC 214-07: <i>Stimage-Norwood v. Pby of S. New England</i>	2002	G-06.0702	G-02.0407	Consultation does not require face-to-face meeting in all circumstances, however, due process requires council to try to meet face-to-face if possible. Where face-to-face consultation was requested, presbytery required to do so.	Retain
PJC 215-02: <i>Cuthbertson v. Matthews Murkland PC</i>	2002	G-10.0102h	G-03.0205 G-03.0113	Session has the responsibility of “assuring that all offerings are distributed to the objects toward which they were contributed.”	Retain
PJC 215-04: <i>Gaba v. Pby of E. Va</i>	2002	G-09.0505b	G-03.0109	All persons affected by AC decision must be given fair notice and an opportunity to be heard.	Retain
PJC 215-04: <i>Gaba v. Pby of E. Va</i>	2002	G-11.0103o	G-02.0904 G-03.0301	When the pastoral relationship is dissolved without the concurrence of the pastor or the congregation, the presbytery is required to provide procedural safeguards of fundamental fairness to the church and pastor to determine whether the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it. The test is fundamental fairness – the opportunity to be heard and a consideration of their respective positions without prejudice.	Retain

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 215-05: <i>McKittrick v. West End PC</i>	2002	G-07.0103	G-01.0102	When presumed trust granted to governing bodies is violated, the rule and benefit of law are placed in danger.	Retain
PJC 215-08: <i>Pby of San Joaquin v Pby of Redwoods</i>	2003	G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b	Sexual orientation is insufficient grounds for further examination into behavior during examination for ordination. A governing body [ordaining council] has a positive obligation to make further inquiry only if it has direct and specific knowledge that said person is in violation of the ordination and installation standards of the Constitution.	Retain
PJC 215-12: <i>Westminster v. Moderator of G.A.</i>	2003	G-13.0104	G-03.0503	The convening of a special meeting of an assembly is not a continuation of the previous assembly, but is a new meeting of the same assembly subject to standing rules of new assembly.	Retain
PJC 215-12: <i>Westminster v. Moderator of G.A.</i>	2003	G-13.0104	G-03.0503	Moderator is obliged to cease advocacy of a particular position and act with impartiality in the exercise of the duties described in G-13.0104.	Retain
PJC 215-12: <i>Westminster v. Moderator of G.A.</i>	2003	G-13.0104	G-03.0503	The Moderator has the right and responsibility on behalf of the General Assembly to verify the standing of commissioners and their signatures in requests for a special meeting.	Retain
PJC 215-03: <i>San Joaquin v Synod of the Pacific</i>	2002	G-07.0103 G-.0500a(2)	F-02.05 G-01.0102	The concept of mutual accountability and responsibility lies at the heart of this covenantal understanding, and our system of government is structured to achieve such mutual accountability.	Retain
PJC 216-01: <i>Minihan, et al., v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley</i>	2003	G-07.0103 G-09.044d	G-01.0102 G-03.0106	1992 Amendment did not grant a presbytery power to compel a session to transmit its per capita apportionment.	Retain
PJC 216-01: <i>Minihan, et al., v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley</i>	2003	G-07.0103 G-09.0404d G-10.0102i	G-01.0102 G-03.0106 G-02.0301c	The term “benevolences” in G-10.0102i (responsibilities of the session) includes per capita funds.	Retain
PJC 216-01: <i>Minihan, et al., v. Presbytery of Scioto Valley</i>	2003	G-07.0103 G-09.0404d	G-01.0102 G-03.0106	Withholding per capita as a means of protest or dissent evidences a serious breach of the trust and love with which our Lord Jesus intends the covenant community to function together.	Retain
PJC 216-06: <i>Hope, et al. v. Presbytery of San Francisco</i>	2003	G-14.0403 G-14.0405 G-14.0412	G-02.0604 G-02.0605 G-03.0106	Pby must communicate substance of concerns that form the basis for a recommendation of removal to allow the candidate a fair opportunity to respond.	Retain
PJC 216-06: <i>Hope, et al. v. Presbytery of San Francisco</i>	2003	G-14.0405 G-14.0412 G-14.0403	G-02.0604 G-02.0605 G-03.0106	Pby has wide discretion in evaluating a candidate’s readiness for ministry.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 217-01: <i>Hope, et al. v. Presbytery of San Francisco</i>	2004	G-04.0301f G-09.0405 G-09.0407 G-09.0408 G-09.0411 G-09.0503 G-11.0504 G-14.0402	F-03.0206 G-03.0106 G-03.0108 G-03.0109	Failure to follow its own stated policy does not rise to the level of a constitutional error reviewable by the GAPJC, because [the GAPJC] rules on violations of the requirements of the <i>Book of Order</i> rather than those of internal Presbytery policy.	Retain
PJC 217-01: <i>Hope, et al. v. Presbytery of San Francisco</i>	2004	G-14.0112 G-14.0405	G-02.0601 02.0603 02.0604 02.0605	Specific <i>Book of Order</i> provision did not mandate that pby provide guidance and training in conflict resolution, so not required. Facts showed that pby provided a history of guidance and care that was deemed adequate.	Retain
PJC 217-01: <i>Hope, et al v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	2004	G-14.0463	G-02.0609	Pby is not required to make copies of confidential documents available to inquirer or candidate if the pby adequately communicates to inquirer or candidate the substance of any concerns contained in the documents.	Retain
PJC 217-02: <i>Johnston v. Heartland Presbytery</i>	2004	G-01.0100c G-04.0302	F-01.0203 F-03.0203	Our unity in Christ and the relational nature of our governance require dialogue between and among governing bodies.	Retain
PJC 217-02: <i>Johnston v. Heartland Presbytery</i>	2004	G-04.0301f	F-03.0206	A higher governing body's "right of review and control over a lower one" ... "must not be understood in hierarchical terms, but in light of the shared responsibility and power at the heart of Presbyterian order." A presbytery's right of oversight cannot be construed to give a presbytery ... a right to mandate a session's full payment of per capita ... as a[n absolute pre-] condition of its eligibility to seek presbytery's assistance.	Retain
PJC 217-02: <i>Johnston v. Heartland Presbytery</i>	2004	G-08.0101	G-04.0402	Payment of per capita apportionments or fulfillment of a mission pledge cannot be the only criteria when determining conditions of eligibility for a congregation to request a loan guarantee, but they may be included in criteria used.	Retain
PJC 217-02: <i>Johnston v. Heartland Presbytery</i>	2004	G-11.0103g	G-03.0301c	A presbytery's duty to 'provide pastoral care to churches' includes a duty to engage them in conversation about their efforts to participate fully in the mission of the larger church.	Retain
PJC 217-02: (formerly 216-17) <i>Johnston et al, vs. Heartland Pby</i>	2004	G-11.0304 G-11.0103a-c	G-03.0113 G-03.0301	Presbytery's constitutional responsibility to develop the mission budget does not permit the Pby to compel a congregation to pay per capita and impose sanctions.	Retain

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PJC 217-05: <i>Sess of Second Pres Church, Tulsa OK v. Eastern OK Pby</i>	2005	G-09.0503a(4)	G-03.0109b(5)	Pby may delegate to an administrative commission authority to dissolve a congregation to an administrative commission.	Retain
PJC 217-06: <i>Raines v. Sess of Miami Shores Pres Church</i>	2005	G-10.0302b(3)	G-03.0204a	The request for termination of membership of an active member, including elders and deacons, is governed by G-10.0302b(3), now G-03.0204a.	Retain
PJC 217-06: <i>Raines v. Sess of Miami Shores Pres Church</i>	2005	G-06.0701	G-02.0407	Renunciation requires a written statement, delivered to the clerk of the governing body, which states in clear and certain terms the act of renunciation of jurisdiction.	Retain
PJC 217-07: <i>Williamson v. Pby of Western North Carolina</i>	2005	G-06.0108b	G-02.0105	Corporate community has right to place limits upon the exercise of freedom of conscience by its officers.	Retain
PJC 217-07: <i>Williamson v. Pby of Western North Carolina</i>	2005	G-14.0403	G-02.0503a	Requires a presbytery to develop separate written criteria for the validation of ministries within its bounds based on description of ordained office found at G-6.0100 and G-6.0200 and G-11.0403a-e. Simply listing <i>Book of Order</i> citations is insufficient statement for criteria.	Retain
PJC 217-07: <i>Williamson v. Pby of Western North Carolina</i>	2005	G-18.0301	G-06.04	No PJC in our denomination has the authority to amend or to invalidate any part of the Constitution.	Retain
PJC 217-09: <i>Synod of Northeast, et al. v. Board of Pensions.</i>	2005	G-09.0403	G-03.0106	The 195th GA established the Board of Pensions; the 198th GA approved the Benefits Plan; the GA thus delegated to the Board fiduciary responsibility under Pennsylvania law.	Retain
PJC 217-11: <i>Kuipers v. Session of Elkton Pres. Church.</i>	2005	G-10.0102m G-09.0403 G-09.0501a G-10.0102 h, i, m G-10.0401	G-03.0201c	The <i>Book of Order</i> gives a session authority and responsibility for the mission and government of its congregation including responsibility for church financial matters and for the constitution of its committees.	Retain
PJC 217-12: <i>Chesterbrook Taiwanese PC v. National Capital Pby.</i>	2006	G-07.0304b chs VII, VIII passim.	G-01.0503	Congregational meetings on property matters are not required for every matter having to do with property issues, but are limited to those matters enumerated in Chapters VII and VIII (former G-7.0304, G-8.0500).	Retain
PJC 217-12: <i>Chesterbrook Taiwanese PC v. National Capital Pby.</i>	2006	G-15.0105	G-05.0103	Presbyteries and congregations are free to transact business with non-members and may take actions and pass resolutions that address their dealings with non-members.	Retain

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PJC 217-12: <i>Chesterbrook Taiwanese PC v. National Capital Pby.</i>	2006	G-08.0201 G-08.0301 G-08.0401	G-04.0103 G-040203 G-04.0204 G-04.0205	Pby has exclusive power to determine the use and disposition of church property when the property ceases to be used for a particular church. A dissolving church has the right to dispose of church property only as the pby directs.	Retain
PJC 218-01: <i>Sess of Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas City, Mo. v. Sess of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Overland Park, Ks.</i>	2006	G-06.0106b	G-02.0104b	If gov body has reasonable cause for inquiry based on its knowledge of the life and character of a candidate, it has positive obligation to make inquiry. Direct and specific knowledge required.	Retain
PJC 218-02: <i>Fair-Booth v. Natl Capital Pby</i>	2006	G-11.0101	G-03.0301	Elder-commissioners are elected by sessions from a particular church but are members of a pby only when enrolled at a particular pby meeting.	Retain
PJC 218-05: <i>Essinger-Hileman v. Pby of Miami</i>	2006	G-11.0103o	G-02.0904 G-03.0109b(5) G-03.0301a G-03.0303d	Fundamental fairness ordinarily requires that pastor and congregations-be given notice and opportunity to be heard before a pby votes to dissolve pastoral relationship.	Retain
PJC 218-09: <i>Buescher et al v. Pby of Olympia</i>	2008	G-06.0108 G-18.0301	G-02.0105 G-03.0501c	Attempts by governing bodies that ordain and install officers to adopt resolutions, statements or policies that paraphrase or restate provisions of the <i>Book of Order</i> and/or declare them as “essentials of Reformed faith and polity” are confusing and unnecessary, and are themselves an obstruction to constitutional governance in violation of G-6.0108a.	Retain
PJC 218-09: <i>Buescher et al v. Pby of Olympia</i>	2008	G-13.0103r	G-06.02	While the GA and the GAPJC may interpret ordination standards set forth in the Book of Confessions and the Form of Government, the Authoritative Interpretation of the Theological Task on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church adopted by the 217 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly did not (and constitutionally could not) change any ordination standard.	Retain
PJC 218-09: <i>Buescher et al v. Pby of Olympia</i>	2008	G-13.0103r	G-06.02	No lower governing body can constitutionally define, diminish, augment or modify standards for ordination and installation of church officers .	Retain
PJC 218-09: <i>Buescher et al v. Pby of Olympia</i>	2008	G-06.0108 G-13.0103r G-18.0301	G-02.0105 G-03.0501c G-06.02 G-06.04	Governing body may not define in advance “essentials” and declare failure to adhere to these mandated “essentials” an absolute bar to ordination and installation.	Retain
PJC 218-10: <i>Bush et al v. Pby of Pittsburgh</i>	2008	G-06.0106b G-06.0108	G-02.0104b G-02.0105	It is up to the examining body to determine whether a candidate’s actions and beliefs are a serious departure from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity, or are such that they infringe on the rights and views of others, or would obstruct the constitutional governance of the church.	Retain



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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 218-10: <i>Bush et al v. Pby of Pittsburgh</i>	2008	G-13.0103r	G-06.02	No lower governing body can constitutionally define, diminish, augment or modify standards for ordination and installation of church officers.	Retain
PJC 219- 12: <i>Phinisee v Pby of Charleston-Atlantic</i>	2010	G-10.0103a G-10.0201	G-03.0203	When a special session meeting has been called constitutionally, the Moderator must call the meeting and the Presbytery may not appoint a different moderator.	Retain
PJC 219- 12: <i>Phinisee v Pby of Charleston-Atlantic</i>	2010	G-11.0103s G-09.0503a	G-03.0109b(5)	Decision to appt AC by a pby is a discretionary function that resides solely with the pby.	Retain
PJC 219- 12: <i>Phinisee v Pby of Charleston-Atlantic</i>	2010	G-11.0501a	G-3.0307	Pby may delegate power to COM (such as call a special meeting of session) but power must be explicit if not listed in G-11.0501a.	Retain
PJC 219-02: <i>Pby of Greater Atlanta v. Ransom</i>	2010	G-09.0502 G-09.0503	G-03.0109b(5)	Attempts at Administrative resolutions of conflict are permissible.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0502 G-9.0503 G-9.0505b(2) G-11.0103o	G-03.0109b(5)	An administrative commission may not dissolve a pastoral relationship without adhering to the requirements of G-11.0103o and G-9.0505b(2).	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-01.0400 G-04.0302 G-07.0103	G-03.0101 G-03.0103	Our unity in Christ and of the relational nature of our polity is fundamental to Presbyterianism and a gracious witness to Scripture and the Holy Spirit. We are bound together in covenantal relationships that assume and require the blessings and difficulties of dialogue based on trust and love.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-01.0400 G-04.0302 G-07.0103	G-03.0101 G-03.0103	Presbyteries and congregations have a reciprocal obligation for [dialogue] when discussing the mission of dismissing a congregation from pby membership.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-06.0108b G-06.0200 G-06.0302 G-06.0304	G-02.0105, G-02.0301 Ruling elder defined G-02.0402	Free expression of conscience is limited for officers and pastors under G-6.0108b, and does not encompass the calling of congregational meetings, moving churches to seek dismissal from the denomination or obstructing constitutional governance of the church.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-06.0108b G-06.0200 G-06.0302	G-02.0105 G-02.0301 G-02.0402 G-06.0109b	The mere creation of an administrative commission is not an act of discipline.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-07.0304	G-01.0503	“Withdrawal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not a matter that can be considered for action at a congregational meeting.”	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0103	G-03.0101	The jurisdiction of each governing body within the church is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, and that powers not expressly mentioned in the <i>Book of Order</i> are reserved to the presbyteries.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0103	G-03.0101	When an administrative commission reaches a decision on a matter referred to it, the commission’s decision becomes the action of the appointing body.	Retain

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0502	G-03.0109	The functions of an administrative commission are limited by the appointing body, and may include any function that the appointing body wishes to delegate (with specified exceptions expressly provided for in the <i>Book of Order</i> ).	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0502 G-09.0503	G-03.0109b(5) G-03.0303e	The Presbytery may appoint an administrative commission or delegate power to it without investigation, notice and an opportunity to be heard. AC must then investigate, give notice and opportunity to be heard prior to making any decisions.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0505a	G-03.0109	A governing body may amend or rescind an action or decision of an administrative commission in the same manner that it may change its own decisions and actions.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-09.0505b	G-03.0109	When an administrative commission has been appointed to settle differences within a church or other entity, there are requirements that it must observe in order to assure the fair exercise of authority. All persons to be affected by the decision must be given fair notice and an opportunity to be heard on the matters at issue.	Retain
PJC 219-03: <i>Sundquist v. Pby of Heartland</i>	2010	G-11.0103s	G-03.0303e	Neither the Presbytery, nor an administrative commission, may automatically assume original jurisdiction over a session.	Retain
PJC 219-04: <i>Wolfe v. Pby of Winnebago</i>	2010	G-06.0201 G-11.0103k G-11.0103n G-11.0103p G-11.0502b	G-02.0501 G-02.0502 G-02.0503	“a presbytery clearly has the right and responsibility to approve or disapprove of the ministerial tasks undertaken by its members[Rice v. Philadelphia] [T]his power should not be exercised arbitrarily.” [Lewis v. Presbytery of New York City] a presbytery is obligated to treat all parties fairly and provide them with an opportunity to present their positions. The test is fundamental fairness.	Retain
PJC 219-04: <i>Wolfe v. Pby of Winnebago</i>	2010	G-06.0201 G-11.0103 G-11.0403 G-11.0502b	G-02.0501 G-02.0502 G-02.0503a,b G-03.0109b	A minister member is accountable to the Presbytery for the performance of her work. Presbytery has the authority to determine how she can be helpful to the mission of the church.	Retain
PJC 219-04: <i>Wolfe v. Pby of Winnebago</i>	2010	G-06.0201 G-09.0505b G-11.0103 G-11.0403 G-11.0502b	G-02.0501 G-02.0502 G-02.0503 G-03.0109b	A presbytery has the authority to address the work of a minister of Word and Sacrament through administrative means.	Retain
PJC 219-05: <i>Lee v. Pby of Midwest Hanmi</i>	2010	G-09.0502 G-09.0503 G-06.0702	G-02.0509 G-03.0109	Before an administrative commission can act on matters of renunciation of jurisdiction, the presbytery must have granted the commission authority to act on that matter.	Retain
PJC 219-05: <i>Lee v. Pby of Midwest Hanmi</i>	2010	G-09.0502 G-09.0503	G-03.0109	When a governing body establishes an administrative commission, it shall state specifically the scope of	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				power given to the commission (G-9.0502). Powers not delegated by a governing body are reserved to that body.	
PJC 219-07: <i>Pby of Wyoming v. Gordon King</i>	2010	G-09.0404 G-09.0405	G-03.0106	“Individuals have the responsibility to know the policies of the governing bodies they serve.”	Retain
PJC 219-08: <i>Bierschwale v. Pby of Twin Cities</i>	2010	G-06.0108a, b.	G-02.0105	The standards for determining whether departures from essentials of Reformed faith and polity are permitted include whether a departure deviates from the standards in the Book of Confessions and the Form of Government, infringes the rights and views of others, or obstructs the constitutional governance of the church.	Retain
PJC 219-09: <i>Davis v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	2010	G-06.0108b G-11.0103n and r G-06.0106b	G-02.0105 G-02.0502 G-02.0104	The governing body of membership determines whether a church officer has departed from biblical and constitutional standards (G-6.0108b) and then whether to impose a censure (G-11.0103n and r).	Retain
PJC 219-11: <i>Naegeli v Pby of San Francisco</i>	2010	G-14.0120 G-14.0450 G-14.0470 G-14.0474 G-14.0481 G-14.0482 G-06.0108	G-02.0702 G-02.0104 G-02.0105 G-02.0610	Departures under G-6.0108 (now G-2.0105) are not the same as waivers under G-14.0450, G-14.0470 through G-14.0474 (now G-2.0610).	Retain
PJC 219-11: <i>Naegeli v Pby of San Francisco</i>	2010	G-06.0108 G-14.0120 G-14.0450 G-14.0470 G-14.0474 G-14.0481 G-14.0482	G-02.0104 G-02.0105 G-02.0610 G-02.0607 G-02.0702	The proper time to determine whether a candidate has expressed a departure from the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity is at the time of a presbytery’s examination of the candidate for ordination, not determination of readiness for examination.	Retain
PJC 219-11: <i>Naegeli v Pby of San Francisco</i>	2010	G-14.0120 G-14. G-14.0470 G-14.0474 G-14.0481 G-14.0482	G-02.0104b G-02.0105 G-02.0701 G-02.0702	Pby must provide opportunity for examination of candidate consistent with procedures listed in G-14.0482 (statement of personal faith and commitment to ministry) and G-6.0108b (requirement that candidate must abide by standards, but may have to choose to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. Pby responsible for determining whether person has departed from essentials of reformed faith and polity).	Retain
PJC 219-11: <i>Naegeli v Pby of San Francisco</i>	2010	G-14.0463	G-02.0609	Pby has discretion whether to maintain or remove candidate from the roll of candidates for minister of Word and Sacrament.	Retain
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-06.0201	G-02.0501 G-02.0503(5)	A call to ministry always involves responsibility for participating in the ministry of the church at large.	Retain
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-06.0201 G-11.0103k G-11.0103n G-11.0103p G-11.0502b	G-02.0501 G-02.0502 G-02.0503	Both Due Process and Fundamental Fairness require notice, an opportunity to be heard, and a fair, unbiased consideration of the issues.	Retain
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-11.0403	G-02.0502, G-02.0503a G-03.0306	Pby must have separate written criteria for validated ministries.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-11.0403d	G-02.0502 G-02.0503a	Call must be confirmed by calling community & validated by presbytery.	Retain
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-11.0403d	G-02.0503a(4)	Validated ministry must be in a setting where minister is accountable to an entity other than him or herself. Accountability does not exist where minister would supervise & evaluate him or herself.	Retain
PJC 219-14: <i>Westbrook v Pby of New Hope</i>	2010	G-11.0403d	G-02.0503a(4)	Pby has discretion to provide required oversight functions - accepting responsibility beyond those set forth in G-11.0403.	Retain

Interpretations Rendered by the General Assembly That Are Retained

ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Com. 06-84	1984	G-10.0301 G-14.0223	G-02.0401	Presbytery has the authority to require a report of the age and ethnic descent of each person elected to the nominating committees of its member churches.	Retain
Com. 06-84	1984	G-10.0301	G-03.0108a and b	The requirement that "Minutes and other official records of the session" shall be available to the presbytery upon request may be interpreted to include the bylaws of the particular church. Presbytery power "to review session minutes and records at least once each year" may be interpreted to provide review more frequently than an annual basis.	Retain
Request: Item 27, 17.111, p.143	1985	G-10.0103b	G-03.0201 G-03.0104	"The language of G-10.0103, second paragraph, is to be understood as clearly giving the presbytery the power to designate the moderator of a session in a church not served by a pastor. The term pastor does not include the offices of associate pastor or assistant pastor in this context. The language of G-10.0103, which permits sessions to invite a minister to 'preside on particular occasions' or to 'elect one of its own members to preside, . . . ' deals only with the situation that occurs when the duly designated moderator is not able to preside at a particular meeting because of illness or other cause."	Retain
Ovt. 185-84	1985,	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	Participation by a particular church in the pension plan of the denomination is mandatory. Another pension plan may not be substituted.	Retain
Communication 14.	1986	G-10.0302b(1)	G-03.0204a	When a session receives a request for transfer from a member whose name has been stricken, the session should restore the member to the roll on reaffirmation of faith and then transfer the member.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Commissioners Resolution 09-85	1986	G-11.0405	G-02.0506	“[A] minister of another denomination called to be a minister of a union church is a member of presbytery only for the period of service to the union church. When his or her period of service with that church ends, his or her membership in presbytery ends.	Retain
Com.	1986	G-14.0240	G-02.0402	The bylaws of the church should determine how soon after election of church officers the installation will take place.	Retain
Com. 17-87	1987	G-10.0102b	G-01.0302 G-03.0201	The conscience of elders is not bound by pronouncements of the General Assembly in considering the application of individuals for membership.	Retain
Com.0 7-87	1987	G-11.0103v	G-03.0106	A governing body may delegate particular aspects of its task to councils, boards, agencies, commissions, and committees, but always on the basis of accountability to the governing body. This principle requires the reporting of all actions of a presbytery council to the presbytery. There are no exceptions.	Retain
Com. 08-87	1987	G-11.0403e G-14.0480	G-02.0503a G-02.0701	A ministry need not include proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament for a presbytery to validate it or to approve it as valid for ordination.	Retain
Com. 10-87	1987	G-14.0550	G-03.0201	Pby may appoint member of another pby to moderate session of church without a pastor.	Retain
Req. 13-88	1988	G-09.0503a	G-03.0109	The list of administrative powers is not exhaustive.	Retain
Req. 09	1988	G-11.0103i	G-03.0301c	A presbytery may dismiss a church with its property pursuant to G-11.0103i and G-11.0103y, provided the request is made in proper form and provided proper consideration is given to the interests of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as provided in Chapter VIII. In particular, G-8.0201 recognizes the principle that all property by or for a particular church is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).	Retain
Ovt. 20-88	1988	G-13.0103r	G-03.0501c	Interpretations of the Constitution arrived at through the means specified in G-13.0103r are binding on the whole church.	Retain
Com.04-88	1988	G-09.0203b	G-03.0104	An elder, not currently active on session, may serve as clerk of session.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 10-88	1988	G-10.0401d	G-03.0113	...Audit” as used in this section means an-examination or review of the financial statements and records of the church to determine that they present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the church for the period then ended. Audits and/ or reviews should be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and from sufficient information to enable the independent auditor or committee of members to render an opinion about the financial position and results of operations of the church for the period then ended.	Retain
Req. 89-26	1989	G-10.0102h	G-03.0201a	There is implied authority in the <i>Book of Order</i> for governing bodies to take appropriate steps to enable them to accomplish their constitutional responsibilities.	Retain
Req. 89-2	1989	G-10.0102d	G-03.0201a	“The presbytery has the authority to require in the call of associate pastors that the session designate certain minimum preaching opportunities.”	Retain
Req. 89-5	1989	G-11.0405	G-02.0505 G-02.0506	If a minister of another denomination cannot provide evidence of good standing, “[T]here are two routes the church and presbytery may follow should they wish to do so. The person may continue to serve the church as a lay preacher in a stated supply role or the person may become a candidate for the ministry in which case the requirements for ordination would need to be met in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Book of Order</i> .”	Retain
Req 89-9	1989	G-07.0101	G-01.02	“... should a particular church wish to change its name it must obtain the approval of the presbytery and also comply with any applicable requirements of civil law and that no amendment to the Constitution is necessary.”	Retain
Req. 89-11	1989	G-11.0403d	G-02.0503a(4)	“The presbytery, however, has the right to determine whether ‘other individual circumstances’ exist in determining validation of ministry. The session of a particular church may not serve as the board of directors of a nonparish situation for the purpose of validating the ministry of a Minister. If the minister wishes to seek accountability to the particular church, the session and congregation could if it wishes issue a call to the minister and his or her counseling service to become part of that church’s mission.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 89-16	1989	G-14.0401	G-02.0509 G-02.0601	A person who has renounced jurisdiction should first come again under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a member of a particular church and then initiate the process and procedures found in G-14.0300, Preparation for the Office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament. A presbytery would then be free to recognize that certain requirements of the section had been met previously and waive them if possible. Such a person would not qualify to return under the provisions of G-11.0414 since that person had renounced the jurisdiction of the church and was deleted from the roll.	Retain
Req. 89-8	1989	G-14.0522	G-02.0504a	The term of a designated pastor is renewable for another specified term or the pastor may be considered for a call to that church in accordance with Chapter XIV of the <i>Book of Order</i> .	Retain
Req. 90-18	1990	G-09.0302 G-07.0302c	G-01.05	Robert's or some other comparable compilation of parliamentary procedures, with respect to fairness and due process, should be used in the conduct of congregational meetings; and specified in the bylaws.	Retain
Req. 90-18	1990	G-10.0401	G-03.0205	The session of each particular church should define the duties and responsibilities of the treasurer.	Retain
Req. 90-1	1990	G-11.0103v	G-03.0109 G-03.0106	The intent is that participation in presbytery actions be limited to ministers or elders. When presbytery delegates any of its stated responsibilities to a committee, commission, or council, the delegated body must be as qualified as the presbytery; that is, it must be composed of elders and ministers. If non-elders are members of the council, they serve as corresponding members with voice but no vote and they may not vote on actions for the presbytery.	Retain
Req. 90-4	1990	G-11.0416	G-02.0509	If a pastor of a particular church renounces the jurisdiction of the church under G-6.0501, the pastoral relationship is thereby dissolved, and the pulpit is vacant.	Retain
Req. 90-7	1990	G-11.0403d	G-02.0503a G-02.0503c	Every presbytery must treat each individual case separately and, for purposes of presbytery transfer, ministers who are honorably retired are considered to be engaged in a validated ministry.	Retain
Req. 90-8	1990	G-09.0203b	G-03.0104 G-3.0107	Presbytery minutes should reflect accurately what was done, and not be overly technical.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 90-10 Ovt. 91-85	1990 1992	G-11.0402	G-02.0503	<p>“[I]t is not permissible for a presbytery, or its appropriate committee, to conduct the examination required in G-11.0402 prior to the issuance of a call to a pastoral relation within the presbytery, from a governing body or agency as defined in G-11.0410, or by entering work defined in G-11.0411.”</p> <p><i>However, this opinion was modified with the following:</i></p> <p>that a single examination conducted before the vote of a congregation to call the minister may satisfy the requirements of G-11.0402, as long as the examination is thorough and complete enough to warrant a recommendation to receive the minister should the congregation vote to call the minister.</p>	Retain
Req. 90-20	1990	G-14.0120	G-02.0102 G-02.0704	When an elder is ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, he or she is enrolled as a member of the presbytery and deleted from the rolls of the congregation.	Retain
Req. 90-17	1990	G-14.0210	G-02.0404 G-02.0405	A previously ordained elder coming back as a member to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and being elected to the session may be installed as an elder without being ordained again, if the circumstances clearly indicate that when the person left the Presbyterian church and joined a church of another denomination there was no intention of renouncing the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian church. The reasons for joining the other denomination would be particularly pertinent. The session should be the judge.	Retain
Req. 90-16	1991	G-10.0102m	G-03.0201c	The congregation is not a governing body in the <i>Book of Order</i> . The congregation has only specific and very limited powers. (See G-7.0304.) The congregation is given power to elect a [pastor] nominating committee to nominate a pastor and a committee to nominate elders and deacons. The congregation is not empowered to elect any other persons or committees.	Retain
Req. 91-23	1991	G-10.0102o	G-03.0201c	“Inasmuch [as] the session is responsible and accountable for determination of the appropriate use of the church buildings and facilities (G-10.0102n), it should not allow the use of the church facilities for a same sex union ceremony that the session determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.” (cf. W-4.9001)	Retain



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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 91-25	1991	G-10.0401d	G-03.0113	“Where civil law specifies who is qualified to perform audits, the churches and governing bodies shall comply to the fullest extent economically feasible. When such an audit is deemed to be not feasible, the churches and governing bodies shall make some decision for the performance of some responsible review of the financial documents as to comply with the intent of exercising adequate fiscal accountability.” The words “complete audit” are to be understood to mean that the audit and (or) review should be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.	Retain
Req. 91-17	1991	G-11.0401b.	G-03.0306	The work of a seminary is under the control of the General Assembly, not of the presbytery within whose geographical bounds it is. Therefore, faculty from another presbytery would not be required to obtain consent of the local presbytery in order to teach in the seminary.	Retain
Req. 91-1	1991	G-11.0404	G-02.0505a	Ordination to Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA) and ordination as deacon in the United Methodist Church are not equivalent.	Retain
Req. 91-3	1991	G-11.0401b G-11.0401a	G-03.0306	“There is an underlying principle of Presbyterian polity that a minister holds membership in only one presbytery, because dual membership raises problems of jurisdiction and accountability.	Retain
Req. 91-5	1991	G-09.0403 G-11.0103v	G-03.0106 G-03.0303f	The form of reports to the presbytery of those accountable to it is left to the discretion of presbytery.	Retain
Req. 91-5	1991	G-14.0480	G-02.0701	The invitation of persons other than presbytery commissioners to lay hands on the candidate and pray, including unordained persons is permitted.	Retain
Req. 91-6	1991	G-09.0705	G-03.0109 G-03.0110	“1. Any individual minister, lay member, or employee of the church may be accompanied by a person of her or his own choosing when the need for such support is felt by that person; “2. All such accompanying persons shall be members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); “3. The financial cost of such accompanying persons and related expenses, if any, shall be borne by the person inviting them, except under the provisions of D-8.1000b. “4. By this action, the General Assembly does not particularly encourage or recommend retention of counsel in the activities of the church; it merely permits it.”	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Ref. 91-1, Req. 91-11 & 91-12	1991	G-09.0703 G-13.0103h	G-03.0110 G-03.0501c	The GA. cannot require the Board of Pensions to adhere to the Personnel Policies of the GA., and of the GAC, if such adherence creates conflict with the Board's civil law responsibilities.	Retain
Req. 91-4	1991	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	For those conscientiously objecting to insurance that provides abortions, avenues open still include protest and efforts to the change the policy.	Retain
Req. 90-12	1991	G-15.0204a	G-05.05	A presbytery may organize a federated church or a union church acting in concert with a comparable governing body of another denomination or denominations.	Retain
Req. 91-28	1992	G-09.0407c	G-03.0108	Synod or pby may use clerk of next lower gov. body to read and review minutes and records of another gov. body. However, higher gov. body cannot require clerk of lower gov. body to be present at meeting where records are examined.	Retain
Req. 91-27	1992	G-10.0401	G-03.0205	"Congregations are generally free to establish their method of governance so long as it does not offend either church law, in this case the <i>Book of Order</i> , or civil law in the state where the church is located.	Retain
Req. 91-21	1992	G-11.0103n	G-02.0503	"Ministers serving beyond the jurisdiction of the church are still members of presbytery and the presbytery has an interest in the compensation and benefits received by its members.	Retain
Req. 92-16	1992	G-07.0103 G-11.0103o	G-01.0102 G-03.0303	"Presbytery, through its committee on ministry, does have the power, authority, and responsibility to approve the positions, as well as personnel for the various ministries within the congregations of the presbytery."	Retain
Ref. 90-1	1992	G-10.0102k G-14.0240	G-02.0402 G-03.0201c	"Session may require such training or examination under <i>Book of Order</i> , G-10.0102j that lists as one of the responsibilities and powers of a session "to engage in a process for education and mutual growth of the members of the session."	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 92-3	1992	G-11.0402	G-02.0503	“The provisions of G-11.0413 grant permission for members-at-large and inactive members to be transferred from one presbytery to another in the same status according to the various provisions of G-11.0400. It is permissible for a minister to transfer from a presbytery as an active member and be received by a new presbytery as a member-at-large if the receiving presbytery agrees. Conversely, a member-at-large may be received as an active member if presbytery has determined that the provisions of G-11.0406a have been properly observed.”	Retain
Req. 92-10	1992	G-09-0202b G-10.0103 G-7.0306	G-01.0504 G-03.0104 G-03.0201	The function of the moderator is to be the presence of presbytery and/or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in that governing body. It is to ensure that the session continues to be a governing body according to the <i>Book of Order</i> . Thus, a basic quality of our polity is that a governing body consists of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament making decisions together.	Retain
Req. 92-4; 307, 21.074, Req. 92-8	1992	G-14.0540	G-02.0805	The installation service is part of the calling process. That process is incomplete until such service has taken place.	Retain
Req. 92-9	1992	G-14.0612 G-7.0302b	G-02.0903 G-01.0501	A motion to dissolve the pastoral relationship would not be in order at a congregational meeting, unless the dissolution of such relationship was an item specifically listed in the call of the meeting.	Retain
Req. 93-4	1993	G-11.0502h	G-03.0307	“[W]hen the presbytery has exercised its authority to delegate approval of calls to the committee on ministry; the presbytery has delegated its authority to approve plans for installation and the power to appoint the necessary administrative commission to carry out those plans.”	Retain
Req. 93-3	1993	G-14.0223	G-02.0401	1 those members of an officer nominating committee “chosen by the congregation or by such organizations within the church as the congregation may designate” shall, of course, be elected by the congregation.  2 all members of an officer nominating committee with the exception of the elders and deacons designated by the session and board of deacons, are elected by the congregation.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 93-10	1993	G-14.0231	G-02.0401	The congregation may establish a bylaw to provide for those instances not covered in the Constitution of the church.	Retain
Req. 93-14	1993	G-14.0480	G-02.0701	That the provisions of G-14.0401 that a candidate “shall have . . . received a call for service to a church” as a prerequisite for ordination is not to be interpreted as limited to situations defined in G-14.0501 as “permanent pastoral relations.” And, further, it is the responsibility of the presbytery, through its appropriate committees, to evaluate individual circumstances in determining which other pastoral relations serve as a prerequisite for ordination and/or membership.	Retain
Req. 93-13	1993	G-14.0532	G-02.0804	Congregations must be fully informed as to the terms of call at the time they receive the report of a pastor nominating committee.	Retain
Ref. Req. 92-14	1993	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	The Pension plan has provisions for comity in cases where the pastor has dual standing and can waive participation in the plan for persons whose secular employment has mandatory benefits.	Retain
Ovt. 93-93	1994	G-11.0103f	G-03.0301a	To the extent that guidance incorporates requirements established by the presbytery in the fulfillment of its unique responsibility, such advice is mandatory.	Retain
Req. 94-8	1994	G-14.0471	G-02.0610	Section G-14.0313, with its subparagraphs,[pre-2006] is concerned with “extraordinary circumstances,” that is, those circumstances in which the candidate is exceptionally well qualified, but through a different route than is usually followed. It is important to note that the interpretation already given by the past General Assemblies has emphasized that “‘extraordinary’ means rare; exceptional; and exceeding the common degree, limit or measure”  The second set of questions requests an interpretation of the final sentence of G-14.0313a, concerning the reasons that must be noted in the presbytery’s minutes for granting of the exception. The question asks whether an exception can be granted only if there is evidence of an alternative course of study. The language, “the course of study specified,” would indicate	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				that this is indeed a requirement of the exception.” A second question concerning the last sentence of G-14.0313a asks for a definition of the exception that is purportedly being allowed by a presbytery to the requirements of G-14.0310b(2) or (3). The completion of the alternate “course of study” does not say or imply that it must lead to a degree from a single institution. The type of course is left to the wisdom of the presbytery. It is not to be acted upon lightly, as evidenced by the requirement for a three-quarters affirmative vote of the presbyters present.	
Req. 94-11	1994	G-14.0513	G-02.0504a,c	A “co-pastor model” exists only in a church that has an installed co-pastor. There is no functional equivalent or “something closely resembling” that qualifies.	Retain
Req. 94-10	1994	G-18.0301c.	G-06.04c	Before any proposed amendment may be transmitted to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval, the General Assembly must vote on the proposed amendment. The General Assembly retains the power to amend the proposed amendment, and approve or disapprove it, in its original form or as amended.	Retain
Req. 91-18, 92-3, and 93-14	1995	G-09.0201	G-03.0104	Presbytery may not delegate power “to elect officers of presbytery.”	Retain
GA, (1995, 281ff. 21.120, Reqs. 91-18, 92-3, and 93-14):	1995	G-09.0403	G-03.0106	Of the responsibilities and powers of a presbytery, as enumerated in G-11.0103, the following are so basic to the life and work of a presbytery that they should not be delegated: “a. to develop strategy for the mission of the church in its area consistent with G-3.0000; “h. to organize new churches and to receive and unite churches . . . ;” “i. to divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members;” “j. to control the location of new churches and of churches desiring to move;” s. to assume original jurisdiction in any case in which it determines that a session cannot exercise its authority. . . “t. to maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the church, including (1) electing commissioners to the synod and to the General Assembly . . . ;”	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Ovt 92-54	1995	G-13.0201d	G-03.0106 G-03.0109	General Assembly Council is required to report to GA all task force recommendations.	Retain
Req. 95-10	1995	G-09.0505b(1)	G-03.0109	Presbytery can't put minister on temporary leave without a hearing pursuant to standards of G-9.0505 and the Rules of Discipline. Voluntary agreements for leave may be accepted.	Retain
Req. 96-2	1996	G-11.0406c	G-02.0508	Inactive member has no standing to make motion on own behalf.	Retain
Req. 96-3	1996	G-11.0406c	G-02. 0507	Person against whom no charges pending at time removed may be restored by process described in G-11.0414a. [lately G-6.0600].	Retain
Req. 96-7	1996	G-11.0501b G-09.0503	G-03.0109b	" It is the prerogative of the presbytery to grant to its administrative commissions such powers as are deemed necessary for the effective ministry of the presbytery, as long as those delegated powers are not in violation of the principles and provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."	Retain
Req. 97-2	1997	G-09.0407a	G-01.0505 G-03.0204	1. The clerk of session, as the clerk of the congregational meeting, reports to the session on behalf of the congregation through minutes of the cong meeting. 2. "Body" or "organization" [council] means any individual or group arising within cong. that "affects theological instruction, spiritual development, mission programs, raises money, uses property, or purports in any way to represent the congregation to the public."	Retain
Req. 97-4	1997	G-10.01021	G-02.1001 G-03.0201c	"If a commissioned lay pastor is moderator of session, he or she may lead a service of ordination and installation of elders and deacons.	Retain
Req. 97-5	1997	G-10.0103b	G-03.0203	"The moderator of session, whether the pastor or moderator appointed by the presbytery, represents the whole church. The elders of a church may not circumvent the moderator's role by calling meetings in a manner contrary to G-10.0201."	Retain
Req. 97-6	1997	G-09.0701a	G-03.0110	"There is no role for the committee on ministry in the process of hiring presbytery staff unless such a role is assigned in the manual of operations or bylaws of the presbytery. Further, the committee on ministry has no role in the voluntary resignation of presbytery staff unless otherwise provided for in the presbytery manual of operations or bylaws. The <i>Book of Order</i> does not provide for any role for committee on ministry in the hiring of any non-clergy staff."	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 97-7	1997	G-09.0703	G-03.0110	“It is the prerogative of the General Assembly to review the adequacy of any search process for executives of General Assembly agencies and the suitability of any person elected by such an agency. Furthermore, until the General Assembly has granted its concurrence, the election process has not been completed.”	Retain
Req. 98-4	1998	G-06.0204 G-11.0501	G-03.0307 G-04.0301	“What is the extent of confidentiality in regards to conversations between ministers and members of a division or committee? 16.0205 There is none, except for the provision that “A person duly appointed by a governing body to provide counseling services for persons within the jurisdiction of the governing body shall not testify before a session or permanent judicial commission, except that the restriction may be waived by the person about whom the testimony is sought” (D-14.0203).	Retain
Req. 98-4	1998	G-14.0540	G-02.0805	Status of minister between effective date call begins and date of installation is “pastor-elect” and has same rights as other ministers in pby of membership.	Retain
Req. 98-4	1998	G-14.0560	G-02.10	Laypersons commissioned for pastoral ministry by other denominations may not administer the sacraments, perform weddings, or moderate session.	Retain
Ovt. 97-5 and 97-15	1999	G-11.0203	G-02.0505 G-03.0301	The provision for corresponding members of a presbytery, G-11.0203, permits a geographical presbytery to adopt a standing rule that would grant corresponding membership to the ministers and elders of a particular church within its bounds that belongs to a nongeographic presbytery, and to extend the privileges of corresponding membership, including participation with voice and vote in the program committees of the presbytery.	Retain
CR 97-1	1999	G-11.0103o	G-03.0301a,c	“It is entirely constitutional to use psychological and psychiatric evaluations in supervising the work of ministers when a presbytery deems them necessary.” “In the provisions of G-14.0303f and G-14.0305j on inquiry and candidacy, presbyteries possess sufficient authority to utilize psychological and psychiatric services in evaluating candidates for ministry.”	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Req. 99-1	1999	G-09.0404d	G-03.0106	<p>Pby has responsibility to remit per capita allocations to synod and GA, even if a congregation does not pay per capita allocated to it by pby. Pby has responsibility to pay the full amount irrespective of specific collection from churches, “as long as funds are available within the presbytery.”</p> <p>Pby may use unrestricted funds (whether collected as per capita or general benevolence) to pay per capita allocations to synod and GA.</p>	Retain
Ovt. 99-4	1999	G-10.0103	G-03.0104 G-03.0201 G-02.1001	Allows a pby to appoint a CLP as moderator for church to which CLP is commissioned.	Retain
Req. 00-1	2000	G-14.0570	G-02.0502	A minister may serve as a parish associate in a church under jurisdiction of pby within which he or she resides while being a member of another pby. Provisions of G-11.0401 apply.	Retain
Req. 01-1	2001	G-09.0505b(1)	G-03.0109	<p>Fair notice should, at a minimum, comport with the time limits for meetings cited in the <i>Book of Order</i> (D-6.0202a, D-8.0201, D-13.0201, G-7.0303b, G-11.0201, G-12.0201). “Fair notice shall consist of a short and plain statement of the matters at issue as identified by the commission and of the time and place for a hearing upon the matters at issue.” It shall be given to all persons expected to be affected by the decision(s) of the administrative commission. In its absolute discretion, an administrative commission may give the required notice only to “responsible representatives of persons aligned in interest.” For instance, if those “aligned in interest” are the members of an organized group, the notice might be given only to the leaders of that group.</p> <p>The method of giving notice will vary according to the particular circumstances. . . . If the administrative commission deems it necessary to obtain proof that any particular person or group has received notification, a written communication sent by certified mail with a return receipt or by personal delivery with a signed receipt should be used.</p> <p>A hearing is an opportunity for the administrative commission to hear in person the opinions and concerns of those whom it expects to be affected by its decision(s). It is not necessarily open to the public, although the administrative commission may decide to make it open. It is not necessary that all</p>	Retain



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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				parties in interest be present at the same time, although circumstances may make that desirable. If assertions of unsatisfactory conduct are made in meetings between an administrative commission and individuals, the commission should arrange for a meeting at which the right of a person to face those who make such assertions can be honored. It will likely be necessary to hold yet another meeting after allowing time for the accused to “prepare and make a reasoned defense.”	
Item 03-02	2003	G-11.0406a	G-02.0503a	“An individual may not be released from the exercise of ordained office and continue to retain the designation “honorably retired minister.”	Retain
Req. 03-4	2003	G-12.0102n	G-03.0403	“It is assumed that members, officers, and governing bodies of the church will abide by lawful orders issued by its permanent judicial commissions.”	Retain
Item 03-05	2003	G-09.0505b(1) G-11.0103o	G-03.0303e G-03.0109	An administrative commission is not obligated to grant a hearing in making a determination to ask the presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship.	Retain
Item 03-13	2003	G-09.0408	G-03.0108a	Synods possess power to undertake administrative review in carrying out responsibility to assure that presbyteries observe Constitution.	Retain
Req. 03-11, Item 03-09	2003	G-14.0523	G-02.0504a	A session may function as PNC (in reference to a Designated Pastor) after a term only if the original call came via a PNC.	Retain
Item 04-14	2004	G-09.0302	G-03.0105	If a governing body wishes to provide by rule for voting by e-mail, it is advisable to consider the following areas: (1) The nature of any vote that may be conducted by e-mail should be clearly defined. (2) Care must be taken that all qualified to vote are included. (This is particularly important with an e-mail vote, as there may be individuals qualified to vote who do not have access to e-mail.) (3) If the vote is to be by secret ballot, additional provisions are required. (4) There should be provision for a member to object to the vote being taken by electronic means. As technological advances are made in electronic communication, the rules should be revised to accommodate such technology. A governing body that is incorporated should ensure that there are no legal impediments to voting by e-mail. In summary, voting by e-mail is permissible only if there has been	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				provision for deliberation, and the governing documents of the governing body provide for vote by mail or e-mail.	
Item 04-15	2004	G-09.0705	G-03.0104 G-03.0110	The provisions of G-9.0705 do not apply to officers. Officers cannot be terminated under this provision, whether compensated or not. If the governing body combines in one position responsibilities of an officer with non-ecclesiastical responsibilities, an officer who performs those latter duties is entitled to the protections of G-9.0705 only as related to the non-ecclesiastical portion of the position.	Retain
Item 04-16	2004	G-09.0505b(2) G-14.0612	G-03.0109 G-2.0903	“A motion to dissolve the pastoral relationship would not be in order at a congregational meeting unless the dissolution of the pastoral relationship was an item specifically listed in the call for the meeting” ( <i>Minutes</i> , 1992, Part I, pp. 307-8).-This requirement applies to all meetings of the congregation, both special and called. This has been and continues to be the currently binding interpretation of these provisions (cf. G-13.0103r).”	Retain
Item 14-14	2004	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	Employing body may not omit “payment based on a sum equal to the requisite percent of minister’s compensation” even though the minister may decline to be enrolled in the Benefits Plan. This wording was in former G-14.0506b(2).	Retain
Item 14-01	2006	G-13.0112d	G-06.02	“The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) provides advice directly to the General Assembly based upon requests to the ACC, received only from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The ACC provides [only] advice to the General Assembly regarding questions of interpretation of the <i>Book of Order</i> . The ACC does not communicate directly with those who request advice nor make provisions for hearings on matters before it for consideration. The Advisory Committee may consult with General Assembly entities through the Stated Clerk.	Retain
Item 05-24	2006	G-09.0103	G-02.10 G-02.0503 G-03.0101 G-03.0306	The decision to allow a commissioned lay pastor from another presbytery to labor within the bounds of a presbytery is determined by the presbytery in which such ministry occurs.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Item 05-26	2006	G-09.0503a(1)	G-03.0109b	“The responsibility to appoint an administrative commission to conduct an ordination may be delegated by the presbytery to a committee or an officer and each presbytery may provide by rule for the manner in which such appointment shall be made within its bounds.”	Retain
Item 05-27	2006	G-13.0103r	G-03.0501c	Only the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, not synod or presbytery permanent judicial commissions, has the power to render decisions that are authoritative interpretations binding on the entire church.	Retain
Item 06-01	2006	G-10.01021	G-02.0104 G-02.0402 G-03.0201c G-03.0301	<p>a. The Book of Confessions and the Form of Government of the <i>Book of Order</i> set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation.</p> <p>b. These standards are determined by the whole church, after the careful study of Scripture and theology, solely by the constitutional process of approval by the General Assembly with the approval of the presbyteries. These standards may be interpreted by the General Assembly and its Permanent Judicial Commission.</p> <p>c. Ordaining and installing bodies, acting as corporate expressions of the church, have the responsibility to determine their membership by applying these standards to those elected to office. These determinations include:</p> <p>(1) Whether a candidate being examined for ordination and/or installation as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament has departed from scriptural and constitutional standards for fitness for office,</p> <p>(2) Whether any departure constitutes a failure to adhere to the essentials of Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108 of the <i>Book of Order</i>, thus barring the candidate from ordination and/or installation.</p> <p>d. [Whether the examination and ordination and installation decision comply with the Constitution of the PC(USA), and] [W]hether the ordaining/installing body has conducted its examination reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully, and deliberately in deciding to ordain a candidate for church office is subject to review by higher governing bodies.</p> <p>e. All parties should endeavor to outdo one another in honoring one another’s decisions, according the presumption of wisdom to</p>	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				ordaining/installing bodies in examining candidates and to the General Assembly, with presbyteries' approval, in setting standards.	
Item 05-26	2006	G-14.0482	G-02.0702	The responsibility to appoint an administrative commission to conduct an ordination may be delegated by the presbytery to a committee or an officer and each presbytery may provide by rule for the manner in which such appointment shall be made within its bounds.	Retain
Item 07-02	2006	G-16.0301	G-05.05	Clarified difference between union and federated churches; does not relate to other denomination being Reformed, but to whether separate denominational affiliation is retained or not.	Retain
Item 03-15	2008	G-13.0112c	G-06.02	"All overtures or requests supporting or opposing proposed authoritative interpretations of the <i>Book of Order</i> must be received by the 120-day deadline, so that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution may prepare its constitutionally required findings and recommendations to the General Assembly."	Retain
Item 04-20	2008	G-7.0305	G-1.0501	The right to establish a quorum for meetings of the congregation is assigned to the congregation itself by G-7.0305. It is not a power assigned to the session, or to any other governing body.	Retain
Item 04-20	2008	G-09.0505b(1)	G-03.0109	Hearings called to consider the matter of a congregation's withdrawal from the PC(USA) are for the advice of the presbytery, so that the commission may make informed decisions. No congregational business may be transacted at these hearings.	Retain
Item 04-20	2008	G-07.0306	G-03.0104	In potentially particularly tense or stressful congregational meetings, the presbytery may suggest that the pastor or moderator invite a minister named by the presbytery, in an effort to ensure that the congregational decision to be made is free of undue influence from the installed pastor, protecting both the process and the pastor. But an installed pastor is not bound to act on the suggestion.	Retain
Item 04-21	2008	G-10.0102b	G-02.0407 G-02.0509 G-03.0201c	"A person who has renounced membership in a PC(USA) congregation may, at some subsequent point, seek admission to membership in another PC(USA) congregation by reaffirmation of faith."	Retain

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<b>ID</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>OLD FOG</b>	<b>NEW FOG</b>	<b>Description of AI</b>	<b>Recommend</b>
Item 04-24	2008	G-11.0405b	G-02.0506 G-02.0701 G-02.0702	“The Orderly Exchange of Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament” is a series of agreements that were mandated by “A Formula of Agreement.” ...” The words “not intended” in the Orderly Exchange document closes the door to ordination to a first call in another denomination.	Retain
Item 05-15	2008	G-11.0103z	G-02.0504b G-03.0301b	In the amended Chapter 14, G-14.0550 on temporary pastoral relationships begins with these words, “All temporary relationships of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, full or part-time, are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery.” It would appear that the new wording is intended to give presbyteries flexibility to create or designate temporary pastoral relationships without specifying what those relationships should be.	Retain
Item 07-13	2008	G-11.0103i	G-02.0505 G-03.0301	Dismissing pby must determine whether receiving body’s organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of PCUSA, including satisfying itself about whether this is true of transitional pby of Evangelical Presbyterian Church. No congregation may be dismissed to independent or non-denominational status. Administrative commissions may not be empowered to approve dismissal.	Retain
Item 05-14	2008	G-14.0482	G-02.0702	A presbytery may ordain a person to a “call” that is not an installed pastoral relationship.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Item 04-24	2008	G-11.0405b G-15.0201a.	G-02.05 G-02.0701 G-05.0202	<p>The “Formula of Agreement” was approved by the General Assembly, approved by the presbyteries, and is binding on the whole church</p> <p>The four denominations will, among other requirements, “recognize each others’ various ministries and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.” These agreements were written by persons representing the four denominations and were not approved by the General Assembly or the presbyteries, but they, too, are binding on the church, because of our agreements with the partner denominations. There are no express provisions in our Constitution for amendment, interpretation, or clarification. The way to amend the Orderly Exchange document is to ask the team, made up of representatives of the four participating denominations to amend or clarify the document. A candidate may not accept a first call in a congregation of another church and be ordained to that call.</p>	Retain
Item 03-15	2008	G-18.0301a.	G-06.04a	All overtures supporting or opposing proposed changes to the <i>Book of Order</i> must be submitted in accordance with the 120-day deadline.	Retain
Item 03-28	2010	G-09.0404d	G-03.0106	“A presbytery is required to remit to the General Assembly and the synod per capita funds remitted by the session of member churches for per capita, even if the presbytery lacks sufficient funds to pay its own expenses.”	Retain
Item 05-12	2010	G-09.0407d (3)	G-03.0108	Sessions are required to produce any articles of incorporation and bylaws adopted by the congregation as part of the annual review of session records and may be required to produce such documents as part of a special administrative review: Furthermore, “A congregation lacks the power to adopt changes to its articles of incorporation, regulations, bylaws, or standing rules that are contrary to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”	Retain
Item 05-12	2010	G-07.0402 G-11.0103x	G-03.0107 G-04.0000	As part of their responsibility to review the proceedings of sessions, presbyteries have responsibility to determine that the proceedings of sessions “have been regular and in accordance with the Constitution” (G-9.0409a(2)). Sessions are	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
				required to produce any articles of incorporation and bylaws adopted by the congregation as part of the annual review of session records and may be required to produce such documents as part of a special administrative review undertaken on learning “of any irregularity or delinquency by a lower governing body” ( <i>Book of Order</i> , G-9.0408).	
Item 05-13	2010	G-09.0503a	G-03.0109	It is constitutional ... for a governing body to provide by rule for appointment of an administrative commission as might be needed under emergency circumstances such as a natural disaster or a public health order forbidding social gatherings.	Retain
Item 05-13	2010	G-09.0504b	G-03.0109	A governing body may approve a group of members who serve by virtue of office as the core membership of an administrative commission if it annually reviews the composition of that group for its representational sufficiency under G-9.0500 and by recorded action augments it as needed.	Retain
Item 05-14	2010	G-09.0705	G-03.0104 G-03.0110 G-03.0305	Traditional duties of a stated clerk include “those enumerated in G-9.0203a, serving as resource for ecclesiastical committees as noted in G-9.0202, providing support for administrative commissions, and fulfilling the responsibilities of the stated clerk for support of the judicial process as provided in the Rules of Discipline.” These responsibilities are clearly ecclesiastical in nature in that they facilitate the functions of the governing body as required by the Constitution of the church.	Retain
Item 05-18	2010	G-10.0201	G-03.0105	<i>Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised</i> , 10th Edition states that “only business mentioned in the call of a special meeting can be transacted at such a meeting. If, at a special meeting, it becomes urgent in an emergency to take action for which no notice was given, that action, to become legal, must be ratified ... by the organization at a regular meeting.”	Retain
Item 05-21	2010	G-13.0103r	G-03.0501c G-06.02	An authoritative interpretation is an interpretation of one or more provisions of the <i>Book of Order</i> . An authoritative interpretation of the Constitution is binding on all members and governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The most recent interpretation of a provision of the <i>Book of Order</i> is binding. An authoritative interpretation is not an amendment to the Constitution.	Retain

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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Item 05-23	2010	G-11.0401	G-03.0306 G-02.0503a G-02.0501	<p>“(Work is properly within the responsibility of a presbytery when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Responsibility for the work is constitutionally assigned to the presbytery (e.g., service to congregations under the jurisdiction of the presbytery);</li> <li>•The work is in service to another church and an ecumenical agreement (G-15.0201a) with that church assigns responsibility to the presbytery for permitting a minister to serve the other church; or</li> <li>•The consultation of the presbytery with the governing bodies above and below it (G-9.0404b) has resulted in an agreement that the presbytery is to be responsible for the type of work.</li> </ul> <p>Work is not properly within the responsibility of a presbytery when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Responsibility for the work is constitutionally assigned to another governing body (e.g., service to synod or General Assembly);</li> <li>•The work is in service to another church and an ecumenical agreement assigns responsibility to a governing body other than the presbytery for permitting a minister to serve the other church; or</li> <li>•The consultation of the presbytery with the governing bodies above and below it (G-9.0404b) has resulted in an agreement that another governing body is to be responsible for the type of work.</li> </ul> <p>Presbyteries may assert responsibility for work within their bounds where responsibility is not otherwise assigned.”</p>	Retain
Item 05-17	2010	G-14.0440	G-02.0607	If the committee on preparation for ministry has approved a particular candidate who meets all the requirements to enter into negotiation for his or her ministerial service, that candidate may circulate a Personal Information Form or other biographical information.	Retain



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ID	YEAR	OLD FOG	NEW FOG	Description of AI	Recommend
Item 05-16	2010	G-14.0534	G-02.0804	In response to questions on the practice of financial gifts to a minister that amount to undisclosed compensation additional to the terms of call and that may not meet the requirements of federal and state tax laws. This section leaves "latitude and responsibility for presbyteries to determine fiscal policies for their member churches and standards of financial ethical conduct for members of the presbytery, consistent with current and applicable federal and state tax laws."	Retain

Prior Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions and Assembly Actions in Which No Foundations of Presbyterian Polity or the Form of Government Section Was Interpreted.

ID	YEAR	Retain	Notes
PJC 195-01: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Grafton</i>	1983	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 195-03: <i>Phillabaum v. Pby of Wyoming</i>	1983	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 196-02: <i>Hennigan v. Pby of Catawba</i> , Postponed in 1984, 11.063	1985	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 196-03: <i>Edmonds v. Pby of Cape Fear</i>	1984	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 197-02: <i>PCUSA v. Hardwick</i>	1985	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 197-06: <i>Hedstrom v. Session of FPC of Nashville</i>	1985	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 197-07: <i>Kennedy v. Pby of Shenango</i>	1985	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 197-08: <i>PCUSA v. Tempelman</i>	1985	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 198-01: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Mecklenburg</i>	1986	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 198-02: <i>Maseroni v. Pby of Nat. Cap. Union</i>	1986	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 198-03: <i>Warner v. Pby of the Pacific</i>	1986	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 199-02: <i>Buonaiuto v Pby of Long Island</i>	1987	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 199-03: <i>Malcolm v. Adv. Council on Church and Society</i>	1987	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-01: <i>Olson v. Trustees, SFTS</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-02: <i>Malcolm v. Office of SC of GA</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-03: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Catawba</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-04: <i>Hardwick, Jr. v. Williams, Jr. and Session, Pearsall Memorial Church</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-05: <i>Young v. Pby of the Pacific</i>	1988	-N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-08: <i>Buonaiuto v. Session, First Church, Greenlawn, NY</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

<b>ID</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Retain</b>	<b>Notes</b>
PJC 200-09: <i>Olson v. Trustees of SFTS</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-10: <i>Olson v. Trustees of SFTS</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 200-11: <i>Olson v. Office of the SC of GA</i>	1988	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 201-01: <i>Hoover v Synod of the Piedmont</i>	1989	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 201-02: <i>Hoover v. Pby of "E"</i>	1989	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 201-03: <i>Van Deventer v. Syn of So. Atlantic</i>	1989	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 201-04: <i>PCUSA v. Park</i>	1989	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 202-02: <i>Rhyne, Jr. and McBride v. Synod of Mid-Atlantic</i>	1990	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 203-05: <i>PCUSA v. Lewis</i>	1991	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 204-01: <i>Fernandez, et al. v. Pby of Grand Canyon</i>	1992	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 204-02: <i>PC(USA) v. Ross</i>	1992	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 204-03: <i>Pby of Blackhawk v. Garton</i>	1992	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 204-06: <i>Bolton v. Session of Alamance Church, Greensboro, NC</i>	1992	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-01: <i>PCUSA v. Whitelock</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-02: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-06: <i>Anderson v. Pby of Genesee Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-07: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-08: <i>Witherspoon PC v. Pby of Whitewater Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-09: <i>Gaddie v. Pby of Whitewater Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-10: <i>Session of Witherspoon PC v. Pby of Whitewater Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-11: <i>Session of Witherspoon PC v. Pby of Whitewater Valley</i>	1993		No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-13: <i>Cooper v. Pby of Muskingum Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FoG sections interpreted.
PJC 205-14: <i>Session, Witherspoon PC v. Pby of Whitewater Valley</i>	1993	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-01: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of SF</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-04: <i>Metherell v. GAC</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-05: <i>Pby of Santa Fe v. Truscott</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-06: <i>Mkhize v. Pby of Miss. and Pby of Memphis</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-07: <i>Bayley v. Pby of Minn. Valleys</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-09: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 206-10: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.

## 08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION REVIEW

<b>ID</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Retain</b>	<b>Notes</b>
PJC 206-11: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	1994	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-02: <i>White v. Pby of Redwoods</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-03: <i>White v. Pby of Redwoods</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-04: <i>Evans v. Pby of Lake Michigan</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-06: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-09: <i>Haverly v. Pby of Heartland</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-10: <i>Baker v. Pby of Middle Tennessee</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 207-12: <i>PCUSA v. Herrera</i>	1995	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-01: <i>Gallman v. Session, Oak Grove Church</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-02: <i>Pby of Riverside v. Haddox</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-05: <i>Lundin, et al. v. Pby of Chicago</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-06: <i>Veldhuizen v. Pby of SF</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-07: <i>Panko v. Pby of Wabash Valley</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-08: <i>Ling v. Session, First Church, Bay Saint Louis</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 208-10: <i>Pby of NYC v. Sisley, Jr.</i>	1996	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-01: <i>Haggin v. Pby of Redwoods</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-04: <i>Phillips v. Pby of So. Kansas</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-05: <i>Henderson v. Syn of So. Cal. and Hawaii</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-06: <i>Hoover v. Pby of Charlotte</i>		N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-07: <i>Anderson v. Pby of Scioto Valley</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-08: <i>San Mateo Korean PC v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-09: <i>Lesane v. Pby of New Harmony</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-10: <i>Pby of San Juan v. PCUSA Foundation</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-11: <i>Lee v. Pby of San Francisco</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 209-12: <i>Cook v. Pby of E. Tennessee</i>	1997	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-01: <i>Whitehead v. Pby of Detroit</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-01: <i>Whitehead v. Pby of Detroit</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-03: <i>Session of Brighton Church v. Pby of Genesee Valley</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-04: <i>Anderson, et al. v. Pby of Scioto Valley</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-05: <i>Pby of National Capital v. OGA</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-07: <i>Lee and Pahn v. Pby of Midwest Hanmi</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 210-08: <i>Session, New Lebanon Church, Jasper, GA v. General Assembly</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.

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<b>ID</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Retain</b>	<b>Notes</b>
PJC 210-09: <i>Schumacher v. Pby of Palo Duro</i>	1998	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 211-01: <i>Riefle v. Knox PC</i>	1999	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 211-03: <i>Heiserman v. Presbyterian Board of Pensions</i>	1999	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 211-04: <i>Pby of E. Tennessee v. Cook</i>	1999	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 211-05: <i>Pby of E. Tennessee v. Cook</i>	1999	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 211-06: <i>Session of Govans PC v. GA Council</i>	1999	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-01: <i>Tucker v. Pby of Louisville</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-02: <i>Pby of the James v. Synod of the Mid-Atlantic</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-04: <i>Pby of Shenango v. GAC</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-05: <i>Chamberlain and Jiménez v. GAC</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-09: <i>Hair and McCallum v. Session, First Church, Stamford</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-11: <i>Benton, et al. v. Pby of Hudson River</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 212-13: <i>White, Jr. v. GAC and Board of Pensions</i>	2000	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 213-01: <i>Hennigan v. Pby of Charlotte</i>	2001	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 213-03: <i>Pahn v. Pby of Midwest Hanmi</i>	2001	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 213-04: <i>Pby of John Knox v. Syn of Lakes and Prairies</i>	2001	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 213-05: <i>Soto v. GA Council</i>	2001	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 213-09: <i>Pby of Elizabeth v. Finn</i>	2001	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 214-04: <i>Twilleager v. Central PC</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 214-06: <i>Pby of Santa Fe v. Gearhart</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 214-08: <i>Montreat PC v. GAC</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 214-09: <i>Combiar v. Madison Ave. PC</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 214-10: <i>Bae v. AKAP</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 215-01: <i>Bae v. AKAP; 215-07 AKAP v Synod of Mid-Atlantic</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 215-06: <i>Pby of Elizabeth v. Lynn</i>	2002	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 215-09: <i>Pby of Charlotte v Jacobs</i>	2003	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 215-10: <i>Wager v. Synod of NE</i>	2003	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 217-13: <i>Frye v. Session of First PC, Tecumseh, MI.</i>	2006	N/A	No FoG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-03: <i>Sess Palos Park Pres v. ACC</i>	2006	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-04: <i>Stewart v Mission Pby</i>	2006	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-06: <i>PC(USA) thru Pby of Wyo v. Gordon King</i>	2006	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-07: <i>Pby of Redwoods v Spahr</i>	2008	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.

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ID	YEAR	Retain	Notes
PJC 218-08: <i>Yun v. KUPC of NJ</i>	2008	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-12: <i>Spahr v. Pby of Redwoods</i>	2008	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 218-15: <i>1st PC of Washington v Pby of Washington</i>	2008	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 219-06: <i>Yun v. KUPC</i>	2010	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.
PJC 219-15: <i>Caledonia PC v. Presbytery of John Knox</i>	2010	N/A	No FOG sections interpreted.

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-01**

*Advice on Item 08-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC).*

With respect to Recommendation 1., the ACC advises that the special committee’s recommendation be approved, with the following exceptions:

*UPC of Blasdell v. Presbytery of Western NY, Remedial Case 197-09* (It is unconstitutional for the church to ordain any self-affirming, practicing, and unrepentant homosexual as elder, deacon, or minister of the Word; the General Assembly has power to determine matters of interpretation.)

*Sallade v. Presbytery of Genesee Valley, Remedial case 205-05* (A self-affirmed practicing homosexual may not be invited to serve in a PC(USA) position that presumes ordination.)

With respect to Recommendation 2., the ACC advises that the special committee’s recommendation be approved.

With respect to Recommendation 3., the ACC advises that the General Assembly receive for information the report of the special committee that it had determined that the items on the list were authoritative interpretations, that it found that the language interpreted was identical or essentially the same as the current language in the Form of Government, and that the statements continue with whatever force they originally had.

Although Recommendation 4. does not raise issues of constitutional interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution would heartily concur with expressing thanks to the special committee for its work.

*Rationale*

In 2010 the ACC advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) concerning the analysis by which it could be determined whether the approval of a major revision of the constitution would result in the continuation or removal of an authoritative interpretation of the constitution made prior to such major revision. The 219th General Assembly (2010) formed the special committee to review the existing authoritative interpretations and charged it “to make recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) concerning the status of specific existing authoritative interpretations of the Constitution based on the Status of Authoritative Interpretations,” which was the analysis described by the ACC.

During the course of the special committee’s work a current member of the ACC observed many of its meetings. The ACC reviewed a preliminary draft of the special committee’s report, and gave advice to the special committee, which then followed the majority of the advice given as it prepared its final report.

The Form of Government in G-6.02 defines the processes by which the *Book of Order* is interpreted. It affirms the authority of the General Assembly’s Permanent Judicial Commission to render authoritative interpretations in remedial and disciplinary cases. With regard to interpretations to be made in the General Assembly meeting in plenary, it provides:

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall communicate its report and recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly, no less than sixty days prior to the General Assembly.

The process of comparing the originally interpreted constitutional text to the current text takes place with the understanding that each authoritative interpretation is an interpretive act by the General Assembly that continues in effect until the General Assembly rescinds it, amends it, or supersedes it with a new authoritative interpretation. If the General Assembly does not take such an action with regard to an existing authoritative interpretation, it continues to be binding upon the whole church.

The frequent practice of the General Assembly has been to render new authoritative interpretations that supersede prior ones and modify them. However, it should be noted that on at least one occasion the General Assembly has explicitly set aside an existing authoritative interpretation. The 218th General Assembly (2008) used its interpretive authority when, acting on its Item 05-09 (<https://www.pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=1461>; see also *Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 373), it decided that “Interpretive statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the effect of the 2008 action cited above is that a number of authoritative interpretations discussed in the report of the special committee were no longer in existence at the time it began its work. These include specific holdings concerning ordained service in the following decisions of the General Assembly’s Permanent Judicial Commission: *UPC of Blasdell v. Presbytery of Western NY, Remedial Case 197-09*; and *Sallade v. Presbytery of Genesee Valley, Remedial Case 205-05*.

The first two recommendations from the special committee are in the nature of motions to rescind specific authoritative interpretations. The General Assembly has the authority to exclude any of the listed authoritative interpretations from the approval of those recommendations.

#### 1. *Advice on Special Committee Recommendation 1.*

The special committee has correctly explained the fact that a decision of the GAPJC can contain multiple authoritative interpretations, and has used its tables to identify which of the authoritative interpretations in a decision it is recommending be made of no further force and effect. Its descriptions of these authoritative interpretations are terse, because the special committee encourages the reader not to stop at the wording of annotations in the *Annotated Book of Order*, or at its own brief statements, but to read the original decision or action for full understanding of each authoritative interpretation.

The ACC advises the assembly that the actions recommended by the special committee would not amend the decisions or change the outcome of the specific cases, but would merely change the continuing force of the specified authoritative interpretations in those decisions.

The ACC agrees with the special committee that the constitutional language originally interpreted in these authoritative interpretations is so different from the language of the current Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government that removal of each existing authoritative interpretation in the list is warranted.

The special committee has explained its inclusion of specific interpretations in *Blasdell* and *Sallade* in its list of authoritative interpretations to be made of no further force and effect, saying “Since the most recent authoritative interpretation is binding, based on the guidelines presented above, the committee is recommending that the General Assembly vote not to retain interpretations no longer in effect.”

The special committee cites *Sallade* for an authoritative interpretation not to be retained, which says, “A self-affirmed practicing homosexual may not be invited to serve in a PCUSA position that presumes ordination.” This is one of the authoritative interpretations made of no further force or effect by the 2008 action cited above. The ACC advises the assembly that the special committee reached the correct conclusion by comparing the current constitutional text to the earlier interpreted text, but that the special committee erred in not recognizing that this interpretation was no longer in existence. This part of the special committee’s recommendation puts the assembly in the confusing position of being asked to take an action that is plainly redundant.

The special committee cites *Blasdell* for two authoritative interpretations, one of which was made of no further effect by the 2008 action cited above. The ACC regrets the decision of the special committee to treat that authoritative interpretation as though it were still in existence and needed to be evaluated again on the basis of comparison of the two versions of the Constitution, but does agree that the special committee correctly did the textual analysis described in its charge. This part of the special committee’s recommendation puts the assembly in the confusing position of being asked to take an action that is plainly redundant.

The special committee also cites the *Blasdell* decision for the authoritative interpretation that the General Assembly has powers to determine matters of interpretation. The ACC advises the assembly that it considers the statements in *Blasdell* concerning the General Assembly’s powers of interpretation to continue to be good law in the church, and consistent with G-3.0501c and G-6.02. Making these statements of no further force and effect would cause confusion in the church and could raise questions about subsequent interpretations that relied on *Blasdell*.

#### 2. *Advice on Special Committee Recommendation 2.*

The ACC agrees with the special committee that the constitutional language originally interpreted in these authoritative interpretations is so different from the current language that removal of these authoritative interpretations is warranted.

The special committee has described its challenge in identifying all of the existing authoritative interpretations by using the annotations in the *Annotated Book of Order*. Not every annotation states an authoritative interpretation.

One example would be Ref. 90-2, 1990 (Proposals for significant change in Book of Order should not originate with ACC.). This statement was drawn from the rationale for encouraging the proponents of a commissioners' resolution proposing a constitutional amendment to reinstate their proposal through their presbyteries. The ACC still agrees with the statement, but advises the assembly that it is not an authoritative interpretation, and was not claimed as one when it was made. Declaring it of no further force or effect may be helpful in clarifying the state of our polity. Removing this item from the motion would not have the effect of transforming what was never an authoritative interpretation into one binding upon the whole church.

### 3. *Advice on Special Committee Recommendation 3.*

The special committee has provided a highly useful list of the statements it reviewed, and concerning which it states that the statements are retained. This list is very helpful in showing the breadth of the committee's work. The ACC advises an alternative way of responding to this list for three reasons.

First, as stated earlier, it is in the nature of authoritative interpretations to continue in force until rescinded, modified, or superseded. A motion to acknowledge authoritative interpretations currently in effect as retained might create confusion suggesting that they have been reaffirmed. It is possible that new situations or new questions might shed a different light on any of these statements, and the church should not be bound by a recent quasi-reaffirmation of them.

Second, it is possible that some of these statements were not authoritative interpretations when originally stated. Acknowledging them as retained, as the special committee recommends, could give these statements more authority than they merit.

Third, many decisions of the GAPJC can be cited for a large number of authoritative interpretations because of the highly significant way in which that commission contributes to the ongoing work of interpreting our Constitution. The special committee's list of "retained" authoritative interpretations does not (and could not without quoting the entire decisions) identify every interpretation made in those decisions.

The ACC advises the assembly that this list prepared by the special committee is useful, but that there is the risk of confusion for the church if a reader gives too much significance to the fact that it does not include a reference to a particular interpretation for which a decision can be cited. As stated earlier, authoritative interpretations continue unless reversed, modified by a new interpretation, or rescinded. Thus, a failure to mention a particular authoritative interpretation in this list has as much effect as citing an interpretation on this list.

A preferable response of the assembly to this list would be to acknowledge that the special committee determined these statements to be authoritative interpretations within the scope of its responsibility, that it carefully reviewed these statements, that it did not find a reason to recommend that the assembly remove them, and that the statements continue with whatever status they originally had undisturbed.

### 4. *The Clarification Process Will Continue After This Assembly*

The special committee did not identify any existing authoritative interpretations as needing clarification (following the third guideline in its charge). This is a recognition that our church has normal procedures for obtaining clarification of whether existing authoritative interpretations apply to new situations. A council may submit a request for interpretation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, referred to the ACC, and answered by the General Assembly in plenary with a new interpretation, a modified interpretation, or the rescission of an existing interpretation (G-3.0501c, G-6.02). Alternatively, the GAPJC may determine in a remedial or disciplinary case whether an existing authoritative interpretation adequately addresses a new fact setting with different issues at work, and may render a new interpretation, modify an existing interpretation, or simply rescind an existing interpretation (G-3.0501c, G-6.02).

The ACC wishes to express its thanks to the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order*. The work undertaken by this committee posed difficult challenges that were met by the consistent faithfulness of its members' endeavors.

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## GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 08-01

*Comment on Item 08-01—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment on Item 08-01:

The recommended action would remove two assembly derived authoritative interpretations relative to committees on representation. One defines youth and various age categories, another does not allow for committees on representation to be merged with another committee or body.

The functions of committees on representation (a required body in all councils above session) and its nominating processes (where committees are not required) are only marginally related. The narrow task of recruiting leaders and nominating a slate may be seasonal in the life of a council. The multiple functions of committees on representation have an ongoing nature and include responsibilities regarding the employment of personnel in the council. We hope that councils will be (1) imaginative in their encouraging participation and leadership, (2) experimental in their means of measuring and reporting their interpretations, (3) adaptive designing the accountability structures appropriate for their context in light of the mandated functions, and (4) connectional as they work for the wholeness of their council. The *Book of Order*, G-3.0103, currently says committees on representation should not be merged with other committees or entities, we wish the stronger language were retained.

While rigid definitions of what youth means has prompted debate at assemblies as recent as the 219th General Assembly (2010), GACOR wants to remind the assembly that the majority of Presbyterians are older and there is need for intentional inclusion and involvement of younger Presbyterians in the decision-making processes and leadership of our councils and congregations. Examining how our leadership is distributed as to age is one factor in providing a helpful snapshot of who is participating and whose voices are included and whose stories are normative for our communities.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

## Item 08-02

[The assembly approved Item 08-02. See pp. 68, 69.]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of G-3.0306 Regarding Laboring Inside the Bounds of a Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

**The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the following authoritative interpretation of G-3.0306 regarding the responsibility of presbyteries to develop written criteria for validating ministries within their bounds:**

**“Work is properly within the responsibility of a presbytery when:**

**“• Responsibility for the work is constitutionally assigned to the presbytery (e.g., service to congregations under the jurisdiction of the presbytery);**

**“• The work is in service to another church and an ecumenical agreement (G-5.0201) with that church assigns responsibility to the presbytery for permitting a minister to serve the other church; or**

**“• The consultation of the presbytery with other councils (G-3.0106) has resulted in an agreement that the presbytery is to be responsible for the type of work.**

**“Work is not properly within the responsibility of a presbytery when:**

**“• Responsibility for the work is constitutionally assigned to another council (e.g., service to synod or General Assembly);**

**“• The work is in service to another church and an ecumenical agreement assigns responsibility to a council other than the presbytery for permitting a minister to serve the other church; or**

**“• The consultation of the presbytery with other councils (G-3.0106) has resulted in an agreement that another council is to be responsible for the type of work.**

**“Presbyteries may assert responsibility for work within their bounds where responsibility is not otherwise assigned.”**

### *Rationale*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the above authoritative interpretation to the former G-11.0401a, for the purpose of clarifying the rights, powers, and responsibilities of presbyteries to oversee ministries within their bounds (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 59, 344, Item 05-23). However, G-11.0401a was removed from the Form of Government in the revision



adopted in 2011. Nevertheless, clarifying rights, powers, and responsibilities of presbyteries concerning oversight of persons laboring inside and outside the bounds of presbyteries is necessary to the orderly governance of the church. We believe that by attaching the authoritative interpretation approved in 2010 to G-3.0306, with minor amendment of citations and nomenclature to reflect the current Form of Government, these powers and responsibilities may be clarified for the church.

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-02**

*Advice on Item 08-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve item 08-02.

*Rationale*

This proposed authoritative interpretation restates an authoritative interpretation rendered by the 219th General Assembly (2010) of a provision that no longer exists.

The language of presbytery “bounds” does continue within the Form of Government at G-3.0106 [per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within presbytery’s bounds], G-3.0107 [records of sessions that cease to exist become property of presbytery within whose bounds the session was prior to cessation], G-3.0301b [authorizing Lord’s Supper for non-congregational entities meeting within presbytery’s bounds], G-3.0301c [warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within presbytery’s bounds], G-3.0306 [validating ministries within presbytery’s bounds], G-3.0501 [commissioners to General Assembly to be reflective of diversity with presbytery’s bounds], W-3.6204(1), D-3.0101b(2) [engaging in work within bounds of presbytery is submission to jurisdiction of that presbytery], D-10.0201c [expenses of investigation of alleged offense to be paid by council within whose bounds offense was alleged to have occurred].

The request to the 219th General Assembly (2010) was related to the procedures for obtaining permission to labor inside and outside the bounds. The authoritative interpretation rendered is equally appropriate for current G-3.0306, which has to do with the validation of ministries.



**Item 09-01**

[The assembly approved Item 09-01. See p. 9.]

*On Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Mission Partnership Between the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.*

**The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:**

**1. Request the Moderator and the Stated Clerk to send a formal communication to the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba expressing the joy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on the occasion of the 45th Anniversary of the formation of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba as an autonomous and independent sister church, congratulating that church for its steadfast faith and testimony to the gospel in difficult times throughout the forty-five years of its existence and for its significant leadership contribution to the world ecumenical movement, expressing thanksgiving for the vital mission ties that bind together the many congregations and presbyteries in the Presbyterian Cuba Partners Network in the U.S. and Cuba, and assuring them of our prayers as they gather in the Fourth National Institute to chart a course for mission and ministry in Cuba in the years ahead.**

**2. Request the Moderator and the Stated Clerk to prepare a communication to the Cuba Partners' Network Gathering, meeting in December 2012 in Cuba, to be read in that gathering, expressing appreciation to the individual members and pastors of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba in that gathering for their faithful and effective ministry to the people of Cuba, and assuring them of the prayerful support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as they continue to enrich the life and deepen the faith of their U.S. partners.**

**3. Urge the committees and officers of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to recognize the 45th Anniversary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba in a plenary session of the General Assembly and make provision for the commissioners to hear directly from the Reverend Francisco Marrero, the general secretary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba.**

*Rationale*

After its founding in 1890 by a Cuban layman, Presbyterianism in Cuba was intimately connected with both of the immediate predecessor churches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

In an early act of reunion, the mission efforts of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. were united in 1918 into one presbytery of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., which became the Presbytery of Cuba of the Synod of New Jersey.

After a three-year process of theological reflection following the First National Institute led by Dr. John A. Mackay, as Cuban Presbyterians faced a difficult future under a hostile government, a greatly diminished body of pastors and members, and the cutoff of support and communication with the U.S. church, the Presbytery of Cuba sent an overture to the 178th General Assembly (1966) of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., meeting in Boston, asking to be dismissed in order to form an independent and autonomous Presbyterian church, which overture was approved.

In January 1967, the Presbytery of Cuba was dissolved and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba (Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Cuba) was constituted in Havana with the participation of Moderator Ganse Little, Stated Clerk William P. Thompson, and Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretary John Coventry Smith; and immediately emphasized its ecumenical commitment by joining the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Latin American Council of Churches, in which organizations Cuban Presbyterians have provided distinguished leadership through the years.

After twenty years of separation created by the United States government embargo of Cuba, representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission agencies were able to meet with the leaders of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba in Havana and craft a Mutual Mission Agreement to guide the mission relations of the two denominations, adopted in 1986 by the General Assemblies of both churches.

As a result of the provisions of the Mutual Mission Agreement, there are now twelve synods and presbyteries and eighty-one congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with partnership ties to entities of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, in addition to the Outreach Foundation, the Presbyterian Cuba Connection, and Living Waters for the World, organized into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Cuba Partners Network.

Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Cuba Partners Network will gather with their Cuban partners in Cuba December 3–10, 2012, to celebrate their unity in mission and the 45th Anniversary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba.

The Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba will convene the Fourth National Institute in October 2012 to celebrate the 45th anniversary of its founding and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the path ahead in a time of great change and confusion in Cuba.

The Reverend Francisco Marrero, general secretary of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and dean of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, is an ecumenical visitor to the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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**Concurrence to Item 09-01 from the Presbyteries of Chicago, Middle Tennessee, South Louisiana, and the Twin Cities Area.**

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**Concurrence to Item 09-01 from the Presbytery of Long Island (with Additional Rationale).**

The overture speaks for itself, expressing in proper ‘whereas’ form the history, and ongoing role that the Presbyterian-Reformed Church enjoys in Cuba, and its prominent leadership positions in international religious organizations. It is worthy of Presbytery of Long Island support. The Cuba Work Group feels, however, that it has something to add to the deliberations of the committee as it makes its recommendation on concurrence.

Ecumenical mission work has been defined as “the *whole work* of the *whole church* to take the Gospel to the *whole world*.” To better fulfill this Great Commandment, the Presbytery of Long Island chose thirty years ago to act upon the invitation of our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba to join hands once more. They were once our “mission children,” so it meant rejoining the long line of saints who were already remembered and revered in Cuba for their seventy years of Presbyterian missionary presence there. With the monetary and advisory support of the Boards of National Mission of both the Northern and Southern governing bodies, the young Cuban church was incorporated into the Synod of New Jersey, Presbytery of New Brunswick. These mission workers labored to build churches and hospitals, and being Presbyterian, focused on educating and training pastors and lay leaders. The schools that they established provided educational opportunities of a superior quality for Cuban youth and young adults.

The triumph of the Revolution in 1959 and the resulting U.S. economic embargo of 1962 forced an inevitable, tragic estrangement between our churches. After four years of being deprived of all economic and fraternal support, the Cuban church was moved to seek a status independent of and isolated from its mother church in the U.S. At the General Assembly of the UPCUSA in 1967, the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba was inaugurated. Its promise was recorded: “Have confidence in us and we will be faithful.” A Cuban pastor summed up their first decade alone, under a government officially “atheist,” in this way: “And we have tried to be so:

“We have tried to be faithful to the Tradition that you taught us;

“We have tried to be faithful to our Lord, Jesus Christ;

“We have tried to be faithful to Reformed principles;

“We have tried to be faithful to our Cuban situation.”

He continued: “This faithfulness has not been easy. It has cost great sacrifices. The Church has ... had to pay the price of discipleship, the sacrifice of the Cross; but it is now discovering the Resurrection stage.”

Some fifteen years on, when the Cuban church reached out to what had become PC(USA), in hopes of repairing the breach, the Presbytery of Long Island was among the first in the denomination to reach back, to explore the challenge of a mission partnership that requires constant perseverance in overcoming the barriers that two hostile governments erect, to isolate each other and confound the audacity of such mutual Christian witness and accompaniment in the Fields of the Lord. The Cuban church is forty-five-years old now, but the economic embargo is fifty. Our Cuban partnerships have been a serious tutorial for us in the cost of discipleship and the price of the suffering caused to these family members by the collateral damage of our flourishing failed diplomacy. We stand humbled by their ambitious outreach in the reality of so few resources, confident in the power of prayer to redeem.

“Whereas”: the Cuba Work Group of the Presbytery of Long Island wishes to lift up our Cuban partners and their accomplishments of forty-five years as an independent entity, and to celebrate the occasion with the 220th General Assembly (2012) in Pittsburgh. More than that, we hope that we highlight by our demeanor the joy that these thirty years of knowing, enduring, learning, teaching, loving, and supporting one another have afforded us all in the service of the Kingdom. By the

power and direction of the Holy Spirit we have been able to walk hand-in-hand in undiminished commitment to the healed breach. To this end, we also gratefully acknowledge the importance of our year by year faithful support from presbytery mission grant monies, and the prayers of the people.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-01

*Comment on Item 09-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Presbyterian World Mission welcomes this overture as an opportunity to celebrate the forty-five years of faithful ministry of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, its contribution to the world ecumenical movement, and its partnership with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We assure the church in Cuba of our prayers as they gather in the Fourth National Institute to chart a course for mission and ministry in Cuba in the years ahead.

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## Item 09-02

[The assembly approved Item 09-02. See p. 9.]

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) invite the following churches to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the 221st General Assembly (2014):

**Overseas: Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT), Indonesian Christian Church (GKI), Evangelical Church of Peru, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bolivia, Moravian Church in Nicaragua, Ethiopia Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, Presbyterian Community of Congo (CPC), Reformed Church in Hungary, The Episcopal Church of the Holy Land, and the Presbyterian Church of Sudan.**

**Within the United States: African Methodist Episcopal Church, Moravian Church (Southern Province), Reformed Church in America, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, United Methodist Church.**

#### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations nominates to each General Assembly churches to be invited to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the subsequent assembly (Standing Rule B.2.g.; *Organization for Mission*, Section IV.C.7). We recommend ten overseas churches and five churches from within the United States. Of the overseas churches, we recommend at least one church from each area staffed by World Mission. Of the churches within the United States, we recommend at least one church from the Formula of Agreement, two churches from other Covenant Relationships (CUiC, Moravian, KPCA), and one church from a tradition that we are not in a traditional ecumenical relationship.

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## Item 09-03

[The assembly approved Item 09-03. See p. 9.]

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (GACEIR) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Affirm with gratitude to God the achievements of the World Council of Churches (WCC) since its founding in 1948 and express its appreciation to the member churches for their participation in this instrument of the ecumenical movement, as we seek to find the unity declared by our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Offer gratitude for the witness and presence of the WCC in some of the challenging places in our world through its willingness and ability to pull together the various expressions of Christianity and ultimately offering a collective voice affecting change and support to some of the troubling situations. A collective voice is proven more powerful than any singular expression.

3. Request the WCC to enter into a time of open conversation with member churches regarding how to increase the involvement of women, youth, and indigenous people in leadership and in programming.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate to the WCC, in regards to the PC(USA) governance review, PC(USA) values of representation, inclusivity, and transparency in discerning the mind of Christ and the exercise of governance.

5. Request the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to take the following actions and report to the General Assembly following the next WCC review:

a. to continue to document and report progress of the participation of women, youth, and indigenous people in the various aspects of the WCC;

b. to follow and report on the Global Christian Forum as it relates to the global ecumenical movement and the WCC.

6. Request the WCC to find more effective ways to communicate and network its resources as it relates to both member and nonmember churches.

7. Express our appreciation to the open and responsive way in which senior staff of the WCC cooperated with our review, providing full information in a timely and collegial fashion.

8. Declare intent for PC(USA) to seek to sustain its current support for the core budget of the WCC and, where possible, to seek ways to support the programmatic function of the WCC. Urge PC(USA) WCC Central Committee members to insist on balanced WCC budgets.

9. Direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to continue and/or increase participation on the various committees, commissions, and leadership of the WCC as invited; request OGA and GAMC to inform the WCC of internal structural changes or changes in personnel so that invitations may be appropriately offered.

10. Instruct the Office of Communications to regularly include the work of the WCC (and other ecumenical bodies) in its communication portfolio and regularly update the church about the witness and ministry of the WCC for local church participation as appropriate; encourage the GAMC to utilize WCC resources in the development of PC(USA) materials and programs; direct GACIER to work with and offer suggestions to OGA, GAMC, and particularly the Office of Communications regarding ecumenical engagement and information sharing of such in these communication structures, i.e. website and other forms of communication.

### *Rationale*

#### *A. Assigned Task*

At the 212th General Assembly (2000), and in response to concerns voiced within the General Assembly Council (GAC), the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) was asked to design a process “for review of councils and other ecumenical alliances to which the PC (USA) belongs.” The 213th General Assembly (2001) approved the decision, and the 215th General Assembly (2003) received the first review document of the World Council of Churches (WCC). This current report is the second such review.

The review team included: the Reverends Judy Angleberger, Gun Ho Lee, Krystin Granberg (members of GACEIR ), Elenora Giddings Ivory and Ashley Seaman. The financial review was done by Elder James Tse and the Reverend Carlos Malave was staff.

The 215th General Assembly (2003) raised questions of leadership and finance of the WCC, This review has sought to address these questions.

#### *B. Our Process*

The review committee conducted face-to-face interviews; used video conferencing or e-mailed a questionnaire to the following representatives of the WCC and the PC(USA):

World Council of Churches Staff: the Reverend Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary World Council of Churches; the Reverend Garland Pierce, senior assistant to the general secretary; the Reverend Dr. Hielke Wolters, associate general secretary; Natasha Klukach, programme executive for Church and Ecumenical Relations and North America Region.

Female Presidents of the WCC: The Reverend Dr. Ofelia Ortega, Cuba; Dame Mary Tanner, England; the Reverend Dr. Bernice Powell Jackson, U.S.A.

PC(USA):

Office of the General Assembly—Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, Director of Department of Ecumenical and Agency Relations Robina Winbush, and Associate for Ecumenical Relations Carlos Malave.

General Assembly Mission Council—Executive Director Linda Valentine, Program and Project Directors Sara Lisherness, Hunter Farrell, Charles Wiley, Ann Ferguson, Lee Hinson-Hasty, Gina Yeager-Buckley, Mark Koenig, and Bill Somplasky-Jarmon. For experiences and perspectives from across the denomination, letters were sent to the 174 ecumenical liaisons of the presbyteries and to the executive/general presbyters.

### C. *History of the WCC & PC(USA)*

Many church historians will agree that while the 19th century was the century of mission, the 20th century was the century of ecumenism. As we look back on these two centuries of mission and unity from the perspective of a renewed commitment by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the ecumenical movement, we are grateful to God for the faithful and relevant ministries rendered by the World Council of Churches (WCC), particularly its committed staff and delegates from member churches. Since its founding in 1948, the WCC has been and still is a privileged instrument of “the one ecumenical movement” by which formerly separated sisters and brothers of the Christian faith are now drawn closer to and engaged with one another under the common lordship of Jesus Christ. There is a Christocentric and Trinitarian Basis, as a reference point for its member churches. “The WCC is a fellowship of churches that confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” The WCC consists now of 349 member churches who are seeking visible unity all over the world through the four main streams of the ecumenical movement, i.e., common fellowship (Faith and Order), common witness (Mission and Evangelism), common service (Life and Work), and common renewal (Learning and Prayer). The 10th General Assembly, the WCC’s highest governing body, will meet in Busan, Korea, in 2013 with an assembly theme focused on God’s vision of justice and peace in the light of its sixty-five years of life together in Christ.

As one of the WCC’s 147 charter member churches, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has continuously contributed to the activities and programs of the WCC. The 2003 report of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to the 215th General Assembly (2003) on the Review of the World Council of Churches put it succinctly: “Presbyterians have played an important role in the history of the WCC in a variety of ways, through the sharing of theological insights from our tradition, the contributions of individual Presbyterians to WCC programs, and the provision of financial and material support. ... We have contributed to WCC programs aimed at strengthening human rights concerns, women’s concerns, and issues concerned with justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. We have also played a key role in the interfaith dialogue discussions and relationships with people of other faith traditions.”

As the WCC is in search of the common understanding and vision of the ecumenical movement, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can give a more fundamental contribution to the WCC from the perspective of reformation. Not only the world-renowned Presbyterians such as John A. Mackay and Eugene Carson Blake but also all the faithful Presbyterians who served the WCC as its staff and committee members have contributed to the formation and development of the WCC by their being both reformed *and* ecumenical. *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), <http://oga.pcusa.org/ecumenicalrelations/resources/ecumenical-stance-of-the-pcusa.pdf>, points to this calling clearly: “From the earliest days of European settlement in North America, there has been a dynamic tension between the distinctively Reformed identity claimed by Presbyterians and our confession of ‘one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church’ that embraces the larger community of believers and churches. This has played out over the years in varying degrees of emphasis on a Presbyterian ‘brand’ in doctrine and polity, and a simultaneous commitment to unity in Christian ministry and mission.” The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been and will be determined to live out this dynamic tension between being reformed and ecumenical, while “at all levels [seeking] to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ and [being] open to opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical groups” (*Book of Order*, G-5.0101).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s reference point regarding ecumenical relations, *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, was an outcome of the 2007 consultation called to “review our ecumenical vision and construct an ecumenical stance and policy to guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) staff and elected bodies for the next ten years.” This policy statement, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), covers well the biblical and theological basis of ecumenism, a historical overview of Presbyterian ecumenical involvement including a review of the ecumenical work of the General Assembly over the previous decade (1997–2007), and an analysis of ten priorities facing up to an emerging new reality in our changing ecumenical landscape. What is most significant for the purpose of our review of the WCC from the perspective of reformation is its broader ecumenical vision that discovers new ecumenical conversation partners such as immigrants, human rights activists, and people of other faiths “in building the human community that God intended from the very beginning.” As *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* states, “The purpose of the ecumenical movement is to help make manifest God’s intention for the household of God. In the past, churches have often limited that vision to a unified Church that would help bring about a unified world or even unify the world within it. The ecumenical vision that is part of God’s vision is actually much larger. John 10:10b describes the vision as God’s desire that the inhabitants of the household of God ‘may have life, and have it abundantly.’ This is a vision of justice and peace that allows space for all of God’s creation to live life in its fullness. God is continually active in bringing loving wholeness to creation, where all can live in peace. God is especially attentive to those who have been excluded from abundant life and calls the church to cooperate in this process.”

### D. *Current Nature of the WCC*

The WCC works to make manifest God’s intention for the household of God. Empowered by member churches, the WCC offers hope to the hopeless, gives voice to the voiceless, and provides a common table for theological reflection and ecumenical conversation.

Member churches participate in the WCC through the Central Committee, WCC conferences, consultations, social networks, Living Letters teams, and the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, to name a few. The WCC is currently structured into the following programmatic areas (see [www.oikumene.org](http://www.oikumene.org).)

- [The Ecumenical Movement in the 21st century](#)
- [Unity, Mission, Evangelism, and Spirituality](#)
- [Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace](#)
- [Justice, Diakonia, and responsibility for creation](#)
- [Education and Ecumenical Formation](#)
- [Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation](#)

In the ecumenical movement, the WCC continues to be unique in its role, authority, networks, and reputation as a convener of the necessary people for theological dialogue, and for political, social, and economic Christian witness. The WCC is a global catalyst for expanding the common table of traditional ecumenical relationships. It is the only ecumenical organization engaged in partnership between Orthodox and Protestant Christian Communion. It facilitated the creation of the Global Christian Forum, a gathering with evangelical and Pentecostal Christian Communion. In justice advocacy and theological dialogue, it is finding new ways of bringing churches together for action and connection. With the turmoil and turbulence in many countries, the WCC has had impact working with and through churches of various nations and has been able, as one body, to provide an important and unified voice in these situations. The general secretary asked the question we should all ask: “What does it mean to carry the cross together?” The world is suffering and the WCC is invited to participate as a reconciling agent as told in these stories:

#### 1. *Russia-Georgia War*

When the Russia-Georgia War broke out in late August of 2008, the Orthodox churches of both nations called upon the World Council of Churches to come to stand with them as they tried to bring an end to the hostilities and establish peace between the two nations. The Patriarchates did not describe the war as a battle between nations, but rather as a situation of Orthodox killing Orthodox as each nation is 90 percent Orthodox. The churches wanted the WCC to stand with them as they built a bridge of peace. The hostilities were focused on disputed adjoining territorial borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The WCC, through its peacemaking program, established a pastoral delegation to visit Russia and Georgia from 3 to 7 September 2008. The delegation visited and listened to WCC member churches in both countries and encouraged their efforts for peace. The delegation also visited people displaced by the violence and with church aid programmes. The goal was to encourage Christians in both countries to keep talking to each other and praying for each other so that Christians in Georgia and Russia could manage not to allow the divide between their countries to separate them from one another. The delegation has also visited with government officials to ask them to do what is in their power to stop hostilities and said “in so much as it depends on you, return no one evil for evil” and to move towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The delegation met with high-level representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, Georgian Orthodox Church, Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia and others. The delegation visited humanitarian work of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International and its local partners. ACT International is a WCC-backed coordination body for emergency relief.

Members of the WCC delegation, using its “Churches in Conflict Situations Project” heading were: Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste, Romanian Orthodox Church (head of the delegation); the Reverend Jean-Arnold de Clermont, Reformed Church of France, president of the Conference of European Churches; the Reverend László Lehel, director of Hungarian Interchurch Aid, on behalf of ACT International; the Reverend Elenora Giddings Ivory, director of Public Witness and Global Advocacy, World Council of Churches; Jonathan Frerichs, WCC programme executive (Middle East and nuclear disarmament).

#### 2. *Rwanda*

Some fifteen years after the major Rwandan genocide of 1994, which killed 800,000 people in ethnic hatred and tensions over a period of 100 days, the WCC was asked by the churches of Rwanda and neighboring Congo to send a delegation to bring more international focus and attention to the fact that violence had not ended. People who lived along the Rwanda/Congo border were in fear of their lives—particularly the women who had come to be the target of widespread rape and mutilation. Rape is still a weapon of war.

The July 2009 WCC Living Letters visit was to challenge the churches to do more in the light of what the women were experiencing. The delegation challenged churches to end their denial of the violence that was being perpetrated against wom-



en. The churches seemed to relegate the violence to the private sphere and only understood it as a physical act while ignoring the emotional toll it was taking.

The goal of the delegation was to have everyone acknowledge that the violence actually existed. The delegation met with an All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) women's workshop on Transformation Leadership for Peace, Healing and Reconciliation in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where the women heard the delegation offer validation of their plight and prayers for its resolution. "This means taking it out of the private arena and placing it squarely at the altars of our churches, in the seats of our parliament and in the halls of our academies," said Dr. Sam Kobia, the then general secretary.

Churches in the DRC report that as rebel groups continue their activities in the country, women and girls persistently suffered sexual violence by armed men. Some had been brutally gang-raped, often in front of their families and communities. In numerous cases, men have also been forced at gunpoint to rape their own relatives.

Those women had been traumatized. They kept to themselves and asked what they could do to stop the violence. The delegation met with Dr Christine Amisi, the coordinator of the HIV and AIDS programme of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, South Kivu. The hospital specializes in handling cases of sexual violence. In 2008, for example, it had handled 3,500 cases of sexual violence. "But those who have power seem to have a deaf ear," Amisi added.

The WCC once again was asked to stand on the side of victims. The delegation moved around the country and visited with both church and government officials in Kinshasa, Bukavu, South Kivu, and Goma.

#### E. *Common Engagement with WCC*

It has been said that to be Presbyterian is to also be ecumenical. There are several places where the PC(USA) is drawing on the WCC in programming and ecclesial work. Listed below are several examples of our common engagement.

##### 1. *The WCC with PC(USA) Engagement*

*The Nature and Mission of the Church*—This sixty-four page document brought the breadth and depth of theological reflection of the member churches to the common table to shape of this current statement on the church. Though not all are in agreement, the conversation that began would not have happened without the WCC. The PC(USA)'s Office of Theology and Worship, which shared in the production of the document, is a participant of the WCC's Faith and Order work with representation and some funding for the very reason that "international and ecumenical theology cannot be done in any other venue."

*Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*—Shortly after the beginning of each year, Christians around the world pray for church unity. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, traditionally celebrated January 18–25, draws on resources sponsored jointly by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church. This is a much used resource of many Presbyterian churches. <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/1/20/week-prayer-christian-unity-focus-jerusalem/>.

*International Day of Peace-September 21*—The WCC invites individuals to pray for peace on September 21 and encourages congregations to pray for peace at their services before or after that date. The WCC also suggests that congregations and individuals consider participating in the International Day of Peace Vigil or consider holding twenty-four-hour prayer vigils or other observances in their own congregation on September 21. Because this year's annual focus of the Decade to Overcome Violence—Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace is on the United States, the WCC is asking people across the world to include prayers for the churches, religious communities, ecumenical organizations, and all people of goodwill in the United States who pursue peace and justice. <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/interfaithrelations/pdf/ecumenicaldialogue.pdf>.

##### 2. *Resources of the WCC Used to Support PC(USA) Ministries*

*Evangelism Sunday-September 30*—As congregations celebrate Evangelism Sunday, the PC(USA) resource entitled, *Turn to the Living God: A Call to Evangelism in Jesus Christ's Way*, approved by the 203rd General Assembly (1991), recognized that there are unchurched populations worldwide. The General Assembly relied on a WCC document when it said, "Some of the larger people groups and many smaller subcultures still have no indigenous church, one that expresses their unique culture. While they may be found in isolated parts of the world, unevangelized people groups are increasingly likely to be found in the teeming cities of the world." *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation*, an ecumenical document of the WCC (paragraph 25), calls for the establishment of congregations in every human community and culture: This task of sowing the seed needs to be continued until there is, in every human community, a cell of the kingdom, a church confessing Jesus Christ and in his name serving people. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to this task. In fulfilling this calling we will be sensitive toward the cultures of people groups with whom we engage in mission. At the same time we will work cooperatively with other churches and Christian groups seeking to relate to particular people groups. A recent exciting outcome of this cooperative work in mission and evangelism is "Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Rec-

ommendations for Conduct,” a joint statement by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID), the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) after five years of common study on the subject.

*World Aids Day-December 1*—The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the resolution, “Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action,” in exercise of its responsibility to help the whole church address matters of “social righteousness.” As a social witness policy statement, it is presented for the guidance and edification of both church and society, and determines procedures and program for the ministries and staff of the General Assembly. It is recommended for consideration and study by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and commended to the free Christian conscience of all congregations and members for prayerful study, dialogue, and action. This social witness resolution satisfies the rules that govern the formation of social policy in the PC(USA).

### 3. *Programs in Conjunction with United Nations*

Because of its unique standing with the United Nations, there are a number of programs that the WCC and its member churches, including the PC(USA), are in engagement with the United Nations:

*The UN Millennium Development Goals*—To the extent congregations and presbytery committees are working on the economic justice issues as delineated in the Millennium Development Goals of the WCC, they are working with others around the world to (1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal health, (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (7) ensure environmental sustainability, and (8) develop a global partnership for development. The WCC has made these goals a center piece of its economic justice program (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/public-witness-addressing-power-affirming-peace/poverty-wealth-and-ecology/statement-on-the-millennium-development-goals.html>).

*UN Economic and Social Council*—The WCC holds the much coveted ECOSOC status, meaning that it holds credentials to speak to the United Nations of issues of economic justice. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) assists the UN General Assembly in promoting international economic and social cooperation and development. The ECOSOC has fifty-four members and meets once a year in July for a four-week session. Since 1998, it has held another meeting each April with finance ministers heading key committees of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Viewed separate from the specialized bodies it coordinates, ECOSOC’s functions include information gathering, advising member nations, and making recommendations. In addition, ECOSOC is well-positioned to provide policy coherence and coordinate the overlapping functions of the UN’s subsidiary bodies and it is in these roles that it is most active. As Presbyterians, we are privileged to be part of this voice for justice as the WCC advocates these concerns by virtue of our membership in the WCC.

*UN High Commissioner of Refugees* with several other agencies performs most of its humanitarian work in partnership with some of the other UN agencies. Examples include mass vaccination programs (through the World Health Organization), the avoidance of famine and malnutrition (through the work of the World Food Programme) and the protection of vulnerable and displaced people. At a WCC annual advocacy event, participants heard about the “new environment refugee” to describe all the thousands who are now being displaced by natural disasters of tsunamis, earthquakes, tidal waves for which the UN must assist. Whole islands are disappearing in the Pacific. Residents must be relocated. When we send our contributions to help with these sudden disasters, they go towards helping provide a worldwide Christian presence during these traumatic times. Some of these people will never have a place to which they can return. These are often the indigenous people mentioned in the 2003 review of the WCC—those on whom the PC(USA) wanted to focus particular attention.

*UN Human Rights Council* was established in 2006, to address human rights violations. As the WCC promotes the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it also provides opportunities for advocacy on behalf of indigenous peoples by bringing representatives of some of these communities to Geneva when the Human Rights Council is reviewing these concerns and violations. There are approximately 370 million indigenous peoples around the world according to the UN web site. “The declaration outlines the individual and collective rights to culture, language, education, identity, employment, and health, thereby addressing post-colonial issues that had confronted indigenous peoples for centuries. The declaration aims to maintain, strengthen, and encourage the growth of indigenous institutions, cultures, and traditions. It also prohibits discrimination against indigenous peoples and promotes their active participation in matters that concern their past, present and future. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is the UN’s central coordinating body for matters relating to the concerns and rights of the world’s indigenous peoples. The forum is an advisory body within the framework of the United Nations System that reports to the UN’s Economic and Social Council” ([www.un.org/en](http://www.un.org/en)).

### F. *Transition and Changes*

The WCC is again in a time of transition as their leadership has spoken of the need for greater vision and outreach. A Governance Review is being conducted that will provide a place for reflection, prayer, and action, not on its own merit, but in relation to its more than three hundred member churches. One of the female presidents shared this perspective

My own hope would be that we will all get hold at a deeper level of the fact that the WCC is not a structural organization over against the churches but a fellowship of churches. The structure that enables the fellowship to work, think, and pray together has to be appropriate for the support of the fellowship of churches and not a structure with its own separate life. This means greater clarity about the role of the Assembly and its responsibility to give account to the member churches of the fellowship of work done in the past 7 years and to set plans for the next 7 years. There has to be greater accountability to the churches for the agenda of the WCC. I hope the GRC will help to sort out the different responsibilities of the Assembly, the CC and the EC and the proper inter-relation between them; make a clear distinction between governance and management; clarify the roles of the Moderator and Vice moderators of the CC and the General Secretary; define more clearly the role of the Presidents; help the staff to understand their role and work in support of the fellowship of churches and the proper lines of accountability in the interest of good management. Whatever changes are suggested I hope that they will be changes in the perspective of the central mandate of the Council to call the churches to the goal of visible unity.

Review began recently and its proposals will not be known immediately.

The ecumenical table has been expanded by the WCC when it facilitated the formation of the Global Christian Forum that has begun to develop relationships with church families not traditionally involved with the WCC, like the Pentecostal and Evangelical churches. The general secretary recently visited Pentecostal churches in South Africa and Korea. The leadership does not see the Global Christian Forum standing on its own but can be a doorway to a new way of being church together. At this point there is no formal relationship between the two bodies, albeit one formed from the other.

### 1. *Women, Youth and Indigenous Peoples*

Specific in this review is response to the 215th General Assembly (2003) regarding the following recommendation:

That the PC(USA) continue to advocate for the WCC's historic commitment to the greater participation of women, youth, and indigenous people in the life of the council and for the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to document and report progress being done in that regard in a clear and concise fashion to the next General Assembly following each WCC review. (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 341)

With regard to representation, the WCC relies on the member churches to nominate and support candidates of differing gender, race, ethnicity, and age. The WCC is a product of its members. One of the gifts of the WCC is to provide a forum for the different Christian churches to engage and challenge one another to broaden their historic understanding of leadership. As reported to us by one of the female presidents "We have to go on challenging one another in the structures of the Council and also challenging the churches with a vision of greater wholeness and holiness while all the time trying to understand those churches and individuals who see things differently from the way we see them. In the WCC we have to model inclusive community."

Given this, the review team finds much progress in these areas, though challenges remain, as follows:

#### a. *Women*

There are still no women involved in the four senior staff positions that are the general secretary, the deputy general secretary, and the two associated general secretaries. One of the associate general secretary positions is currently vacant. The hope is that a woman will fill the position. The Central Committee, at its last meeting, held firm to the need for greater representation of women in the leadership of the WCC.

The dialogue between Anglican Protestant and Orthodox Church leaders reflects a new limitation on women's participation in the WCC. These traditions have different understandings of women's ordination and the role of women in public and spiritual leadership. The WCC culture still expects women to compromise their voice and calling to ministry for the sake of keeping the dialogue and relationship active.

#### b. *Youth*

Youth are adequately represented at WCC conferences and on committees. The energy of youth has become a force in the global ecumenical movement. A "Youth Desk" still exists and the council supports various international youth gatherings, courses at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/activities/bossey.html>), the *Echoes* magazine (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/echos-for-peace-ecumenic.html>), and virtual networks for youth to connect with each other, the council, and further social organizing and theological reflection.

Even as the council includes youth, the structure of the WCC is not as flexible and responsive as other social movements to encourage a functional youth movement or to create new forms of being church.

#### c. *Indigenous*

There has not been any improvement in representation in leadership positions of the WCC. Most of the emphasis with indigenous peoples concerns has been through the Climate Change campaign and working group as it has great impact on these communities.

There continues a struggle to live into a world with women, indigenous, and youth being equals in participation, recognition and voice. Each voice challenges in its own way: women's ordination with the Orthodox tradition, youth with the broad-

ening ecumenical and interreligious landscape, and the indigenous who engage in north/south economic dynamics and around the care of creation.

## 2. *Financial State of the WCC*

The financial review is based on the documents made available for the three years from 2008–2010. Because the WCC is based in Geneva, Switzerland, the financial data are reported in Swiss Francs (CHF) which makes them vulnerable to foreign currency risks. The currencies giving rise to this risk are principally the Euro, the Swedish Krona, the U.S. Dollar, and the Pound Sterling.

The WCC has a healthy balance sheet. However, the fact that the current ratio (current assets divided by current liabilities), which measures the ability to meet current obligation, has deteriorated from more than 4.5 times in 2008 and 2.4 times in 2009 to only 1.1 times in 2010 is of concern. The cause of this reduction is a result of the mortgage loan due on Staff Residential Building of more than 10 million CHF in 2010. If this loan was not renegotiated in 2011, it would considerably cause a drain in cash assets.

The WCC has maintained a consistent Funds and Reserves (net assets) balance of 39.8 million CHF, 39.5 million CHF and 40.7 million CHF for 2008, 2009, and 2010, respectively. Of those balances, 16.0 million CHF, 15.6 million CHF, and 16.3 million CHF are in Restricted Funds, and 23.8 million CHF, 23.9 million CHF, and 24.5 million CHF, are in Unrestricted & Designated Funds for 2008, 2009, and 2010, respectively.

In accordance with the Funds and Reserves Policy approved by the Central Committee in August 2003, General Reserves are defined as those funds available to the council after meeting its obligations and commitments, without realizing fixed assets. In February 2005, the Central Committee set the General Reserves target at six months' salary cost.

During 2008, the deterioration in the financial markets led to a fall in WCC's investments, which was valued at 15.5 million CHF in 2007 to 10.0 million CHF in 2008. This resulted in a net realized and unrealized loss of 2.9 million CHF in 2008. The investments rebounded to 12.7 million CHF in 2009 with a gain of 1.0 million CHF. However, the investments fell again in 2010 to 9.9 million with a loss of 0.4 million CHF.

The WCC derives more than 80 percent of its income on contributions from its membership dues and donations, which has decreased from 35.7 million CHF in 2008 and 36.2 million CHF in 2009 to 32.5 million CHF in 2010. Based on the 2010 financial data, 68 percent of the membership income comes from Europe, 25 percent from North America and the remaining 7 percent from a combination of Asia, Africa, Middle East, Pacific, Caribbean, and Latin America.

To balance its reduced budget, a 20 percent staff reduction was instituted from 173 employees in 2008 to 166 employees in 2009 to 144 employees in 2010. As a result of the staff reduction, the personnel costs have been reduced from 17.9 million CHF in 2008 to 18.5 million in 2009 to 16.4 million CHF in 2010. The overall expenses have decreased from 39.3 million CHF in 2008 to 36.7 million CHF in 2009 to 31.5 million CHF in 2010.

Overall during the three-year review period of 2008–2010, WCC has been able to manage its budget in meeting the challenges of declined membership contributions and financial markets.

The 2003 Review called the GACEIR to address the following questions, the response follows:

Declare its intent that the PC(USA) shall seek to sustain the level of its support, both financial and in human resources, to the work of the World Council of Churches, while also urging our partner churches to seek every possible way of increasing their support. To these ends, we encourage the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations to address the following questions by the next World Council of Churches (WCC) review:

Why do so few churches choose to be a part of the WCC?

Why do so many member churches choose not to support the WCC financially?

What role has the PC(USA) played in creating or perpetuating this situation?

Is the WCC perceived by many churches in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, etc. as an essentially Eurocentric or Western institution? Does the contribution of 98 percent of its funding give to European and North American churches a disproportionate and unjust degree of power within the WCC in relation to larger but less wealthy churches? If so, how can such inequities be fairly and justly resolved?

Financial concerns challenge the WCC as with all churches in these economic times. In response, the WCC has made changes to its budgeting process that has been balanced for the last two years, has established staff positions to connect with member churches, has begun to reach out to foundations for funding, and is seeking to diversify income by possibly approaching individual congregations where the formal relationship with a member church allows such direct contact. In addition to financial gifts and space usage, in kind services are being assessed as gifts to the WCC.

In regard to giving, there are member churches which exist in volatile and disruptive conditions so that any giving would be neither wise nor safe. With other member churches there are no funds available for leaders to even participate in meetings.

In both situations, these churches recognize the broader global impact of the Christian church and voice and find it meaningful to be part of this community.

The PC(USA)'s core support of \$458,402 has remained at the same level since 2003. Due to the influence of exchange rates, the total contribution in Swiss Francs has been reduced from approximately 630,000 CHF to 426,000 CHF, a loss of approximately 32 percent. Since 2007, mission support has been reduced more than \$650,000, which does not reflect the devaluation from exchange rates. The decrease represents financial challenges within programs related to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Offering—especially as it impacted the Presbyterian Hunger Program. The Hunger Program was a significant donor to the WCC for many years. The OGHS receipts have been declining for more than ten years. The Hunger Program worked very hard to maintain its commitments to the WCC but had to make some hard decisions in 2008. The PC(USA) has been a consistent voice in encouraging member churches to pay their dues.

Currently 349 churches are involved in the WCC, which include major church bodies in many countries. Participation may vary dependent upon ecclesial organizations, such that in some places the WCC may not relate directly to a denomination but instead relate to national, regional, or local councils, which themselves have a number of church members. In some countries there is a national church that holds the membership in the WCC representing several churches.

One challenge to the WCC is the critique of its Eurocentric nature and location in Geneva, one of the most expensive cities in the world. The general secretary and other leaders have stated that Geneva is the center for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with representation from almost every nation in the world. By being present in Geneva, the WCC has the opportunity to engage with these NGOs as well as with the United Nations work on human rights.

As a church in the global north, PC(USA) has received many gifts. According to Luke, Jesus said, “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required ...” (Lk. 12:48). The gifts received are not only for the use of the PC(USA) but for the good of the world, thus it becomes imperative to share this relative abundance. Essential to the “requirement” of sharing is an opportunity and a privilege to serve. Such can be said of the European and North American churches with regard to contributions to the WCC.

The Luke verse continues by saying “and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.” Contributions are entrusted to the WCC and as such much will be demanded of their use. In this same section of Luke, Jesus says “those who store up treasures for themselves are not rich toward God,” (Lk. 12:21) but foolish in the abundance of possessions. The call for the “rich” churches, like PC(USA), is to give as it will strengthen God’s mission in the world.

Many parts of the global south are still in a development mode and continue to struggle with the refinement of natural resources. The PC(USA), as with other churches in the global north, is called to find ways to not appear oppressively powerful with what God has blessed upon us as these nations and their churches strive toward self-sustainment.

The United States has not been plagued with continuous war on our soil, crippling natural disasters, and unchecked diseases to the degree experienced in other parts of the world. Although the U.S. economy is currently at a weak point, it is still stronger than many nations of the southern hemisphere. The calling for PC(USA), as with other global north partners, is to share with those whom we live as worldwide neighbors.

If the PC(USA) has played a role in sustaining a feeling of unjust power over smaller churches, it can vow to find ways to listen to the desires of others when the WCC is in a decision-making mode. This would include encouraging a healthy, viable, and acknowledged approach toward other cultures within the WCC.

#### G. *Appreciation of PC(USA) Engagement in the WCC*

##### *Affirmations of PC(USA) Participation*

The PC(USA) presence from the founding of the WCC has had great impact on the work and direction of the council. In the interview with the general secretary, the Reverend Dr. Tveit expressed appreciation and praised the PC(USA) for the

- quality of persons who have served the WCC in various roles specifically mentioning the legacy of General Secretary Eugene Carson Blake (1966–1972);
- ability to function globally with a breadth of ecumenical commitments and connections worldwide;
- commitment to keeping tough issues on the table, asking difficult questions or critical questions, and raising concern for those who live on the margins;
- theological, political, and organizational competency;
- strength and wisdom in dealing with important decisions;
- openness to the gifts of other churches while being faithful to the gifts of being Presbyterian;

- quality of work produced by PC(USA) representatives;
- ability to understand and like to work programmatically and collegially; and
- financial and managerial support.

## H. *Challenges And Hopes*

### 1. *Challenges*

As the PC(USA) and other member churches undergo staff changes and structural realignments, it presents a challenge to the WCC to keep up with avenues of communication. The WCC is not always aware of the changes within the internal structure of PC(USA)—such that communications with particular offices need to be internally defined and then shared with the appropriate offices of the WCC. This information needs to be shared from PC(USA) to the WCC.

Priorities in the GAMC continue to shift focus toward the nurture of the local church—the challenge still remains for us to be a church in the world so that the PC(USA) does not lose sight of being a worldwide witness to the gospel. The PC(USA)'s continued relationship with the WCC can be part of the bridge with the greater church in proclaiming the gospel. We should not see our work as either that we work with the local church or that we work internationally. As identified in the connections made earlier in this report, we connect at the local level with the internationally generated programs of the WCC.

Through the review process it became clear that the PC(USA) website could better serve local congregations if there were more visible links to ecumenical agencies including the WCC. Those programs and information appropriate to congregations will strengthen the church local and universal and offer value of what it means to find our unity in Christ.

Central to our communication is an internal engagement with the WCC through the OGA and the GAMC program areas of Theology and Worship; Theological Education; Peacemaking; Presbyterian Office at the UN; Justice; Immigration; Climate Change; and Environment. These relationships and the work engaged add value to the work and witness of the PC(USA) staff and local congregations. The work with the WCC is not additional responsibility but a calling to fulfill ministry in both a local and a global context. Both are necessary aims for fulfilling our Christian mandate to love God and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

### 2. *Hopes*

Words of hope for continuing work together with the WCC were offered by the Reverend Dr. Tveit, the WCC presidents, and also by the staff and responses from those in the PC(USA). There is hope of increasing the programmatic work being done together by reaching into the depths of commitment and presence of the PC(USA) staff and with congregations, as appropriate. The WCC welcomes and embraces the strong reformed theology that is also an ecumenical presence as a key ingredient to the vision and direction of the WCC and the work in the world and looks to the PC(USA) to continue its leadership and involvement.

The hope is that having been good companions on the common journey of faith, life, witness, and learning, the WCC and the PC(USA) together are now called to renew the ecumenical commitment and reform the ecumenical vision in face of the changing and challenging world from the perspective of God's justice and peace.

## **Item 09-04**

[The assembly approved Item 09-04. See p. 9.]

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012)**

**1. Authorize participation in the Eighth Round of Reform/Catholic dialogue, which will begin in the fall of 2012, and request a report to the 223rd General Assembly (2018).**

**2. Appoint the Reverend David Gambrell, associate for Worship in the General Assembly Mission Council, and the Reverend Cynthia Campbell, Ph.D., interim pastor, Highland Presbyterian Church (Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky) as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) representatives to this dialogue.**

### *Rationale*

Following a meeting in New York on 19 September 2011, and a follow-up phone conference on 4 October 2011, ecumenical officers of the SEIA, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church of America, the Christian Reformed Church, and the United Church of Christ agreed to the following prospectus for the next round of the Catholic-Reformed consultation.

Even as we wrestled through theological and dialogical challenges in the last round, the five communions, in a historically significant moment, affirmed *These Living Waters: The Agreement on the Recognition of Baptism*. The time for a new round of dialogue, which we agree needs to manifest signs of continuity with the last round by means of advancing the foundations in sacramental theology that were established, seems appropriate. The topic of the consultation is largely based, therefore, on the recommendations made in *This Bread of Life*, the culminating document from the previous round of consultation.

More precisely, in its conclusion to the last round of dialogue, participants noted: “*We must also acknowledge that our deliberations were hampered by several ecclesiological issues that arose which were sometimes the cause of considerable tension. Thus we believe that it would be good for us in the future to explore together these ecclesiological issues which still stand before us, including how our sacramental theology relates to the theology of ministry and ordination, the relationship between an individual congregation and the universal Church, understanding each other’s polity, and the nature of the Church and how authority is exercised within that understanding in service to the Body of Christ.*”<sup>1</sup> The upcoming consultation will focus on the nature and meaning of the Church.

Given the challenges and preliminary goals identified, the dialogue will be designed to address issues that are ecclesiological in scope. We envision that the proposed dialogue will begin in the fall of 2012. Among the questions that the dialogue will address are the following:

A. On the ecclesial dimension of the Catholic-Reformed communions:

1. What is our understanding of the role of ministry and the meaning of ordination?
2. How does our sacramental theology, especially our respective interpretations of Eucharist, relate to ministry and ordination?
3. How does each of us understand the relationship between an individual congregation and the universal church?
4. How do we interpret the relationship between the exercise of authority and the role of service?
5. How do we understand the role of *episkopé* in the Roman Catholic and Reformed traditions?
6. How might the ministry of the Bishop of Rome be helpful in the cause of Christian unity?
7. What do we understand to be the mission of the church in light of our shared study on Baptism and Eucharist?
8. How does our understanding of the church’s participation in God’s mission shape our view of the nature of the church?

Endnote

1. This Living Bread: Report of the United States Roman Catholic-Reformed Dialogue on the Eucharist/Lord’s Table, pp. 76–77.

## Item 09-05

[The assembly approved Item 09-05. See pp. 9, 10.]

**The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) elect the following persons as delegates to the General Assembly of Church World Service and the National Council of Churches from 2012–2015:**

**The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly  
Associate Stated Clerk for Ecumenical Relations  
General Assembly Mission Council (or its successor body) representative (elected)  
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly representative (elected)  
The Reverend Carmelo Mercado Jr.  
Hikari Nakam  
Tyler Orem  
The Reverend Paul Rader**

**Alternates: The Reverend Sherri Houser; The Reverend Aimee Moiso.**

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly of Church World Service and the National Council of Churches meets every two years. The GACEIR is nominating eight delegates and two alternates to complete the PC(USA) delegation to the assembly. In addition

to staff with particular ecumenical portfolios, the nominations include elected persons with connections to General Assembly agencies and committees with ecumenical responsibilities, young adults, seminarians, and local pastors.

## Item 09-06

[The assembly Item 09-06. See pp. 9, 10.]

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following persons to be elected as delegates to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches:

1. **The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (by virtue of office); Alternate—Associate Stated Clerk for Ecumenical Relations (by virtue of office).**
2. **The Reverend Laura Mariko Cheifetz; Alternate—Everdith Landrau**

### *Rationale*

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches will meet October 30–November 8, 2013, in Busan, South Korea. The PC(USA) has been allocated two delegates.

## Item 09-07

[The assembly approved Item 09-07. See pp. 9, 10.]

*Recommendations Regarding Covenant to Adopt the Lund Principle—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. **Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to give particular concern to implementing the Lund Principle with PC(USA) full communion and covenant partners and where possible with other Christian churches, and to bring a progress report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**
2. **Encourage Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations to study *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 517ff) using the General Assembly study guide, *God's Unity, Our Journey*.**
3. **Encourage mid councils to study *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* (Ibid.) in collaboration with mid council judicatories of PC(USA) full communion and covenant partners.**
4. **Remind Presbyterian delegations appointed to conciliar bodies and bilateral and multilateral dialogues currently underway of the importance of the Lund Principle in the ecumenical witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).**

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 08-01. Recommendation to refer the Covenant to Adopt and Implement the "Lund Principle" and Codicil to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, requesting a report with recommendations by the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Synod of the Northeast.*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (GACEIR) is pleased to receive Item 08-01 from the Synod of the Northeast as approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), which offers the whole church the example of the Vermont Ecumenical Council in its commitment to implement the Lund Principle.

The Lund Principle, developed at an international ecumenical conference held in Sweden in 1952, provides the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) an important guidepost for the way it carries out its ecumenical commitments: "*Should not the Churches act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?*"

As Item 08-01 reminds the church, the Lund Principle is embodied in numerous places in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is a central conviction in *The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, approved by the 208th General Assembly (2008) (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 517ff).



The GACEIR, as it assists and gives guidance to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in fulfilling its ecumenical vision, is committed to keep the Lund Principle as a centerpiece of its work in

- welcoming diverse patterns of the visible unity of Christ's church, seeking concord in essential things: faith, sacraments, mission, and ministry;
- participating in mission and witness globally with ecumenical church partners, and in mission and witness nationally with regional councils, local associations, and neighboring congregations;
- engaging in bilateral and multilateral dialogues with other churches and traditions to remove barriers of misunderstanding and establish common affirmation;
- working for the union or reunion of separate churches in the Presbyterian and Reformed family;
- reaching out to unfamiliar traditions and associations of churches; and
- searching for the fuller expression of the visible unity to which we are called.

Over the next several years, GACEIR believes that the Lund Principle will provide an important framework as we work to strengthen several areas of our work:

### 1. *Living Constructively with the Tension Between the Academic and the Practical*

Historically, the search to discover our unity in Christ through the exploration of doctrinal differences among the churches has been seen as an academic exercise. Theologians and ecclesialogists have met in bilateral and multilateral dialogues, some of which have continued for decades, to seek common ground on matters of theology. As a result, ecumenism is perceived by many in the church as something academicians do, without practical consequences for the life of the church.

On the other hand, as the Lund Principle suggests, ecumenism is a very practical matter. When full communion agreements are entered into by churches, there are consequences: new relationships among brothers and sisters in the faith who were once divided; the sharing of the Eucharist in places where it has not been shared; and the orderly exchange of ministers of Word and Sacrament among churches that have not enjoyed the benefits of receiving ministers from the other tradition, for example.

The GACEIR believes that it must find ways to live constructively with the tension between the academic (dialogues resulting in significant agreements) and the practical (resources, ecumenical liaisons, communication networks, and ecumenical formation). While different seasons of church's life will require different emphases, GACEIR wants to lift up *both* the academic work of ecumenical engagement and the practical work of implementation for the church as a whole, recognizing that both are critical components of the church's ecumenical life and witness.

### 2. *Increased Programmatic Focus*

Given the staff reductions within the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) related to ecumenical programmatic work in recent years, GACEIR sees the need to move more proactively into developing a programmatic thrust and educational resources that were once the sole purview of the GAMC. These include study resources related to our church's conciliar relationships and full communion agreements, and increased attention to the need for ecumenical formation throughout the denomination. Appropriate faculty at PC(USA) seminaries and others should be brought into this process. The Lund Principle provides a helpful framework as GACEIR pursues a more programmatic focus.

### 3. *Strengthening Ecumenical Reception at the Local Level*

While the PC(USA) has invested considerable resources over the last several decades to participate bilateral and multilateral dialogues, some of which have led to full communion agreements, less effort has been invested in implementing the results of these agreements at the local level. Cutbacks in staff, along with the lack of an overarching strategy for implementation, have contributed to this disparity.

As GACEIR develops an implementation strategy for ecumenical reception, in partnership with mid councils of the church, keeping the Lund Principle as central to local reception will help assure that the church's ecumenical agreements are fully embraced throughout all levels of the church's life.

As the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) moves into its next season of life within a changing cultural context, the Lund Principle provides both a useful framework and a valuable tool to assist the church in fulfilling its ecumenical vision while dealing with diminishing resources and facing new challenges. Guided by the Lund Principle, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations is committed to this work.

## Item 09-08

[The assembly approved Item 09-08. See pp. 9, 10.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On a Green Church Ecumenical Network.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) requests the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to explore and report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the following:**

- 1. The creation of a network of “Green Churches” seriously concerned with global climate change and its danger to future generations, building upon the Environmental Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and denominational environmental programs, and building also on college and university campus ministries involving Christian students and faculty.**
- 2. The relation of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC) and Church World Service in environmental ministry and theology, in light of the administrative separation of these two bodies, once united in witness and mission.**
- 3. The appeal of such direct new names as “Green Church” for young people in U.S. culture.**

### *Rationale*

The next church needs to be a green church. The ecumenical movement can become a movement again by uniting new generations with agencies that continue to have strength, infrastructure, and wisdom for social transformation guided by the Gospel of Christ. The Environmental Justice Work of the NCCC is among its strongest programs. The General Assembly should contribute interchurch vision to the whole church, also inviting and learning from local and regional efforts.

Ward Holder, Presbytery of Boston  
Jeanie Shaw, Presbytery of Sacramento

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-08**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness counsels the following considerations:

This resolution has two foci. It requests the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to explore the creation of a network of green churches and, secondly, to explore the relations of the NCCC and CWS environmental ministries subsequent to administrative separation of the two groups.

The effort to promote green churches fits well within current PC(USA) policy as stated in *The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming*. The PC(USA) Environmental Ministries program has established a network of Earth Care Congregations and the creation of this network will complement this existing work.

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### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 09-08**

*Comment on Item 09-08—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The PC(USA) Environmental Ministries program, which participates actively in the Eco-Justice Working Group of the NCCC, currently provides an active certification program for “Earth Care Congregations” in the PC(USA). It also regularly distributes NCCC and Church World Service (CWS) resources to Presbyterian congregations as appropriate. Through PC(USA) representation at the NCCC Eco-Justice Working Group, the PC(USA) is in conversation with the environmentally focused programs in the other NCCC-member communions and their green church certification programs.

The PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation (<http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>) certification program, begun in 2010, supports holistic environmental justice concerns, including education and action on climate change. The currently certified 95 Earth Care Congregations holistically integrate caring for God’s creation throughout the life of their congregation—in worship, education, facilities, and outreach. The Environmental Ministries program will continue to work with the NCCC, Church World Service, and other ecumenical partners to support local congregations, to engage youth and young adults, and to have a strong ecumenical presence and unified voice in addressing climate change and other environmental issues.

## Item 09-09

[The assembly received Item 09-09. See pp. 9, 10.]

*2008 Referral: Item 07-04. Recommendation 2.b. Instructing the OGA and GAMC to Convene Tables to Create Processes and Procedures for the Orderly Exchange of Ministers and the Orderly Transfer of Churches—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 513).*

The Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations received the report as written. The task was completed in December 2011.

*Response:* In response to this referral, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations appointed an implementation team to meet with the representatives from the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad (KPCA). The joint implementation team, upon the advice and counsel of Vocation staff of the PC(USA), adapted the existing Orderly Exchange of Ministers document currently developed under the Lutheran Reformed Formula of Agreement. Meetings were also held with the Board of Pensions and the KPCA general secretary to address issues related to participation in the Board of Pensions. Upon the advice and counsel of the Constitutional Services staff, processes for transfer of churches were developed. The joint implementation committee finalized the orderly exchange processes for ministers and congregations in December 2011, and the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations approved the processes and forwarded to the 220th General Assembly (2012) for information. [For text of the Orderly Exchange of Ministers document, see 01-02-gaceir-orderly-exchange-of-ministers.pdf.]

## Item 09-Info

*Christians and Jews, People Of God: A Contribution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the Interfaith Conversation—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Office of Theology and Worship).*

In an effort to fulfill the mandate of the 216th General Assembly (2004) to “reexamine and strengthen the relationship between Christians and Jews and the implications of this relationship for our evangelism and new church development,” the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Office of Theology and Worship, offer this draft of “Christians and Jews, People of God: A Contribution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the Interfaith Conversation” to the church for comment. Significant revisions have already been made in accordance with the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) that directed the GAMC to consult more widely with the church. Additional revisions based on the churchwide comment process will be considered before the document is presented for final approval to the 221st General Assembly (2014). Send comments to [taw@pcusa.org](mailto:taw@pcusa.org).

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, PEOPLE OF GOD,  
A Contribution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the Interfaith Conversation

### PREFACE

*The Origin of this Document: the General Assembly Directive, the Abiding Task*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) directed the Office of Theology and Worship, the Office of Interfaith Relations, and the Office of Evangelism to “reexamine and strengthen the relationship between Christians and Jews and the implications of this relationship for our evangelism and new church development.” This directive was a step in the PC(USA)’s continuing response to the 211th General Assembly’s (1999) mandate to guide the church in “bearing witness to Jesus Christ in a pluralistic age.”

The 2004 General Assembly action was prompted in large part by a new church development by a “messianic Jewish” congregation. The Assembly also took actions regarding the state of Israel. For our Jewish sisters and brothers these developments called into question the PC(USA)’s continued commitment to the views established in “A Theological Understanding of the Relationship between Christians and Jews,” views they had received with appreciation.

In partial response to the General Assembly’s mandate, staff from the offices of Theology and Worship, Interfaith Relations, and Evangelism met eight times with representatives of the National Council of Synagogues. These conversations led to four consultations that included rabbis from the Conservative, Reform, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist branches of Judaism, and Presbyterian pastors, theologians, and governing body staffs. Through these consultations it was found that three particular topics needed further theological clarification: God’s covenant with the Jews and the relationship of Christianity to that covenant, the land, and evangelism. Since 2010, the Office of Theology and Worship has consulted with Christians in Middle East countries, with the Presbyterian Middle East Caucus, the Israel-Palestine Mission Network of the PC(USA), and others.

The relationship of Christianity to Judaism, and thus of Christians to Jews, is directly relevant to every Christian. This is true both for Christians who live in the presence of Jews, and for those who do not. To understand Christian faith requires understanding the relationship of Christianity and Judaism.

Recognizing the importance and complexity of Christianity's relationship with Judaism, the 199th General Assembly, (1987), approved the document, "A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews."<sup>i</sup> This document was approved as "a pastoral teaching document to provide a basis for continuing discussion within the Presbyterian community and to offer guidance for occasions in which Presbyterians and Jews converse, cooperate, and enter into dialogue." This document was an important milestone in the PC(USA)'s exploration of its relationship with Judaism and Jews.

A string of significant documents published since the 1987 PC(USA) report bear witness to Christian grappling with Christianity's relationship with Judaism.<sup>ii</sup> Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Presbyterians have shared in continuing engagement with Judaism and Jews. The years since publication of the 1987 document have seen an increase in the number of PC(USA) presbyteries, congregations, and ministers who have developed close ties with Jewish organizations, synagogues, and rabbis. The Christian need to understand Christianity's unique relationship with Judaism is an abiding need. This document seeks to contribute to that understanding.

This document, "Christians and Jews: People of God" is not meant to replace "A Theological Understanding of the Relationship between Christians and Jews." The 1987 study paper represented a significant advance in Christian theological understanding and in Presbyterian-Jewish relations. Its "Affirmations and Explications" remain a valuable resource for discussion within the church. The present paper is offered by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), reflecting its own North American context, to further the conversation of the theological understanding of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. As such, it stands alongside other such efforts in the United States, in the Middle East, and across the world as an additional resource for discussion in the church and for conversations between Christians and Jews.

### *Definitions*

As "A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews" notes, "The defining of terms on this subject is complex but unavoidable." It goes on to offer a few definitions, which will be followed in this paper as well.

We understand "Judaism" to be the religion of the Jews. It is practiced by many today and extends back into the period of the Hebrew Scriptures. Judaism of late antiquity gave rise to that form of Judaism that has been developing since the first century, known as "Rabbinic Judaism." [Judaism of late antiquity] gave rise to early Christianity as well. Both Christianity and Judaism claim relationship with the ancient people Israel; the use of the term "Israel" in this study is restricted to its ancient reference. When referring to the contemporary State of Israel this document will use "State of Israel." We understand "Jews" to include those persons whose self-understanding is that they are descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, and those converted into the Jewish community. We recognize that Jews are varied in the observance of their religion, and that there are many Jews who do not practice Judaism at all.

There is one exception to these definitions. In the New Testament, references to "Israel" often do not mean only an ancient group of people. They mean the descendants of Jacob running across history, to this day, and into the future. For example, Ephesians 2:12 speaks of gentile Christians as once being "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." "Israel" in this verse is not limited to an ancient Israel. Within this paper, when quoting from Scripture, "Israel" may refer to something more than the ancient group. In such cases this paper will not change the wording to fit its definitions.

### *The Complicating Factor of Middle East Politics*

All theological work is done contextually. Part of the context of contemporary interfaith theological dialogue between Christians and Jews is the continuing thorny politics of the state of Israel and Palestine. This paper is consistent with the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples have the right to secure homelands in which to live responsibly and pursue their national, religious, and cultural aspirations. Policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict make clear that an end to all forms of violence, together with the establishment of two viable states through a negotiated resolution of this conflict, are desperately needed for peace, security and justice for both peoples. This policy has been affirmed over and over again by PC(USA) General Assemblies, most recently through the approval of "Breaking Down the Walls" at the 219th General Assembly (2010).<sup>iii</sup>

## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

"... to share the rich root of the olive tree ..." (Rom. 11:17).

The relationship between Christianity and Judaism, and therefore between Christians and Jews, is unique. It is unlike the relationship of Christianity to any other religion.<sup>iv</sup>

The relationship between Christians and Jews is not simply a particular instance of "interfaith relations." The relationship between Christianity and Judaism is unique, foundational, and enduring. The New Testament bears consistent witness to

this relationship—the mercy of God in Jesus Christ embraces both Jew and Gentile; it does not abandon Jews in favor of Gentiles or forsake Jews in favor of the church. Supersessionism, the belief that God’s covenant with the church has replaced God’s covenant with Jews, and that the church has supplanted the Jewish people, is contrary to the core witness of the New Testament and is not supported by the mainstream of the Reformed tradition.

Unfavorable New Testament references to “the Jews” do not refer to all Jews of the first century, and certainly not of the twenty-first. The fact that many first century Jews and most Jews since then have not placed faith in Jesus as God’s Messiah troubles some Christians, but it does not cancel God’s continuing fidelity to his people Israel. “Has God rejected his people?” asks Paul; “Have they stumbled so as to fall?” His answer is clear: “By no means!” (Rom. 11:1, 11).

When Paul draws the differences between Judaism and Christianity, Jews and Christians most starkly, he proclaims God’s enduring faithfulness to Jews: “As regards the gospel they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; for the gifts [of God] and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:28–29). Because God remains true to Jews, Christians have confidence that God will remain true to us. Karl Barth asks, “Do you believe that it lies with us to exclude the Jew from this faithfulness of God? Do you really believe that we can and may deny him this?”<sup>vi</sup> If God is not faithful in keeping covenant with the Jews, then neither can God be trusted to keep covenant with Christians.

Nor can human faithlessness destroy God’s covenant. This is a central affirmation of our Reformed tradition: God’s sovereign grace is never dependent on human faithfulness. “And so, as we confess that God the Father created us when we were ... enemies to him, so also do we confess that the Holy Ghost does sanctify and regenerate us, *without respect to any merit proceeding from us, be it before or be it after our regeneration.*”<sup>vi</sup> Our Reformed tradition stands here with both the Old Testament and the New.<sup>vii</sup>

The relationship of Christianity to the Judaism of Jesus’ day, of Christians to Jews is not that of a replacement, but of “a wild olive shoot” grafted into “the rich root of the olive tree” (Rom. 11:17). While the New Testament contains numerous references to God’s “new covenant” in Christ, these cannot be taken to mean that “new” cancels God’s previous covenants. Just as the covenant at Sinai did not dissolve the covenant with Abraham, so the new covenant sealed in Christ’s blood “does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise” (Gal. 3:17). Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity are best understood as two children of the Second Temple Judaism practiced in the time of Jesus.

In the centuries of European experience from which the PC(USA) descended, the way that Christians relate to Jews has been a barometer of the church’s spiritual health. Too often, across the history of the church, Christians have carried out persecution and pogroms, forced “conversions,” ghettos, multiple forms of discrimination, and subtle modes of contempt—indications that Christians have again become “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise” (Eph. 2:12), thus contradicting the redeeming work of Christ. Often, these attitudes and events have resulted from uninformed stereotypes of Jews and Judaism. Genuine knowledge is essential, not only for the sake of Jews, but also because Christians can fully understand who we are as people of faith only when we understand who Jews are as people of faith. Understanding who Jews *were* in biblical times is insufficient; we must recover in our time the good news that Christ “has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Eph. 2:14).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to explore more deeply what it means to affirm that Christians and Jews *now* worship and serve the same God, and how this differentiates Christian-Jewish relations from Christian relationships with adherents of other religions.

“... and has remembered his holy covenant ...” (Lk. 1:72).

The Bible is made up of two Testaments. The Old Testament is not replaced by the New Testament. The books of the Old Testament are Scripture for Judaism. The two Testaments stand together for Christians. Christians and Jews share these biblical books, collected in different orderings in the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Tanakh.

John Calvin, devoting an entire chapter of the *Institutes* to an explication of “The Similarity of the Old and New Testaments,” declares that “The covenant made with all the patriarchs is so much like ours in substance and reality that the two are actually one and the same.”<sup>viii</sup> Clearly, there are differences in “the mode of dispensation” between the two, so that Calvin readily acknowledges that there are differences between the Old and New Testaments. “I freely admit the differences in Scripture, to which attention is called,” says Calvin, “but in such a way as not to detract from its established unity.”<sup>ix</sup>

Christian faith is firmly grounded in the Old Testament, for Christian faith affirms that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob *is* the one triune God. Superficial contrasts between “the wrathful God of the Old Testament” and “the loving God of the New Testament” are not only inaccurate readings of both Old and New Testaments, but also denials of the very foundations of Christian faith.

One of the earliest challenges faced by the Christian church came from Marcion’s attempt to detach Christianity from its Jewish heritage. He set out to remove all references to the Old Testament from Christian writings: only an edited version of Luke’s Gospel and edited versions of Paul’s letters remained once Marcion had excised all favorable mention of Israel, the

law, and the justice of God. The church rejected Marcion's assertion that the God who "has spoken to us by a Son" is not the same God who spoke "in many and various ways by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1–2). The early church preserved the truth of the gospel, yet both mild and virulent versions of Marcion's heresy have endured.

Some Christian treatments of Scripture can reduce the Old Testament to a narrative account of what people used to believe long ago and far away. For Christians, the Old Testament is more than a record of ancient Israel's faith; it is *Christian Scripture*. Jesus proclaimed, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Mt. 5:17).<sup>x</sup> Similarly, Paul says that "Christ is the *telos* of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes [*telos*—"end"—not as "termination" of the law, but as the law's "goal, purpose"].

Well-intentioned replacement of the terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" by "Hebrew Bible" and "Early Christian Writings" can have unintended yet unfortunate effects. They combine to imply that the "Hebrew Bible" is "*their* Bible," not Christian Scripture, and that "Christian Writings" are confined to the New Testament. Using the common term "testament" for both indicates the integral, inseparable connection between the two. "Old" and "New" may be retained because the former does not mean outdated or inferior and the latter does not imply the replacement of the former. ("Older and Newer Testaments" or "First and Second Testaments" are alternatives that also convey this connection.)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to explore more deeply the reality that Christians and Jews share Scripture. At the same time, the church is called to recover the Old Testament as *Christian Scripture*, reading the Old Testament with and through the New Testament.

"... and has broken down the dividing wall [of] hostility ..." (Eph. 2:14).

Christian teaching of hostility and contempt for Jews has blighted the history of the church. It has been a mark of failure to understand and live the Christian faith.

Many Christians mistakenly equate contemporary Jews with New Testament Pharisees, and the current state and people of Israel with Old Testament Israel. There is a sense in which the latter is an understandable mistake, for modern Middle Eastern cities and states often bear the same names as they did in the past—e.g., Egypt, Syria, Jerusalem, and Israel. However, biblical realities should not be read into present-day political situations, nor should modern political situations be read into biblical narratives or accounts of the gospel. Twenty-first century Christians do not live with Egyptians under the Pharaohs, Assyrian conquerors, Babylonian captors, David's Jerusalem, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah the Roman Empire, or religious rule by scribes and Pharisees. Christians live now with the modern heirs of those peoples, shaped by all of the intervening events and forces of history. Today's Judaism is not the ancient Judaism that we see in the Bible, but Rabbinic Judaism. It is a faith that is rooted in Scripture, but one, like our own, that has been shaped by centuries of faithful interpretation, change, and renewal. Today's Jews must be understood in relation to their long history since the time of Jesus, and in light of the faith, ethics and practice that marks their lives today.

The survival of the Jewish people, in spite of hostility, exile, diaspora, and holocaust, is theologically significant for Christian faith. Karl Barth relates the story about Frederick the Great asking his personal physician for a single proof of the existence of God. The physician replied, "Your Majesty, the Jews!" Barth comments that, "in the person of the Jew there stands a witness before our eyes, the witness of God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and in that with us all."<sup>xi</sup> It is a witness to the faithfulness of God, and the faithfulness of the Jewish people. The survival of the Jews comes in spite of suppression, separation, and persecution, most lamentably by Christians. Christian teaching of contempt for Jews and the subsequent history of ghettos, pogroms, and even holocaust is not simply a distant memory. Anti-Semitism is a continuing reality throughout the world, including within the Christian church.

The New Testament does not merely encourage toleration of the Jews. The New Testament surprise is not that Jews are encompassed within the grace of God. No, the New Testament surprise is that God's mercy *extends beyond Jews to include the Gentiles*. It is the people of the other nations, the "Gentiles" (the overwhelming majority of Christians) who were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise." It is they who have been brought near by the cross of Christ (Eph. 2:12–13) so that "there is no longer Jew or Greek ... for all ... are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The good news of the New Testament is not confined to the first century; its proclamation has enduring significance. Paul's affirmation that God has not rejected his people Israel, that the Jews have not stumbled so as to fall, and his declaration that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26) is as true today as Paul's proclamation of our salvation in Christ.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to examine all aspects of its life: its interpretation of Scripture, its theology, its educational materials, and its public policy, in order to avoid explicit or implicit teaching of contempt for Judaism and Jews. Continuing conversation with Jews should include faithful exploration of inaccurate and offensive characterizations of Jews and Judaism.

#### THE LAND

"... the LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land ...'" (Gen. 12:7).

*Theological Reflection on God, Peoples, Land: Necessary, Complex*

As the 1987 statement reminded the church, a faithful effort to understand the relationship of Christianity to Judaism, and of Christians with Jews, “cannot avoid the reality of the promise of land.”

Addressing this issue is extremely difficult today. It is difficult, first, because of the unresolved conflict between the State of Israel and Palestinians. Second, it is difficult because theological assertions about the land figure centrally in political debates and in justifying state policies. The long Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and the suffering of the Palestinian people has sometimes been justified on the basis of the biblical promise. A minority of Jews, particularly in the settlers’ movement, and a minority of Christians, particularly Christian Zionists<sup>xiii</sup> and some who hold to dispensationalist theologies, have misappropriated the biblical promise, employing it as a political instrument. Moreover, some see any discussion of the issue of land as *de facto* part of a position statement on the Middle East, or on Israeli-Palestinian peace. As the 1987 statement reminded the church, “The question with which we must wrestle is how this promise is to be understood in the light of the existence of the modern political state of Israel. ... The State of Israel is a geopolitical entity and is not to be validated theologically.”

Related to these positions, and yet distinct from them, there is theological work to be done, seeking to understand the God who made the promise of land, and the relationship of God and God’s promise to Christianity and Judaism today. It remains to explore the biblical promise of land, and how it can be understood in the present context of the Christian-Jewish interfaith relationship.

As Christians read and interpret Scripture, the concrete particularity of the biblical promise of land has often proved to be a stumbling block, in much the same way that the particularity of the incarnation and crucifixion of Jesus Christ have been a stumbling block (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18–25). God acts in and through the concrete realities of Jesus’ life and passion. In the same way, the Bible witnesses to God’s election of one people out of many, and God’s promise to one person, Abraham. It is not possible to deny the particularity of God’s gift of a specific land to the people of God’s covenant. Faced with this gift and its concrete particularity, Christians need to ask what this gift means for *all* the people of the world, *and* for the people of that particular place, both Israelis and Palestinians, at this time in history.

*Land: A Place to Know the Abiding Presence of The Lord*

In the biblical account, land is given by God to the people Israel. This land was promised to the descendants of Abraham and Sarah.<sup>xiii</sup> This land was to be the place in which God’s people were to keep God’s covenant, live according to God’s will, and be a light to the nations. “If you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:5–6).

In the biblical account, the land is integral to the responsibility of the ancient people Israel. The land is given not just as a place to live, but primarily as the place in which the people Israel can live out the covenant and carry out God’s commandments. The concrete gift of land, as presented in the biblical text, comes less with rights than with distinctive responsibilities. The gift of the land is conditional upon the following of God’s way. The Scriptures warn repeatedly that failure to do so will result in God casting the people out of the land (cf. Lev. 20:22; Deut. 8: 11–20, 30: 15–18, etc.).

The promised gift of land abides even through the Babylonian exile, when the people are removed from the territory of ancient Israel as an act of God’s judgment on the people’s failure to be faithful to God. Thus the Scriptures also speak of this land in proclaiming the return of God’s people from exile; the land is central to the redemption of God’s people. God found this particular people “in a desert land, in a howling wilderness” (Deut. 32:10), and appointed them to be the Lord’s people. God gives this particular land to them, in which they are to fulfill the divine will, in order to establish the Sovereignty of God on earth.

Central to the meaning of land—before, during, and after the exile—is that it is a place to know the abiding presence of the Lord. It is a place in which concretely to experience God’s presence. In the words of Christian biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann,

The land for which Israel yearns and which it remembers is never unclaimed space but always *a place with Yahweh*, a place well filled with memories of life with him and promise from him and vows to him. It is land that provides the central assurance to Israel of its historicity, that it will be and always must be concerned with actual rootage in a place which is a repository for commitment and therefore identity.<sup>xiv</sup>

*The Reformed Tradition Affirms: God, Peoples, Lands*

There is a strong Christian tradition that has understood God’s gift of land in more spiritual or metaphorical terms. They assert that with the coming of the new covenant, God is no longer concerned with physical land, but with the human heart, and not solely with one particular people, but instead with all of humankind. God’s gift of this particular land to this particular people is seen by these interpreters as a demonstration of God’s gift of the potential for life, for fruitfulness, and for the pursuit of holiness and justice to all people, in all places.

Reformed and Presbyterian interpreters have usually understood the promise of “land” primarily as an earthly and historical reality. The foundational events of Christian faith also took place in this land; it is here that the Word became flesh in Jesus of Nazareth, a Jew who lived in this same land, then under Roman occupation. History and the concrete material world are foundational to our understanding of God’s work of salvation. In biblical perspective, life in relation with God always involves actual human communities in concrete places, struggling to live within God’s kingdom.

Both the Old and New Testaments are clear: God alone owns the land; all others are stewards acting on God’s behalf. “The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). The earth is God’s creation, and God alone is holy and to be worshipped. Other texts go on to suggest that “in the end” God will create a “new heaven” and a “new earth,” in order to accomplish God’s own intentions (Isa.65:17; 66:22; Rev. 21:1–5). No one but God has everlasting ownership of land on this earth, and because God owns the land, no one has ever been *more* than caretakers of the land of Israel, or of any other land. At the same time, God’s people, whether we mean the particular Jewish people or are speaking more universally, are *not less* than stewards. God has given the land as a trust for safekeeping, a place for responsibility, and an arena in which to deal justly with one another and with the land (Ex. 19:6).

“... to provide for those who mourn in Zion ... (Isa. 61:3).

#### *God, Peoples, Land, and the Present*

The connection between the Jewish people and the particular land of Israel has been expressed in every generation of Jews, in liturgy and poetry, in daily prayers and charitable giving, and in periodic movements to return. Their connection with this land has been, and remains, a part of Jewish self-understanding, from antiquity through today. Though there are Jews who do not find this connection to either the biblical land or the modern state essential to their self-understanding, for the great majority of Jews the biblical land, the State of Israel, and Jewish identity are inextricably intertwined. At the same time, there are others whose identity is inextricably intertwined with this particular land: the Palestinians who have raised families, farmed crops, and lived out their hopes and dreams on this land for centuries.

In order to understand contemporary Jewish identity theologically in interfaith relationship, one must understand this ongoing relationship between Jewish peoplehood and land. To make an effort for understanding does not necessarily imply agreement or support.

Most Jews understand that the land of biblical Israel and the modern State of Israel are two distinct realities: the state is a contemporary secular and political entity, whereas the land is the geographic place promised and given by God in the Torah, the boundaries of which are not exactly defined. Nevertheless, the two are closely related elements of Jewish peoplehood.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms the ongoing covenantal relationship between God and the Jewish people, and the continuing commitment of Jewish men and women to live out God’s will in daily life, for the sake of fulfilling God’s purpose for all humanity. Yet it is difficult for Christians to understand how *a modern state* can play a role for Jews, similar to the role of *the ancient land*, in the fulfillment of this covenant. In light of Christian experience through time, it is difficult for us to accord a contemporary state spiritual or religious significance.

While we affirm that God’s gift of land was, like the incarnation, particular and concrete, we also give thanks to God as the giver of the potential for life, fruitfulness and justice to all of humanity in all lands. God’s gift of this particular land, and the potential and responsibility that goes with that gift, *pertains both to the Jews and to the Palestinian people who live along side each other* in what was the ancient, biblical land of promise. Both peoples have claims on the same land. Jews and Palestinians give voice to incompatible historical narratives and political claims, each assumed to be “correct” by its narrators. What is not often clearly said in the midst of the conflict is that both people, in different ways, are recipients of God’s gift and responsibility. *The tradition of God’s gift of land in the biblical account does not resolve this conflict, or provide any basis by which to settle modern territorial disputes.* Neither the Israeli state nor the Palestinian authorities has a divine right to the land.

#### *Christian Engagement with the Land: Theological Errors to Avoid*

A wide-spread, traditional interpretation of Scripture has argued that, because the Jews rejected Jesus, God rejected the Jews, put the church in the place of the Jewish people as God’s chosen ones, and cast them out of the land. This is Supersessionism, the teaching that Christians have superseded Jews, that Christianity has taken the place of Judaism in God’s plan and favor. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has clearly rejected this supersessionist teaching, affirming that “the church, elected in Jesus Christ, has been engrafted into the people of God, established by the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, Christians have not replaced Jews.”<sup>xv</sup>

A minority of modern Christian interpreters attributes the creation of the modern State of Israel directly to God, and sees the ingathering of Jews to that state as a fulfillment of prophecy, or as the beginning of the end times. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has rejected such dispensationalist biblical interpretations, which purport to discern the time and order of God’s future activity.<sup>xvi</sup> Presbyterians are also wary of attributing too much theological significance to a state, rejecting with



Barmen “the false doctrine, as though the state, over and beyond its special commission, should and could become the single and totalitarian order of human life, thus fulfilling the church’s vocation as well.”<sup>svii</sup>

Presbyterian commitments to justice and peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike can only stand if we base these commitments on strong support for justice for all people. This means that, in our work for Israeli-Palestinian peace, we must be sure to seek justice and security for both peoples. We must also reject and not make use of the history of Christian anti-Judaism and all of the stereotypes and prejudices that accompany it. Likewise, we must reject and not make use of Arab or Palestinians stereotypes and prejudice.

Whenever our critique of the Israeli-Palestinian situation employs stereotypes, we cloud complicated issues with the rhetoric of ignorance, subliminal prejudices, or the language of hate. Such sources and ideas fail to tell the truth. Such failure to tell the truth undermines the church’s advocacy for peace and justice.

Likewise, characterizations of Zionism that distort that movement can all too easily demonize Jews. The origins, development, and practices of Zionism and its relationship to the realities of the Israeli-Palestinian situation are very complex. Characterizations of Zionism that distort that movement can all too easily demonize Jews. Many Israelis working passionately for peace in the Middle East are motivated by forms of Zionism. When Zionism is presented as monolithic or univocal, or solely as an extension of European colonialism and a result of anti-Semitism, the Zionist movement’s history, internal debates, and ethical concerns are distorted.

*Critique of the state of Israel and its policies is certainly legitimate and is not, in itself, anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic.* It is common among Jews and Christians; Israelis, Palestinians and Americans. However, critique by Christians must take care that the tone of such criticism not become a denunciation of Judaism or the Jewish people. Polemic that identifies Israeli officials with Jewish authorities in the time of Jesus is especially problematic, and clouds an accurate understanding of the current situation. In addition, citizens in democracies such as the State of Israel and the United States are responsible before God for the actions of their governments. The citizens of the State of Israel, not the Jewish people as a whole, are responsible for the conduct of Israeli state policy.

The Exodus narrative is a story of God’s liberation for all oppressed people and is the central narrative of salvation in the Old Testament. Some Christians reflect on their experience as an oppressed people and their liberation in light of the experience of ancient Israel. Broad theological use of the Exodus narrative does not abrogate its continuing centrality in the faith and self-understanding of the Jewish people. The biblical stories of liberation, like those of God’s gift of land, are at one and the same time particular narratives regarding God’s relationship with the Jewish people, and also descriptions of God’s intention to free and provide a home for all peoples. In claiming the Exodus story, Christians should avoid use of the Exodus story that identifies Jews in general as the oppressors in that narrative.

Further, responsible theological critique of state policies should not characterize a whole people as oppressors or “Christ-killers.” Such a characterization of the situation can easily sound like an echo of the classic anti-Jewish accusation that all Jews everywhere are guilty of killing Christ. For Jews this is terrifying, because the narrative of the passion and crucifixion has been used as a theological basis for the ghettoization, denigration, and killing of Jews for nearly twenty centuries. At the same time, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must remain attentive to Palestinian and other Middle East Christians within its own life as well as in the Middle East as they speak theologically about what is happening to them.

#### *God, Peoples, Land, the Present: Living With Our Neighbors*

Clearly, the relationships of Presbyterians (or any Christians) and Jews should neither depend on, nor dictate, particular positions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian situation or its resolution. Our relationships with Jewish neighbors do not necessitate approval of Israeli state policy. Speaking out respectfully against actions of Israeli authorities and groups, or of Palestinian entities, is to be expected among Christians and Jews. Disagreements about the dynamics and possible solutions of the Israeli-Palestinian situation are to be expected as well. Jews and Presbyterians may be surprised by the similarity of their critiques of the State of Israel’s or Palestinians actions as well as by their shared hopes for the aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis alike.

As PC(USA) Christians live in relationship with Jews, questions regarding our understandings of land, and of the politics of the Israeli-Palestinian situation will be central. In order to build relationships of respect and honest understanding with our Jewish neighbors, Presbyterians must be willing and prepared to talk with them about our concerns and questions regarding the State of Israel, its relations with Palestinians and other neighbors, and the land. Presbyterians must also be willing to listen to their expressions of attachment to Israel (both the land and the modern state), their understanding of the biblical promise of land, and the ways that the State of Israel speaks to them of responsibility, justice, and hope.

#### EVANGELISM

“... the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord ... calls to him ...” (Acts 2:39).

The Church is called to tell all people everywhere the good news of salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In the midst of a world of death and decay, the Church witnesses to the reality of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ through its proclamation of the gospel and the character of its transformed life. The Church's incarnational witness has both personal and social implications. The community of faith declares the mighty acts of God, pointing others to Christ rather than to itself. "Evangelism is joyfully sharing the good news of the sovereign love of God and calling all people to repentance, to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, to active membership in the church, and to obedient service in the world."<sup>xviii</sup>

The church's evangelistic task is to be witnesses, teachers, practitioners, and sharers, who engage in the struggles of life and extend to others the invitation to become Christ's disciples. Unfortunately, the history of Christian mission includes some examples of evangelization carried out with little regard for the people to whom the gospel was proclaimed, in ways that have been aggressive, disrespectful, and damaging. Even so, Christian proclamation of the gospel has attempted to be faithful to "the Great Commission" that we follow Jesus into all the world, inviting all people everywhere to become Christ's faithful disciples.

In recent decades, Presbyterians have become increasingly aware of two new challenges to evangelism: the secularization of the culture and the religiously plural character of American society. North America is a mission field, and churches can no longer depend on the natural entrance of people into the community of Christian faith. These realities confront the church with new questions about the appropriate character and means of Christian proclamation.

How should the gospel be shared with Jews? The New Testament makes it clear that Jews are not empty vessels, without God, who must be filled with Christianity in order to be restored to divine favor. "I ask then, has God rejected his people? By no means! ... So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! ... As regards election they are beloved ... that they too may now receive mercy" (Rom. 11:1, 11, 28, 31). With Paul, we affirm these things, but we also join our voices to Paul's to affirm that these things are a mystery, and to confess, "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ... For from him and through him and to him are all things" (Rom. 11:33, 36).

God remains faithful to the Jews; God remains faithful to Christians. As a people, Jews remain faithful to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the Church remain faithful to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whom we know in Emmanuel, Jesus Christ. As two peoples who are known and loved by God and who know and love the one God, Christians and Jews are therefore called to be faithful to one another as children of the covenant.

One mark of Christian fidelity to Jews is honest sharing of the faith that is in us. Christians bear witness to Christ because brothers and sisters who live together in integrity do not withhold their deepest convictions from one another. Jews and Christians are called to live in open relationships of mutual witness in which beliefs and hopes are shared in love. Christians and Jews speak to one another, listen to one another, and learn from one another. And together, Jews and Christians bear witness to the world, showing in word and deed the faithfulness of the one God.

Mutual witness goes beyond formal dialogue to patterns of shared life in which conversation, cooperation, and collaboration develop between churches and synagogues, rabbis and ministers, individual Christians and Jews. It includes mutual disclosure of the ways God is known in the lives of both peoples, respectful listening to and learning from one another. It embraces both mutual affirmation and, when necessary, mutual questioning and correction.

While Christian witness should extend to all peoples, it should not specifically target Jews for pointed and deceptive strategies of proselytism. Especially to be avoided are attempts to present Christian faith in Jewish guise, duplicating Jewish liturgies and practices while avoiding or marginalizing distinctively Christian sacraments and symbols. Faithful, authentic witness to the gospel must always be both truthful and modest. Christian love can never be a Trojan horse for aggressive proselytism, and words of Christian proclamation cannot be used as weapons to coerce conversion. With Jews and all other people, Christians should always be prepared to give "an accounting for the hope that is in [us]; yet do it with gentleness and reverence" (1 Pet. 3:15, 16).

Yet persons who come to Christian faith from Jewish backgrounds must not be asked to deny their Jewish heritage, even though from a Jewish perspective they are no longer religiously Jewish. In the first century of the church, it became clear that Gentiles did not have to become Jews in order to become Christians. It would also be a denial of the gospel if in the twenty-first century, Jews had to become Gentiles in order to become Christians. Yet Christian communities and all who confess faith in Christ should make clear the Lord to whom they belong, and publicly profess their Christian faith in work, liturgy, and life. Because Jews find it difficult to understand how Christian converts from Judaism continue to claim their Jewish heritage, Christians and Jews can engage in careful conversation in order to explore their incommensurate understandings of this matter.

Some Christians and Jews find themselves in "interreligious marriages." For a long time the history of Jewish-Christian separation, suspicion, and antagonism made it difficult for both Jewish and Christian partners, as well as their families and

religious communities, to discover how each partner can live out their faith with integrity. Now intermarriage between Jews and Christians is increasingly common. Too often, the difficulties are such that both partners drift into “no religion.” The birth of children presents parents with the dilemma of how they can share religious faith within the family. We encourage families to work with minister and rabbi so that the children are not deprived of any engagement with Judaism or Christianity or fall into an easy syncretism. “Interreligious marriages” pose challenges to synagogues and churches, and especially to Christian and Jewish spouses and their families. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should see this complex matter as an occasion for intensive dialogue with the Jewish community.

#### PARTNERS IN HOPE

“I am about to do a new thing . . . do you not perceive it?” (Isa. 43:19).

The relationship between Christianity and Judaism, Christians and Jews is not simply a concept. Theological understanding is essential, but theology is never mere theory, abstracted from life. Paul’s letter to the Romans is not an academic essay, coolly considering the theological question of Jews who have not professed faith in Jesus as Messiah and Lord. Paul grapples with this matter that touches him personally and deeply:

I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 9:2–5)

Christians are called to know Jewish brothers and sisters, to listen and learn from them in the sharing of faith and faithfulness, and to give thanks for their living testimony to the enduring fulfillment of God’s gracious promises. In our worship and personal prayers we can join voices throughout the church, praying . . .

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
 Father of us all, whose Son Jesus was born a Jew,  
 was circumcised, and was dedicated in the Temple:  
 thank you for patriarchs and prophets and righteous rabbis,  
 whose teaching we revere, whose law is our law fulfilled in Jesus Christ.  
 Never let us forget that we, who are your people,  
 are by faith children of Abraham,  
 bound in one family with Jewish brothers and sisters,  
 who also serve your promise;  
 through Jesus Christ, our Master and Messiah. Amen. (*The Worshipbook*)

Almighty God, you are the one true God,  
 and have called forth people of faith  
 in every time and place.  
 Your promises are sure and true.  
 We bless you for your covenant given to Abraham and Sarah,  
 that you keep even now with the Jews.  
 We rejoice that you have brought us into covenant with you  
 by the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
 himself a Jew, nurtured in the faith of Israel.  
 We praise you that you are faithful to covenants made  
 with us and Jewish brothers and sisters,  
 that together we may serve your will,  
 and come at last to your promised peace. Amen. (*Book of Common Worship*)

May Jews and Christians join in voicing our foundational affirmation, “The LORD is our God, the LORD alone,” in mutual witness to the world.

#### Endnotes

- i. [www.PC\(USA\).org/theologyandworship/issues/christiansjews.pdf](http://www.PC(USA).org/theologyandworship/issues/christiansjews.pdf).
- ii. Specifically, “The Willowbank Declaration on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People” (1989), “*Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity*” (2000), “A Sacred Obligation: Rethinking Christian Faith in Relation to Judaism and the Jewish People” (2002), and new attention to the conciliar declaration, *Nostra Aetate* (1965). These and other relevant documents are available in the Office of Theology and Worship Church Issues Series No.7, available at [www.PC\(USA\).org/theologyandworship](http://www.PC(USA).org/theologyandworship).
- iii. [http://www.PC\(USA\).org/resource/breaking-down-walls-approved-219th-ga/](http://www.PC(USA).org/resource/breaking-down-walls-approved-219th-ga/).
- iv. This claim is made because of the unique history between Christianity and Judaism. The General Assembly has called for a similar exploration of the theological relationship between Christianity and Islam. That relationship reflects a different history and is in its begin-

ning stages. Other religions have their own unique relationship to Christianity—each relationship has its own integrity and requires particular attention.

- v. Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (London: SCM Press, 1949) p. 80.
- vi. *The Book of Confessions*, The Scots Confession, 3.12. See also The Heidelberg Catechism, e.g. Question 126 (4.126); The Westminster Confession 6.068–6.073;
- vii. See, e.g. Deut. 4:32–40, and 7:7–11; Rom. 5:6–11, 7:14–25, and 8:26–27.
- viii. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.10.2. (Philadelphia; Westminster Press, 1960) p. 429.
- ix. Calvin, *Institutes* 2.11.1, p. 449.
- x. Matthew 5:17 is the only New Testament text quoted in the Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 116a–b.
- xi. Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, p. 75.
- xii. See PC(USA) statement on Christian Zionism. <http://game.pcusa.org/ministries/global/resolution-confronting-christian-zionism/>.
- xiii. The growing acknowledgement of the Islam as faith that also claims the promise of Abraham raises issues of how to understand this promise to all who claim the promise of Abraham, including Christians.
- xiv. Walter Brueggemann, *The Land*, pp. 5–6. The reference is to biblical theology; Brueggemann has made clear more recently that this does not confer a “supernatural right” to land in the midst of the realities of political life today, and amidst the rights of others. He says, “What [Israel] claimed to be supernatural does not and cannot carry weight in the world of political-military reality.” *The Christian Century*, January 2009.
- xv. “A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews,” Affirmation 2.
- xvi. See the General Assembly Theological Statement, “Eschatology: The Doctrine of Last Things” ((1978) and *Between Millennia: What Presbyterians Believe About the Coming of Christ* (Louisville: Office of Theology and Worship, PC(USA), 2001).
- xvii. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part I, *The Book of Confessions*, 8.23. The Theological Declaration of Barmen was written by a group of church leaders in Germany to help Christians withstand the challenges of the Nazi party and of the so-called “German Christians,” a popular movement that saw no conflict between Christianity and the ideals of Hitler’s National Socialism. It was the response of some Reformed and Lutheran churches in Germany to what they believed was the one most critical issue in their situation in 1933, the relation between loyalty to Jesus Christ and loyalty to the state.
- xviii. *Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 359.

## Item 10-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 10-01 with comment. See pp. 61, 77.]

*On Recognizing Bloomfield College as a Racial Ethnic College—From the Presbytery of Newark.*

The Presbytery of Newark overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the General Assembly Mission Council to do the following:

1. Recognize Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, New Jersey, as a racial ethnic college.
2. Admit Bloomfield College to the list of schools and colleges supported through the Christmas Joy Offering.

**Comment: In Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA, a commitment was made to support those schools and institutions “that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups.” The General Assembly Mission Council was asked to propose ways in which this responsibility could be fulfilled. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) related schools currently listed as racial ethnic include Barber Scotia, Cook Native American Ministries, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Menaul School, Presbyterian Pan American School, and Stillman College. The Christmas Joy Offering was established and has for many years been divided between recognized racial ethnic schools and retired church workers with underfunded pensions.**

**Many colleges and secondary schools within the United States today accept racial ethnic students and some, like Bloomfield, have a majority of racial ethnic students. While Bloomfield’s recruitment and admission policies should be acknowledged and applauded, the specific nurturing and confidence-building environments provided by the currently recognized racial ethnic schools to their students do not appear to have the same curricular focus in schools such as Bloomfield.**

**We advise that the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) be asked to develop a brief strategy report that articulates those elements in racial ethnic schools that have effectively generated new and positive racial ethnic leadership within our church and our communities. Bloomfield College should be encouraged to reapply if they feel they meet the criteria once those attributes have been more clearly defined.**

### *Rationale*

“For nearly 145 years, Bloomfield College has embraced a student body that is mainly composed of racial and ethnic minorities. The college’s students are drawn from the urban centers of northern New Jersey, as well as from surrounding states, and from more than 50 countries. Fifty percent of the college’s students are African American and African Caribbean; 19 percent Hispanic; and 3 percent Asian. Thirty percent of students are over 25 years old; 65 percent are women; and more than 54 percent are the first in their families to attend college. Thirty-six percent of students are from families with an income of less than \$20,000 per year; and 90 percent receive some form of financial aid.

Bloomfield College is chartered by the State of New Jersey and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The nursing program is accredited by the New Jersey Board of Nursing and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The education program is accredited by the national Teacher Education Accreditation Council.

Bloomfield College is ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the seventh most diverse campus among National Liberal Arts Colleges. The college is recognized by the federal government as a predominantly black institution and is one of 200 selected nationally to participate in the federally funded Ronald E. McNair program. The McNair program prepares students from disadvantaged backgrounds for success in doctoral studies. Additionally, Bloomfield College is one of only nine schools in New Jersey that takes part in the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation program, a National Science Foundation funded program that promotes minority advancement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Bloomfield College is the only Presbyterian-related college in the Synod of the Northeast. Founded as a seminary to prepare German immigrants for ministry in the Presbyterian church, Bloomfield College has continued its tradition of access, inclusiveness, and diversity. The college is now a comprehensive liberal arts institution serving more than 2,100 degree-seeking students. In addition, 1,600 students from around the world are instructed through noncredit professional training and continuing education programs. The mission of Bloomfield College is to prepare students to attain academic, personal, and professional excellence in a multicultural and global society.

Bloomfield students acquire a personal education that is both broad based and practical. Community service has been central to a Bloomfield College education since its founding. The required Sophomore Core Program teaches social responsibility through community projects. As a matter of fact, Bloomfield College was recently honored by the Corporation for National Community Service as a leader among institutions of higher education for its support of volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement. The college was also admitted to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

Bloomfield College continues its commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through its partnership with the Synod of the Northeast and through the employment of a college chaplain who is a Presbyterian teaching elder. Additionally, the college partners with the Westminster Foundation Advisory Board, which was established in 1998 to support the work of the chaplain and to strengthen the college's Presbyterian heritage.

The northeastern region of the United States continues to be a center of the country's growing diversity, yet there is currently no Presbyterian-related racial ethnic college from the region included in the church's Christmas Joy Offering. Of the non-racial ethnic Presbyterian-related colleges, Bloomfield College has the largest percentage of minority students. Participation in the Christmas Joy Offering will help Bloomfield College continue to provide a greater access to students who may not have considered, yet deserve, a college education. At the same time, inclusion in the offering will help ensure an ongoing Presbyterian presence in the lives of these gifted children of God.

The potential economic benefit of a college degree is greater now than at any other time in our history. It is critical that the young men and women of New Jersey's urban areas are afforded this opportunity. At Bloomfield College, these students experience an environment that allows them to grow academically, socially, and spiritually while in pursuit of a college degree.

This overture is offered as an expression of the hope that the relationship between college and church shall continue and be strengthened in ways that enhance the unique mission and role of both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Bloomfield College.

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**Concurrence to Item 10-01 from the Presbyteries of Boston, Genesee Valley, New York City, Newton, Palisades and the Twin Cities Area.**

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 10-01 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

In Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the 1983 Articles of Agreement between the PCUS and the UPCUSA, a commitment was made to support those schools and institutions "that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups." The General Assembly Mission Council was asked to propose ways in which this responsibility could be fulfilled. The PC(USA)-related schools currently listed as racial ethnic include Barber Scotia, Cook Native American Ministries, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Menaul School, Presbyterian Pan American School, and Stillman College. The Christmas Joy Offering was established and has for many years been divided between recognized racial ethnic schools and retired church workers with underfunded pensions.

Many colleges and secondary schools within the United States today accept racial ethnic students and some, like Bloomfield, have a majority of racial ethnic students. While Bloomfield's recruitment and admission policies should be acknowledged and applauded, the specific nurturing and confidence-building environments provided by the currently recognized racial ethnic schools to their students do not appear to have the same curricular focus in schools such as Bloomfield.

We advise that the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) be asked to develop a brief strategy report that articulates those elements in racial ethnic schools that have effectively generated new and positive racial ethnic leadership within our church and our communities. Bloomfield College should be encouraged to reapply if they feel they meet the criteria once those attributes have been more clearly defined.

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#### ACREC & ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advise that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 10-01.

#### *Rationale*

The 1983 Articles of Agreement contains the following two sections:

- Section 8.3—"finding ways to assure the funding and operational needs of schools and other ... racial ethnic groups."
- Section 8.4—"... Consistent with the dire need for racial ethnic church leadership, the General Assembly Council shall propose to the General Assembly ways whereby the General Assembly shall be able to fulfill its responsibility for edu-

cation through colleges and secondary schools and for meeting the operational and developmental needs of those Presbyterian schools that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups.”

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) sees that the impact of this action would drastically affect the racial ethnic and disadvantaged communities in the following ways:

- The racial ethnic community would lose the support that it is currently receiving for racial ethnic colleges and schools. These institutions have served functions that in this day and time cannot and are not attractively or successfully addressed in any other ways.
- The racial ethnic colleges and schools are still addressing the needs of first generation college educated students. It is true that mainline colleges and institutions are seeking to reach out but the uniquely supportive and educational needs of some to many racial ethnic students are uniquely met in the intentional framework of the environment of the racial ethnic colleges and institutions.
- Historically, the institutions have played a major role in evangelizing, recruiting, and developing leadership in the racial ethnic community and building racial ethnic churches. We can make direct ties between the decrease in membership in our church and leadership of some racial ethnic groups to the withdrawal and demise of support for racial ethnic schools and institutions that essentially educated Presbyterians as a way of church building.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 10-01

*Comment on Item 10-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) received an overture from the Presbytery of Newark on recognizing Bloomfield College as a racial ethnic college. The assembly referred the action to the General Assembly Mission Council for consideration in a way that would not diminish the funding to other institutions.

The General Assembly Mission Council appointed a Racial Ethnic Education Support Work Group. In its report to the 217th General Assembly (2006) it stated that educational guidelines and standards would be developed for schools who receive Christmas Joy Offering funds and recommended that until such guidelines and standards were established that the Christmas Joy Offering continue to be used exclusively for the historically Presbyterian racial ethnic institutions with whom the GAMC has traditionally covenanted. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the Racial Ethnic Education Support Work Group’s recommendations (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 1081–88).

Institutional Standards for Participating in the Christmas Joy Offering were developed and approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008). The distribution of the Christmas Joy Offering did not change beyond the list of Historic Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREIs).

The list of Historic Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions is maintained by the GAMC, through its Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area through a covenant process with the General Assembly. The Partnership Covenant between the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was approved at the 219th General Assembly (2010) (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 1158–62).

If the General Assembly wishes to once again consider adding Bloomfield College to this list, a referral to the GAMC for study would be appropriate as in previous years. Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, New Jersey, was founded in 1868 as a Presbyterian seminary, the German Theological School of Newark, to prepare German immigrants for the ministry. In its almost 140-year history, the college has changed in response to the changing needs of the community around it.

All Presbyterian colleges enroll racial ethnic students. Bloomfield does not identify itself as a racial ethnic institution, though it does have a large enrollment of racial ethnic students.

The Racial Ethnic Education Support Work Group recommended no change in distribution of the Christmas Joy Offering. The work group found there to be a subtle but, nonetheless, significant difference between being a racial ethnic college, i.e., a college whose mission and identity specifically involves educating racial ethnic students, and being a college that welcomes such students in addition to others. As a Presbyterian college, Bloomfield is eligible to receive certain forms of scholarship assistance from the denomination.

With respect to receiving Christmas Joy Offering funds, the General Assembly Mission Council refers commissioners to the recommendation of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, which proposes a change in the way Christmas Joy Offering receipts would be distributed beginning in 2014.

## Item 10-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 10-02 with comment. See pp. 61, 77.]

*On Instituting a Special Offering Designated to Native American Ministry for a Period of Three Years—From the Presbytery of Inland Northwest.*

The Presbytery of Inland Northwest overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to institute and support a request for a Native American Special Offering for three successive years following a period of time to develop appropriate materials for this special offering. The General Assembly urges its members, congregations, presbyteries, synods, and national staff units, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, to study this matter and to seek appropriate ways to support this offering plan. It is further recommended that a report of the progress of this fund be made to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

**Comment: “We ask the GAMC staff to work with this group to ensure there are ways for individuals and organizations to designate gifts toward this cause.”**

### *Rationale*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) voted to cease National Mission Partnership Funding beginning in 2014. This removes funding from the Native American Consulting Committee (NACC), which coordinates/oversees Native American ministries. This reduced funding impacts NACC and Native American congregations in eight synods. These reductions have been further impacted by the elimination of the full-time Native American staff person in Louisville. The NACC needs time to consider ways to bring vitality to Native American congregations and to exercise options in the new environment. This will be done by challenging Native American stewardship, providing for training for congregations, and curriculum that includes a cultural dimension. Hopefully, development of new funding sources will aid with self-determination for Native American congregations.

### **Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Yukon.**

### **ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 10-02.

### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns is well aware of the Churchwide Policy Statement adopted in 1979 with the Native American Consulting Committee. This historical agreement has been the sacredness among Native people to feel the inclusion and support by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In the area of Mutuality in Mission it states: “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through its agencies and governing boards will make it possible for Native Americans to participate and contribute fully in the total life of the church in order that the whole church may be enriched and benefit from partnership and involvement in the larger body of Christ. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will develop ways to include Native Americans in its decision-making process, especially in those areas that affect the lives and destinies of Native Americans.”

There is a dire need to continue our ministry among Native Americans so the PC(USA) will seek to understand Native American culture and respect the philosophy, values, gifts, and heritage of Native Americans in order that Presbyterians may learn from Native American lifestyles and benefit from fellowship with them. In order for this to be possible, funding must happen.

### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 10-02**

*Comment on Item 10-02—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The General Assembly Mission Council’s Office of Native American Congregational Support, located in Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW, enables the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to Native American congregational issues, empowers Native American Presbyterians to participate actively in the mission of the PC(USA), facilitates the church’s task of evangelism and leadership development, and serves as a liaison to ecumenical and denominational entities in relation to issues affecting Native American Presbyterian churches and chapels.



Item 10-02 expresses concern that “reductions have been further impacted by the elimination of the full-time Native American staff person in Louisville.” This concern is not accurate. The GAMC continues to support Native American congregations and a three-quarter time staff person works approximately thirty hours per week, resourcing Native American congregations and communities of faith. This staff person is deployed, thus not requiring her to move to Louisville, Kentucky, but allowing her to engage in ministry out in the church, where she can provide direct support to Native American churches and chapels.

This member of the staff visits worshipping communities on reservations and in the city, supports lay leaders as they seek to develop ministries with Native American youth, travels to Louisville and meets with the grant team, which provides grants to Native American congregations engaged in mission and ministry projects, and she works in partnership with mid councils and other GAMC offices to nurture strong and growing churches and empower Native American leaders in the church. In partnership with the Native American Consulting Committee (NACC), GAMC staff identify social justice inequities surrounding race, class, and gender in the church and work to find ways to address and improve these concerns. Staff also supports Native American Presbyterian Women, Native American Presbyterian Men, and the American Indian Youth Council.

In partnership with NACC, the GAMC recently held a Native American Consultation in Phoenix, Arizona, January 24 through January 26, 2012. Pastors, elders, and leaders throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gathered to discuss the challenges and opportunities Native American Presbyterians have in connection with their own congregations and the larger church.

During the three-day event, the group of about forty people was asked by NACC members to break into smaller discussion groups and focus on obstacles and solutions for three key areas: leadership development, denominational relationships, and financial realities.

As for the advisability of an additional special offering, commissioners are referred to the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force report. The task force has data showing that the church will not support another special offering.

There are serious challenges in bringing vitality to Native American and other congregations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The GAMC refers commissioners to new objectives and directional goals for new and existing worshipping communities in its Mission Work Plan 2013–2016.

## Item 10-03

**[In response to Item 10-03, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 61, 75.]**

*On Supporting Young Adults in Mission and Leadership Development for the Future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Presbytery of Western New York.*

The Presbytery of Western New York overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the General Assembly Mission Council to provide budgetary support to those individuals called by God and the church to serve in witness and mission through the Young Adult Volunteer program of the World Mission Office, in the amount of \$10,000 for each young adult volunteer above and beyond what is currently budgeted for the Young Adult Volunteer program, to further enable their ability to serve nationally and internationally in the name of Jesus Christ through this ministry. These funds would go toward the alleviation of the annual living expenses of each young adult volunteer, including housing and utilities, health insurance, food, and transportation, as well as easing the emotional strain of living with debt. Each young adult volunteer would continue to personally raise financial support for her or his year of service, though toward a more attainable amount.

This request for funds is for up to 100 volunteers per year, not to exceed \$1,000,000 annual total per YAV term (August–August). The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) shall review and evaluate this funding mandate every second General Assembly year (every fourth calendar year).

**“In recognition of the new directional goal of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) regarding young adults, which includes reducing the funding responsibilities for individual young adult volunteers, the 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the GAMC to increase promotion of this vital and dynamic program to mid councils while encouraging mid councils to increase their mission funding by 10.01 percent beyond the Pentecost offering over the next five years, dedicated to inspiring, equipping, and connecting with young adults to further enable their ability to serve nationally and internationally in the name of Jesus Christ.”**

***Rationale***

We believe that God continues to call the church, and the PC(USA) in particular, to live into a bold vision of God's presence and work in and for this creation. This vision calls God's people to work toward living in faithful and loving relationship with all aspects of creation.

In the recent discussion of and emphasis on being mission-oriented peoples, congregations, and churches, it is to be noted that there is a program currently in place that, to date, has commissioned, sent out, and supported some 1,500 individuals over the past two decades. These mission volunteers have gone on to continued service both in the church as we know her, and in creating other faithful worshipping communities in the places in which they live, nationally and internationally. Through the Young Adult Volunteer program of the World Mission Office, individuals have effectively touched the lives of uncountable amounts of people living in the communities in which they have served with the love of God and the witness of God's kingdom, which is a ministry to not only be continued but strengthened in the years to come.

The GAMC Deputy Executive Director of Mission recently shared a vision of planting and recognizing 1,001 new worshipping communities in the next ten years by raising up transformational leaders with the practice of compassionate, prophetic discipleship. Because of the nature of their service experiences, focusing on global discipleship in relevant and meaningful ways, young adult volunteers (YAVs) and YAV alumni are in a unique position to relate the good news of the gospel in their current local contexts in new, creative, and applicable ways, walking alongside the church in her work. Investing in this program is a step toward investing in the future of the church.

The World Mission Council has recently identified three critical global issues in realizing more fully the kingdom of God present in the world:

- We will identify and address the root causes of poverty, particularly as it impacts women and children.
- Together with other members of Christ's body, we will share the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ.
- We will engage in reconciliation amidst cultures of violence, including our own.

The Young Adult Volunteer program routinely orients its mission volunteers to be mindful of these realities in our world, particularly as they pertain to the communities in which they serve. They enter into their time of service with the desire to not only work to alleviate such realities, but through education and awareness, to address the systems and constructs that lead to such brokenness in the first place.

Members in and alumni of the Young Adult Volunteer program frequently go on to ministry in the church, both in traditional ways (seminary, church leadership, etc.) and in nontraditional ways (homeless shelters, counseling networks, etc.). Alumni of the YAV program engage society with a mindfulness toward intentional Christian community, simple living, faithful discernment, and active discipleship. This program truly embodies the phrase, "A year of service for a lifetime of change."

Financial support for YAVs comes from multiple sources, including the sites they serve, and such support at every level is to be continued and encouraged. However, the ongoing ability of individuals and sites to supplement the financial requirements is decreasing. In such light, this becomes an opportunity for us to faithfully step alongside such resources, allowing the ministry and service they offer to continue in the gap.

In a society and economy where more and more individuals are leaving college and graduate work with financial burdens not seen before, as well as the inability of friends and family to give supportively at levels of the past, the increasing cost of entering into a year of service is becoming prohibitive. It behooves us, as the members of the church, to take steps to not only keep this opportunity in place, but to increase involvement in it, for the sake of the church, the culture in which she lives, and the present work of God's kingdom.

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**COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 10-03**

*Comment on Item 10-03—From the Committee on Theological Education.*

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to include offering \$10,000 scholarships to young adult volunteers who choose to also attend a PC(USA) seminary after their year of service. The issues of seminarian debt is raised by the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century in Recommendation 6.e. of their report.

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**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 10-03**

*Comment on Item 10-03—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) is very appreciative to the Presbytery of Western New York for its support of the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program. Item 10-03, as proposed by the Presbytery of Western New York, has a significant financial impact: one million dollars in 2012 and again in 2013.

If approved by the General Assembly, this overture would require the elimination of multiple programs within the GAMC mission budget. The GAMC requests that the General Assembly disapprove Item 10-03 and respond to this request by drawing attention to the church-wide giving opportunities already in place to support the YAV program.

*Rationale*

The YAV program began in 1994 with goals “to identify, assess, recruit, prepare, and deploy a large number of Presbyterians for service and learning experiences in cross-cultural, cross-economic settings. ... To assist individuals and congregations to understand our cultural captivity as U.S. citizens ... to empower a new generation of Christian leadership for the church and for the world ... and to evangelize and revitalize congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ...” for “... as many as one hundred young adults [to] be introduced to the 206th General Assembly—the vanguard of an undertaking aimed at nothing less than changing the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ...” (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 214).

More than 1,200 young adult volunteers have joined in national and international service and learning during the past eighteen years. As these young adults continue to mature and respond to God’s call for faithfulness and transformation, many become church and community leaders, committed to the missional values learned and practiced during their time as YAVs.

There are currently nine national YAV sites in cities around the U.S. and six international sites with global partners in other countries. The YAVs serve for one year with a commitment to spiritual growth, simple living, mission service and learning, vocational discernment, and leadership development.

In its 2013–16 Mission Work Plan, the GAMC has identified partnering and engaging with young adults (those 18–30 years old) as one of six strategic goals. Specifically, the GAMC is committed to inspiring young adults to participate in a season of service, as well as quadruple the number of young adults currently participating in ministries of the GAMC such as the YAV program.

The YAV program is currently funded through a combination of unrestricted contributions, endowments, 25 percent of the Pentecost Offering, grants from presbyteries and participating community agencies within the U.S., and fund raising on the part of YAV participants.

In a very real sense, the more that Presbyterians give, the more YAVs the GAMC will be able to support. An extra commitment opportunity account is available for support: #E049075. Funds given through this account are used for programmatic site support or to directly support young adult volunteers through grants for outstanding student loans, medical insurance, housing and food allowance, and travel costs. The YAV program needs the support of the whole church to expand this important ministry. The GAMC requests that the General Assembly respond to this overture by drawing attention to these giving opportunities.

## Item 10-04

[Item 10-04 became Item 11-20.]

## Item 10-05

[The assembly answered Item 10-05 by the action taken on Item 10-14. See pp. 61, 77.]

*On Maintaining the Integrity of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.*

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to amend the General Assembly Mission Council, Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, recommendations to:

1. restore program names and percentages in the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering,
2. maintain a separate Special Offering for Peacemaking.

*Rationale*

Our God is especially concerned with the plight of economically poor, oppressed, and marginalized people, and our denomination’s major response to this group is through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering ministries.

The One Great Hour of Sharing, received during Lent, has a sixty-three-year history as an ecumenical endeavor that now involves seven denominations and Church World Service, who respond to the world’s hungry, poor, home-

less, and oppressed, and to the conditions that keep them that way (from Alford Group Report, cited in SOATF Report).

Congregational pastors indicate the OGHS has appeal because it is large, unifying, and more identifiable with disaster responses, self-development of people, and hunger relief. There is a feeling that OGHS is proactive and impactful. Pastors also noted that it is appealing to note that multiple denominations participate (from Alford Group Report, cited in Special Offerings Advisory Task Force [SOATF] report).

“The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes that God is calling PC(USA) to a new vision of missional generosity and commitment as a denomination. Special Offerings unite us in mission. Special Offerings allow churches of all sizes to participate in mission together. Special Offerings give opportunities for Presbyterians in every place to contribute as they are able. Special Offerings allow for churches and members to choose areas of passion and impact. Together, we can do more than any of us apart” (p. 2 of SOATF report proper).

The current PC(USA) policy on Special Offerings (“Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings) states: “There will be no more than five churchwide Special Offerings in any given calendar year.”

“Everything boils down to need—we give where we feel called to help” (from Alford Group Report, cited in SOATF Report). Eighty-seven percent of pastors report that their congregations received the OGHS offering in 2011. Seventy-seven percent received the Christmas Joy Offering, 53 percent the Peacemaking Offering, and 42 percent the Pentecost Offering (from Alford Group Report, cited in SOATF report).

“Peacemaking is seen as ‘up and coming’ but could benefit from more specific interpretation” (from Alford Group Report, cited in SOATF Report).

The SOATF report states, “Aligning Special Offerings with the GAMC strategic planning process requires that the GAMC have flexibility for funding allocations within those priorities in accordance with the broad designations established for the Special Offerings.” (Page 9, GAMC, SOATF, recommendations).

#### *Rationale for Restoring Program Names and Percentages*

At present, the Special Offerings allow the people in the pews to distinguish which offerings and missions to support, based upon passionate interest, perceived need, and the impact of these individual ministries.

Most congregations support those offerings for which they feel an affinity, but few support all special offerings. Eighty-seven percent of congregations received the OGHS offering in 2011. Seventy-seven percent received the Christmas Joy Offering, 53 percent the Peacemaking Offering, and 42 percent the Pentecost Offering (From Alford Group Report, cited in SOATF report). These percentages reflect the high value Presbyterians hold for the One Great Hour of Sharing and its ministries, and indicate that there is no need to change the offering by removing the names of the ministries that it supports, or by eliminating the percentages directed to each of them.

Without program names and percentages, there’s a risk of creating a competitive spirit among and between mission programs of GAMC, thereby weakening and/or eliminating the ability of certain ministries to fulfill their commission. With the proposed arrangement, collaborative working relationships will almost certainly be challenged, if not doomed, as ministries fight with one another for funding.

By not including the specific names of the programs included in the OGHS, the possibility of programs being defunded becomes very real. While the report repeatedly states that it has no intention to defund existing ministries, it actually will, for by eliminating the Peacemaking Offering and adding “peacemaking” to the OGHS, all four ministries will be at least partially defunded.

By eliminating program names, and using instead “community development, disaster assistance, hunger ministries,” and the newly added “peacemaking,” runs the risk of all existing ministries being partially defunded or completely eliminated.

Additionally, there is no guarantee that the Peacemaking Offering revenue stream would transfer to the OGHS. Indeed, there is every likelihood that it will not.

At its core, this recommendation (eliminating program names and percentages from the OGHS) eliminates the right of the donor to give to specific programs, and gives denominational decision-makers the power to decide how to use the donors’ gifts without donor input.

#### *Rationale for Maintaining a Separate Special Offering for Peacemaking*

Fifty-eight percent of all congregations do not currently take all four special offerings. Additionally, the PC(USA)’s own “Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings” has for years stated, “There will be no more than five

churchwide Special Offerings in any given calendar year.” Because of these two realities, there seems to be no harm in adding a fifth Special Offering (for World Mission), and then continuing to allow congregations to decide which of the five Special Offerings they wish to support. This is much simpler than the confusing recommendation in the Special Offering Advisory Task Force Report (eliminating the Peacemaking Offering, folding Peacemaking into the One Great Hour of Sharing, and then adding a new fourth offering for World Mission, to be taken on World Communion Sunday, when the Peacemaking Offering has traditionally been received).

Peacemaking is an entirely different topical program than the other programs of the OGHS. If peacemaking is included in the OGHS, this will prevent “the more specific interpretation” that the SOATF calls for in its report. Including Peacemaking in the OGHS destroys the programmatic unity of purpose historically affirmed by givers to the OGHS. With its purpose weakened, it is anticipated that receipts will decrease. Adding the proposed fourth recipient to OGHS weakens the offering’s identity as a Presbyterian way of caring for “the least of these:” the poor, the hungry, and victims of disaster, which is the clear purpose of the ministries of the OGHS.

While the report repeatedly states that it has no intention to defund existing ministries by eliminating the Peacemaking Offering and adding it to the OGHS, all four ministries will be at least partially defunded.

There is no guarantee that the Peacemaking revenue stream would transfer to the OGHS. Indeed, there is every likelihood that it will not.

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**Concurrence to Item 10-05 from the Presbytery of Lehigh.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that this overture be approved with an amendment to Recommendation 2., as noted below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. maintain a separate Special Offering for Peacemaking~~[-]~~, or retain its identity within a combined World Communion Sunday offering season, such as through a World Communion Peacemaking and International Mission Offering.”

*Rationale*

Item 10-05 correctly notes that the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force recommendations would not only eliminate the Peacemaking Offering but, by combining peacemaking with the three One Great Hour of Sharing humanitarian assistance offerings, effectively confuse the long-established mission of that offering as well. We feel that the Peacemaking Offering should be retained in a clearly identifiable form, for its threefold purpose, and in its general season, around World Communion.

The church is built on memory and relationships. Each offering has developed a community of support over time. Changing any of the offerings threatens to uproot a constituency of support. In the case of One Great Hour of Sharing, that constituency is in fact ecumenical, and changing its content would necessitate a new Presbyterian-specific interpretative framework. Of the other denominations that have long been partners in One Great Hour of Sharing, some do not use percentage designations because all their funds go to church world service for work similar to that in our three designated programs.

In the case of the Peacemaking Offering, the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved a six-year process of church-wide discernment to reexamine the place and meaning of peacemaking in our church. It noted a substantial Peacemaking Program developed over thirty years and the impact of the last ten years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan as factors for Presbyterians to consider in light of their own convictions regarding violence and nonviolence. Restructuring the Peacemaking Offering would preempt this work of discernment insofar as it would remove institutional support and visibility.

This overture uses some of the good data from the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force Report but differs in its interpretation and application of that data. The Peacemaking Offering, in particular, has remained reasonably stable at approximately \$1,000,000 per year since 1990 (it had been higher) and was up slightly last year, despite the lack of a program coordinator since 2010. The Special Offerings Task Force recommends retaining the threefold form of the offering: percentages for congregational, presbytery, and General Assembly level use, but generalizing their purpose. Yet the form of the Peacemaking Offering matched its purpose; encouraging specific peacemaking activities at the several council “levels” of the church.

The Special Offerings Task Force makes a number of other recommendations concerning the administration of offerings and fundraising more generally, including the use of direct mail, which has focused on World Mission. Data from the Presbyterian Panel show that Presbyterians favor mission at home by a substantial margin; hence the challenge of fundraising for

international mission is understandable. The solution to that problem, however, need not unduly disrupt other offerings and the relationships on which they depend.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEMS 10-05 and 10-06

*Comment on Items 10-05 and 10-06—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Special Offerings are an important part of the connectional fabric that unites Presbyterians together in mission. In recent years, declining receipts have weakened this bond, and diminished the impact of Presbyterian witness.

Every four years, Special Offerings are reviewed to ensure that they are well-coordinated, and relevant to PC(USA) mission. Concerned by the continued decline in Special Offerings, the General Assembly, in response to the quadrennial review of 2008, directed that the next four year review be enlarged to include:

- A review of the possible role and functions of Special Offerings;
- Ways to encourage and expand the role of Special Offerings as a connective bond in the church;
- Identification of what Special Offerings can do best and what steps need to be taken in order to enable them to do that well;
- Clarification and simplification of the process for considering programs and causes to be included in Special Offerings.

This was in addition to their primary assignment—to provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings, and to consider new causes in light of established criteria.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has spent the four years investigating the current context, and has proposed significant changes in the way Presbyterians engage Special Offerings in support of the mission of the church. Their recommendations should be carefully considered.

The central focus of their recommendations is that the decline in Special Offerings can be reversed. The task force calls the church to embrace a goal of \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020. The GAMC has responded to this call, embracing the goal, and is encouraging the General Assembly to approve it also. The task force is recommending substantive changes in order to meet that goal. As with any call for change, some are concerned about the impact of that change on existing ministries. These are the factors that commissioners will have to weigh as they discern where God is leading the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As an important step in that discernment, the GAMC urges commissioners to read the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force report firsthand, rather than relying upon accounts from others as to what the report recommends. Reversing the decline, and reaching \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020 is too important to be left to secondhand information on what the report recommends.

Among the clarifications that should be made to the overtures received thus far:

- Several overtures are concerned about the possibility of decreased funding for particular programs as a result of the changes. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force report, however, argues that the risk of doing nothing to reverse the overall decline is greater. If the goal of reaching \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020 is met, then more than 50 percent in additional funds will be available for mission.
- Some are concerned that without an explicit connection to existing denominational programs, Special Offerings receipts will be diminished. The example from other denominations, however, is that donors give to causes, not programs. When other denominations promote their special offerings, they are not explicit in advance with programs or allocation percentages. They do report specific allocations as a matter of year-end accountability for disbursements.
- The changes proposed by the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force do not eliminate the designation on any gifts to Special Offerings. Each Special Offering will be specifically designated toward the purpose for which it was received. The proposals call for the GAMC to allocate funds biannually, as part of the General Assembly budget approval process, within these designations. The key difference here is that the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force recommendations call for the offerings to be designated toward particular causes, not toward particular programs. Donors retain the right to designate their gifts specifically, if they so desire.
- The task force found strong evidence that the denomination was unwilling to support more than four Special Offerings. Eighty-one percent of pastors, and 69 percent of ruling elders felt that four Special Offerings was either the right number, or too many.
- Finally, there is some confusion in the overtures concerning what actions have been taken by the GAMC in this regard. The GAMC has endorsed the goal of annual receipts of \$20 million by 2020, and has created a new staff position to

focus efforts toward this end. The GAMC was not asked to approve any particular changes in Special Offerings, either to create new offerings or eliminate existing offerings, as this is properly a General Assembly decision, in response to the direction of the 218th General Assembly (2008). The GAMC asks that commissioners prayerfully consider the recommendations of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force. The opportunities to reverse the decline, and generate new funds for mission are important to our witness as Presbyterians.

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee and the National Self Development of People Committee have expressed similar concerns to those of these overtures, through the Justice Mission Committee of the GAMC.

## Item 10-06

**[The assembly answered Item 10-06 by the action taken on Item 10-14. See pp. 61, 77.]**

*On Retaining the Peacemaking Offering as an Independent Offering Appropriate to World Communion Sunday—From the Presbytery of Albany.*

The Presbytery of Albany respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to issue the following affirmation and direction:

“That the Peacemaking Offering be vigorously affirmed as an independent offering appropriate to World Communion Sunday since it has continuously borne good fruit for God’s Reign; and

“That the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry (not Communications and Funds Development) be directed to retain stewardship of this offering and interpret peacemaking anew using new media and offering young adults the opportunity to tell their stories of building peace.”

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Mission Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has concurred with the recommendation of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force that the Peacemaking Offering be incorporated into the One Great Hour of Sharing, which recommendation is coming before the 220th General Assembly (2012). However, for forty-one years the Peacemaking Offering has provided resources for local initiatives by faithful disciples in building peace at the congregational and presbytery levels of our church (as well as at the General Assembly level). Knowing that Jesus blesses the peacemakers (Mt. 5:9), IS our peace (Eph. 2:14), breaks down walls of hostility, and works for “a new humanity,” we affirm that the continuation of the peacemaking offering is a clear sign of our calling as Presbyterians and Christians.

Resource for Future Study: “FOR CHURCH LEADERS: Keep the Peacemaking Offering,” by Earl S. Johnson Jr. [This article will be published in a future 2012 issue of *Presbyterian Outlook*. Distributed and printed by permission of *Presbyterian Outlook*.]:

On February 16, 2012 the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) announced that it has approved the recommendations of a Special Advisory Task Force, led by the Rev. Karl Travis, to eliminate the Peacemaking Offering and restructure the other three seasonal offerings. Peacemaking will be assumed under One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) and will be replaced in October by a new World Communion Sunday Offering. Congregations and presbyteries will continue to retain 25% each of the new offering, the remaining 50% being allocated to the GAMC. The changes will require the approval of the General Assembly in July to take effect.

According to Travis these and other recommendations were made because of a 25% decline of giving to Peacemaking and the Christmas Joy Offering over the years, a lack of understanding of the purpose of the offerings by Presbyterians, inadequate interpretation to members, and declining attendance and giving in many congregations.

Although it can be assumed that the three year study was undertaken diligently and prayerfully, there are historical, theological, biblical, and practical reasons why the elimination of the Peacemaking Offering should be rejected by the General Assembly.

First of all, we need to be reminded that since the early 1960s peacemaking has been an integral part of our identification as Presbyterians and followers of Jesus Christ. In the Confession of 1967, for example, the Vietnam War caused Presbyterians to oppose war and violence as a way to settle conflicts (C-9.45). “The church in its own life is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace. This search requires that nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at risk to national security.”

In 1969 the UPCUSA GA supported the right of believers to object to war on pacifist grounds, and in 1976 the PCUS called on the president to pardon those who refused military service. In 1975 a special task force was appointed and its remarkable report “Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling” was approved by both assemblies in 1980 and 1981. It has served since as a primary definition of Presbyterian determination to work for peace and justice in all spheres of life. Its theological and biblical studies also remind us today that in a century racked with violence almost everywhere we turn we dare not neutralize or weaken our commitment to peacemaking.

Some people will ask, of course, what our offerings have accomplished in the past? A few specific examples will provide samples of the Peacemaking Offering’s value. In the church I served in Johnstown, NY, the congregation gave its share for more than 20 years to the local Domestic Abuse program. Members know that their gifts have literally saved the lives of women (and men) all around our community. In the Presbytery of Albany,

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

furthermore, its 25% has been used since 2005 for many vital peacemaking activities including mission trips to Nicaragua, Mexico, the New Orleans area, and programs in the United Nations. Grants were given to local churches for attendance at local Peace Colloquies, a Peace and Justice Fair, and a congregation's summer program for students from violent and troubled neighborhoods. No doubt similar examples can be cited from other congregations and presbyteries around the nation.

In regard to use by the General Assembly it is possible to examine the annual reports issued by the GAMC ([http://gmc.pcusa.org/ministries.special\\_offerings](http://gmc.pcusa.org/ministries.special_offerings)). It is proposed that the 2011 offering be used in primary areas of Evangelism, Discipleship, Servanthood, and Diversity (nearly \$2 million was received in 2010). Specifically, it calls for funds to facilitate the International Peacemaking Program, to provide a day-long intensive training on Gun Violence and Gospel Values, to create a web-based resource with prayers on peace and justice concerns, and to send election observers to the Philippines, mentioning just a few.

Ephesians 2:13-22 powerfully proclaims that Jesus Christ himself is our peace (v.14). As he breaks down dividing walls of hostility and works to create "a new humanity" we are reminded that a continuing Peacemaking Offering is a clear sign of who we really are as Christians and Presbyterians.

Earl S. Johnson Jr. is a retired pastor living in Johnstown, New York, and adjunct professor of religious studies at Siena College. See his more detailed background study, *Witness Without Parallel, Eight Biblical Text That Make Us Presbyterian* (Geneva Press, 2003) 107-115.

\*FOR CHURCH LEADERS: Keep the Peacemaking Offering," by Earl S. Johnson Jr. (publication pending in *The Presbyterian Outlook*).

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEMS 10-05 and 10-06

*Comment on Items 10-05 and 10-06—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Special Offerings are an important part of the connectional fabric that unites Presbyterians together in mission. In recent years, declining receipts have weakened this bond, and diminished the impact of Presbyterian witness.

Every four years, Special Offerings are reviewed to ensure that they are well-coordinated, and relevant to PC(USA) mission. Concerned by the continued decline in Special Offerings, the General Assembly, in response to the quadrennial review of 2008, directed that the next four year review be enlarged to include:

- A review of the possible role and functions of Special Offerings;
- Ways to encourage and expand the role of Special Offerings as a connective bond in the church;
- Identification of what Special Offerings can do best and what steps need to be taken in order to enable them to do that well;
- Clarification and simplification of the process for considering programs and causes to be included in Special Offerings.

This was in addition to their primary assignment—to provide for review and evaluation of the causes supported by churchwide special offerings, and to consider new causes in light of established criteria.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has spent the four years investigating the current context, and has proposed significant changes in the way Presbyterians engage Special Offerings in support of the mission of the church. Their recommendations should be carefully considered.

The central focus of their recommendations is that the decline in Special Offerings can be reversed. The task force calls the church to embrace a goal of \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020. The GAMC has responded to this call, embracing the goal, and is encouraging the General Assembly to approve it also. The task force is recommending substantive changes in order to meet that goal. As with any call for change, some are concerned about the impact of that change on existing ministries. These are the factors that commissioners will have to weigh as they discern where God is leading the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As an important step in that discernment, the GAMC urges commissioners to read the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force report firsthand, rather than relying upon accounts from others as to what the report recommends. Reversing the decline, and reaching \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020 is too important to be left to secondhand information on what the report recommends.

Among the clarifications that should be made to the overtures received thus far:

- Several overtures are concerned about the possibility of decreased funding for particular programs as a result of the changes. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force report, however, argues that the risk of doing nothing to reverse the overall decline is greater. If the goal of reaching \$20 million in annual receipts by 2020 is met, then more than 50 percent in additional funds will be available for mission.
- Some are concerned that without an explicit connection to existing denominational programs, Special Offerings receipts will be diminished. The example from other denominations, however, is that donors give to causes, not programs. When other denominations promote their special offerings, they are not explicit in advance with programs or allocation percentages. They do report specific allocations as a matter of year-end accountability for disbursements.



- The changes proposed by the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force do not eliminate the designation on any gifts to Special Offerings. Each Special Offering will be specifically designated toward the purpose for which it was received. The proposals call for the GAMC to allocate funds biannually, as part of the General Assembly budget approval process, within these designations. The key difference here is that the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force recommendations call for the offerings to be designated toward particular causes, not toward particular programs. Donors retain the right to designate their gifts specifically, if they so desire.

- The task force found strong evidence that the denomination was unwilling to support more than four Special Offerings. Eighty-one percent of pastors, and 69 percent of ruling elders felt that four Special Offerings was either the right number, or too many.

- Finally, there is some confusion in the overtures concerning what actions have been taken by the GAMC in this regard. The GAMC has endorsed the goal of annual receipts of \$20 million by 2020, and has created a new staff position to focus efforts toward this end. The GAMC was not asked to approve any particular changes in Special Offerings, either to create new offerings or eliminate existing offerings, as this is properly a General Assembly decision, in response to the direction of the 218th General Assembly (2008). The GAMC asks that commissioners prayerfully consider the recommendations of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force. The opportunities to reverse the decline, and generate new funds for mission are important to our witness as Presbyterians.

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee and the National Self Development of People Committee have expressed similar concerns to those of these overtures, through the Justice Mission Committee of the GAMC.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 10-06 recommends retaining the Peacemaking Offering as an independent offering related to World Communion Sunday and maintained by Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministries.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) counsels the following considerations:

#### *Rationale*

Item 10-06 celebrates what has been a major initiative in the witness and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) over the past thirty-two years. The frequent and positive use of the word, “peacemaking,” itself reflects the wide acceptance of this work, recalling Jesus’ words, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” in the Sermon on the Mount. The overture correctly notes that the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force recommendations would eliminate an independent Peacemaking Offering. That concern would be merged with the three One Great Hour of Sharing humanitarian assistance offerings. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy addresses concern for all four offerings in its Advice & Counsel memorandum to Item 10-05, where the committee affirms that the Peacemaking Offering should be retained in a clearly identifiable form, for its threefold purpose, and in its general season, around World Communion. We do not repeat those points here.

There are several considerations relevant to the arguments for dissolving the Peacemaking Offering:

1. Much of the Special Offerings Task Force argument hinges on restricting the number of special offerings to four, yet many congregations add and subtract offerings based on their finances, capital campaigns, and local mission emphases. For the General Assembly Mission Council to offer resources for five offerings could give congregations more choice, even if most congregations would stick to four offerings.

2. The overture (in Earl Johnson’s essay) notes how peacemaking is anchored historically, theologically, biblically, and practically in the life of the church. At the same time, commissioners may wish to reflect on how much this offering and others point beyond the church itself, to violence continuing to mark all relations, from the interpersonal to the international.

3. Peacemaking Offering receipts have been quite steady since 1990, with a slight upturn last year, despite the lack of a program coordinator since 2010. While it may be argued that the current set of special offerings will decline from the current aggregate \$13 million, it may also be hard to see how re-configured offerings based primarily on new marketing could reach \$20 million.

4. If the number of official offerings is limited to four, the logic of keeping peacemaking with World Communion and international mission and evangelism would need to be contrasted with adding it to the humanitarian hunger, development, and relief work under One Great Hour of Sharing.

5. The Interim Report on Peace Discernment (Item 14-05) describes the six-year process approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) to discern new approaches to peacemaking in the 21st Century. Commissioners may wonder how the

Special Offerings Task Force plan would impact the process of church-wide discernment that is being prepared, even though the Peacemaking Offering is not to be phased out immediately.

6. The Special Offerings Task Force report contains much valuable data and proposals that would change other offerings as well. Commissioners may wish to consider how much change overall is being proposed by the various special committees, as well as by the on-going program bodies of the church and by contentious issues.

## Item 10-07

[The assembly approved Item 10-07. See pp. 61, 74.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the revised *General Assembly Mission Council [Presbyterian Mission Agency] Manual of Operations*. [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

### ~~“GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY MANUAL OF OPERATIONS~~

#### ~~“I. Introduction~~

~~“A. The General Assembly Mission Council, a~~ As an agency of the General Assembly, *the Presbyterian Mission Agency* implements policies established by the General Assembly, coordinates the work of the General Assembly Ministries in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities; works in partnership with synods and presbyteries; and develops and proposes a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. Members of the ~~council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* are elected by the General Assembly and are representatives of synods, presbyteries, and the church at-large. [See Organization for Mission, Section I., History of the *Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*]

~~“The Book of Order also provides that “each governing body above the session shall, in consultation with the governing body above and below it, develop a manual of administrative operations” (G-9.0405 and G-13.0203).~~

“The Manual of Operations shall be in compliance with the Book of Order, the General Assembly Deliverances, the Organization for Mission, and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* may change those appendixes to the Manual of Operations that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, and adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly (See Appendix 11 for the Process and Procedure for Submitting Changes to the ~~GAMC~~ Manual of Operations.)

#### ~~“B. Use of Robert’s Rules of Order (Revised)~~

“The meetings of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and related bodies are held in accordance with the provisions of the Book of Order. As specified in ~~G-9.0302~~ *G-3.0105*, “. . . the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order . . .” is used.

### ~~“II. Composition of the Council Board~~

~~“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Mission Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Mission Council.” (Book of Order, G-13.0202 Membership)~~

#### ~~“A. Membership:~~

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is currently composed of 57 members (40 voting and 17 non-voting). Elected ~~membership~~ *members* of the ~~GAMC~~ *Board* serve ~~one~~ a six-year, non-renewable term:

##### ~~“1. Voting Members~~

###### ~~“a. Elected Membership (36)~~

- ~~“• 6 General Assembly commissioners (2 from current assembly, 2 from the two immediate past assemblies)~~

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- “• 4 young adults (ages 18–35)
  - “• 3 ordained presbytery staff
  - “• 2 ordained synod staff
  - “• 21 from recommendations of presbyteries
- “b. Ex-officio Members (4)
- “• Current Moderator of the General Assembly
  - “• Immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly
  - “• The current Moderator of the Churchwide coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women
  - “• A representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc.
2. “Non Voting Members - with voice:
- “a. Corresponding Members (15)
- “• Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
  - “• Executive Director of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*
  - “• Representative from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA)
  - “• Chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)
  - “• Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)
  - “• Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)
  - “• Representative from the Committee on Theological Education (COTE)
  - “• Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) President
  - “• Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Chair or designee
  - “• Presbyterian *Church (U.S.A.)* Foundation President
  - “• Presbyterian *Church (U.S.A.)* Foundation Chair or designee
  - “• Presbyterian Publishing Corporation President
  - “• Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Chair or designee’
  - “• Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. President
  - “• Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Chair or designee
- “Corresponding members are not assigned to a committee and may attend any committee meeting that is conducting business of interest to them. Corresponding members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board have voice but not vote in Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and committee.*
- “b. *Ecumenical Advisory Members*
- “Ecumenical advisory members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee for election by the General Assembly for two-year terms, with eligibility for two additional terms, on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. One ecumenical advisory member shall serve on the Justice Mission Committee and one shall serve on the Evangelism Mission Committee, with voice and vote in committee. Ecumenical advisory members to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall not be elected to the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.*
- “3. GAMC Committee At-large members
- ~~“The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates for General Assembly election 2 persons to serve on the Audit Committee and 2 persons to serve on Stewardship Committee. These members are nominated from the church at large for their special expertise in each of these following areas. While they are not members of~~

~~the General Assembly Mission Council, they are granted the privilege of the floor during General Assembly Mission Council plenary sessions on matters related to their special expertise.~~

*“The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates for General Assembly election 2 persons to serve on the Audit Committee and 2 persons to serve on Stewardship Committee, with voice and vote, in consultation with the committees. These at-large members serve a two-year term, and are eligible for re-election twice. These members are nominated from the church at-large for their special expertise in each of these areas. While they are not members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, they are granted the privilege of the floor during Presbyterian Mission Agency Board plenary sessions on matters related to their special expertise.*

“B. Inclusiveness and Diversity:

“General Assembly policies ensure that elected bodies represent the wealth of diverse gifts found in the church and provide a means to share responsibilities and decision making. The General Assembly Nominating Committee provides for diversity and inclusiveness in the council’s membership. The General Assembly Committee on Representation monitors their work as well as the appointment of committees and task forces by the council.

“It is the policy of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* to use expansive language when referring to God and inclusive language when referring to God’s people.

“C. Areas of Service:

~~“The General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* may change the names, number, and structure of ~~GAMC Board~~ committees in order to carry out the goals and objectives of the Mission Work Plan using the process delineated in Appendix 11. The work of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is carried out by elected members who may serve ~~in the following areas:~~ *on board committees as well as in liaison relationships.*

~~“• General Assembly Mission Council Executive Committee~~

~~“• Evangelism Mission Committee~~

~~“• Justice Mission Committee~~

~~“• Vocation Mission Committee~~

~~“• Discipleship Mission Committee~~

~~“• Stewardship Committee~~

~~“• Audit Committee~~

~~“• General Assembly Mission Council Nominating Committee~~

~~“• Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy~~

~~“• Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns~~

~~“• Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns~~

~~“• Committee on the Office of the General Assembly~~

~~“• Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions~~

~~“• Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation~~

~~“• Presbyterian Publishing Corporation~~

~~“• Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.~~

~~“• Committee on Theological Education~~

**“III. ~~PC(USA) Constitutional Mandate and Role of the General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board***

~~“According to Book of Order G-13.0201, the~~ *The General Assembly Mission Council* ~~Presbyterian Mission Agency Board~~ shall have the following responsibilities

- “A. To cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church.
- “B. To provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities.
- “C. To develop and propose for GA approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the ~~GAMC~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*, doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for GA approval, an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the ~~GAMC~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*.
- “D. To act in those specific matters assigned to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* by the General Assembly ~~or this Constitution~~, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions.
- “E. To perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly.
- “The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, in consultation with appropriate individuals and groups, establishes such committees, task forces, and work groups as are necessary to conduct its business. Current committees are recorded in Appendix 1 of this manual.
- “The Executive Director reports to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* Executive Committee and the ~~Council~~ *Board* itself. The Executive Director shall provide direction, leadership, and coordination for the total mission program and shared services including review and evaluation.

#### “IV. Citation of Major Documents

- “The following documents guide the work of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and are maintained in offices engaged in work related to their subject matter. Unless appended, these documents are available on the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Website, with printed copies available by request.
- “A. Mission Policy Guide: Text of policies is available in the Minutes of prior General Assemblies. The guide is prepared by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*.
- “B. Churchwide Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Plan: Approved by General Assembly. The plan is available from the ~~GAMC~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Office of Human Resources.
- “C. “Policies Regarding Public Statements by the ~~Council~~ *Board*” approved by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* (Appendix 3).
- “D. Current Mission Work Plan.
- “E. Organization for Mission.
- “F. Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement.

#### “V. ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Staffing

- “A. The ~~GAMC~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* fulfills its work, in part through staff led by the Executive Director. The Executive Director carries out responsibilities with staff in the following ministries: Mission, Communications and Funds Development, Shared Services; and the Office of the Executive Director. For ~~GAMC~~ *the Presbyterian Mission Agency* staff organization, refer to Appendix 2.
- “B. Between meetings of the General Assembly, the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, upon recommendation of the Executive Director, is authorized to restructure the staff organization, always in alignment with the mission direction of the General Assembly. Any such organizational changes will be reported to the next General Assembly.

#### “VI. Election and Confirmation of the ~~GAMC~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Executive Director

“The Executive Director of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* shall be elected by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* to a four-year term subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. (See ~~Book of Order G-9.0703~~.) Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly. (Organization for Mission, Section V.G.)”

***Rationale***

The *GAMC Manual of Operations* calls for the *Manual* to be reviewed, in conjunction with other manuals and the *Organization for Mission*, for consistency and relevance in the current context.

The GAMC approved the changes as recommended by the Procedures Subcommittee. Changes to the *GAMC Manual of Operations* must be approved by the General Assembly.

**Item 10-08**

[The assembly approved Item 10-08. See pp. 61, 74.]

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve changing the name of the General Assembly Mission Council, as follows:**

<b>From :</b>	<b>To:</b>
<b>General Assembly Mission Council (organization)</b>	<b>Presbyterian Mission Agency</b>
<b>General Assembly Mission Council (elected)</b>	<b>Presbyterian Mission Agency Board</b>

***Rationale***

## General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) Name Change

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) considered several options for renaming the General Assembly Mission Council organization and elected body. Two options received the most support:

- Presbyterian Mission Agency & Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
- Presbyterian Mission & Presbyterian Mission Board

After much discussion, and consideration of input from mid council partners, “Presbyterian Mission Agency” and “Presbyterian Mission Agency Board” were chosen for recommendation to the General Assembly.

A. *Why Change Our Name?*

The General Assembly Council (as it was originally known) has been encouraged to clarify its identity for more than seven years.

- In 2004, the Mission Work Plan called for the development of a communication strategy, due to low awareness by pastors and Presbyterians in the pews of the mission and ministry of the General Assembly Council.
- In 2007, the “General Assembly Task Force to Review the GAC” joined this effort, directing the council to create an identity for the mission agency.
- In 2008, the council’s effort from 2004 concluded with a similar call: create an identity for the mission agency. This call was answered with a first step, approved by the General Assembly and a majority of presbyteries: changing the name of the “General Assembly Council” to the “General Assembly Mission Council.”
- In 2009, the Six Agency Review Task Force also called for a heightened identity for the mission agency.

Each of these efforts have called on the GAMC to be more intentional about the way it communicates so that those who participate in its ministries have an awareness of where these ministries originate, how to obtain additional information, and how to support the expansion of these ministries for other audiences.

The adoption of the new Form of Government by the General Assembly and a majority of presbyteries provides additional impetus for the name change effort. The term “council” is changing in the life of the denomination. Under the new Form of Government, “councils” are the term for what was once referred to as “governing bodies.” Since the GAMC is not a governing body, the term “council” should no longer be part of the GAMC’s name.

B. *Choosing a Name*

Building upon the work from 2007, the core identity for the GAMC is mission. Therefore it is not surprising to see “mission” central to most of the names that have been proposed:

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- Presbyterian Mission
- Presbyterian Mission Agency
- Presbyterian Mission Partnership
- Presbyterian Mission Partners
- Presbyterian Mission & Ministry
- Presbyterian Ministry & Mission
- Presbyterian Mission Connection
- Presbyterian Mission Service
- Presbyterians in Mission
- General Assembly Mission
- General Assembly Mission Agency
- General Assembly Mission Partnership
- General Assembly Mission Partners
- General Assembly Mission & Ministry
- General Assembly Ministry & Mission
- General Assembly Mission Connection
- General Assembly Mission Service
- Presbyterians in Mission Partnership
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Agency
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Partnership
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Partners
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission and Ministry
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Ministry & Mission
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Connection
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Service

There has been discussion as to whether “mission” was a sufficient description for the work of the council. Several individuals have suggested adding “ministries” to the name in order to indicate more fully the breadth of the council’s work. After a healthy discussion, however, the consensus has returned each time to “mission” being at the core of the council’s work, and a conclusion that the term is sufficient on its own to carry council’s identity.

After resolving that “mission” stands alone at the core, most discussion has focused on whether to use “Presbyterian,” “General Assembly,” or “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” at the beginning of the name.

In 2007, when the council sought input on changing its name, from General Assembly Council, to better reflect its identity, the feedback was varied. Council members narrowly chose GAMC for their name over Presbyterian Mission Board and Presbyterian Mission Council. However, among church sessions, names that included “Presbyterian” were much more highly valued.

Name	GAC Votes (Total = 44)	Sample Church Session Votes (Total = 33, one of many)
Presbyterian Mission Board	15	17
Presbyterian Mission Council	9	19
General Assembly Mission Council	18	3
Other	2	0

Most of the other General Assembly agencies also use “Presbyterian” in their name, and only the Office of the General Assembly, uses “General Assembly.”

- Board of Pensions
- Office of the General Assembly
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation
- Presbyterian Investment and Loan
- Presbyterian Publishing

Therefore, “Presbyterian” was chosen as the first part of the recommended name because it is the simplest and most descriptive term for describing the mission work that we do, and it is consistent with usage by other agencies and “Presbyterians in the pew.”

The last piece of conversation has focused on whether “Presbyterian Mission” was sufficient or whether another term should be added at the end of the name. Some have felt that “Presbyterian Mission” was too strong or exclusive for a name

for one of the church's agencies, since Presbyterian mission could rightly be said to be accomplished in each congregation, presbytery, and synod, and not just at the General Assembly level. Others have responded there should be no timidity in claiming a strong identity for the church's mission agency. After all, the General Assembly has given other agencies similar names without making exclusive claims.

In this conversation, the GAMC has sought to give special attention to the voices of mid council (formerly known as middle governing body) staff. Mid council staff voiced a preference for another term to be added to the name, so that it did not appear that the GAMC was claiming to be the only "Presbyterian Mission" organization in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Several options were explored (see the list above). In many casual discussions, if the current name (GAMC) isn't used, the conversational term tends to be "the mission agency." For individuals who have been confused about what the GAMC is, "the mission agency" seems to make sense. Therefore, as a means of being sensitive to the concerns of mid council staff and also using language that is already natural for many Presbyterians, the organizational name proposed by the GAMC is "Presbyterian Mission Agency."

#### Organizational and Governance Identity

The name "General Assembly Mission Council" has also been confusing in that it presently represents both the staff organization and the governance body. Other General Assembly agencies have resolved this problem by defining their elected members as a committee, board, or trustees. [For a chart of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Structural Organization, see [gamc-edo-name-change-chart.pdf](#) or see p. 939.]

In order to eliminate confusion between the staff organization and the elected governance body, the GAMC recommends that the elected body be called the "Presbyterian Mission Agency Board."

## Item 10-09

[The assembly approved Item 10-09. See pp. 61, 74.]

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following vision, mission, directional goal statements, and core values for the 2013–2016 GAMC Mission Work Plan:

**Vision:** Presbyterians joyfully engaging in God's mission for the transformation of the world.

**Mission:** Inspire, equip, and connect the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.

#### Directional Goals:

##### Transformational Leaders

*Inspire, equip and connect the church to:* Cultivate, nurture, and sustain diverse, transformational leaders for Christ's mission.

*I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit. John 15:16 (CEB)*

##### Compassionate and Prophetic Discipleship

*Inspire, equip, and connect the church to:* Make, receive and send disciples who demonstrate and proclaim God's justice, peace, and love in an increasingly globalized world.

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. [God] has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and recovery of the sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Luke 4:18–19 (CEB)*

##### New Worshiping Communities

*Inspire, equip, and connect the church to:* Ignite a movement within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that results in the creation of 1,001 new worshiping communities.

*They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved. Acts 2:47 (CEB)*



**Young Adults**

***Inspire, equip and connect the church to:*** Engage and join with young adults in reforming the church for Christ's mission.

*I will set up my covenant with you and your descendants after you in every generation as an enduring covenant. I will be your God and your descendants' God after you. Genesis 17:7 (CEB)*

**General Assembly Engagement**

**Engage with, respond to, resource and represent the General Assembly in alignment with the vision and mission for the General Assembly Mission Council.**

*The apostles and the elders gathered to consider this matter. Acts 15:6 (CEB)*

**Organizational Integrity**

**Build confidence, trust, and engagement in all that we do by being Collaborative, Accountable, Responsive, and Excellent (C.A.R.E.).**

*If anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things. Philippians 4:8a (CEB)*

**Core Values of the General Assembly Mission Council****C.A.R.E. (Collaborative, Accountable, Responsive, Excellent)**

**Within the GAMC and the wider church, we will be:**

**Collaborative.** Working together in an inclusive community, we will invite input, share ideas, and seek the best ways to accomplish our common goals.

**Accountable.** Relying on the Holy Spirit to enable us to trust and to be trustworthy, we will take responsibility for our actions and work with integrity, transparency, and love.

**Responsive.** Acting as servant leaders, we will faithfully respond to the voices and needs of the church by being timely, helpful, enthusiastic, and mission-centered.

**Excellent.** Demonstrating faithful stewardship and service through God's empowering grace, we will work with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

***Rationale*****2013–2016 GAMC Mission Work Plan**

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) is currently carrying out its work as outlined in the 2009–2012 Mission Work Plan. In the summer of 2011, the GAMC engaged in a strategy planning process to develop a new Mission Work Plan to guide its work for 2013–2016. Feedback and input was solicited from diverse leaders across the church to help determine the critical needs of the denomination, what the church believes the GAMC does best, and how the GAMC can best serve the church.

The GAMC has engaged in a process that will strategically align its ministries to support common mission, vision, directional goals, and core values that will be shared across the mission agency. The vision, mission, and directional goals provide direction and a guide for decision making and allocating resources. The GAMC believes that the new Mission Work Plan will enable the agency to attract engagement and support by congregations, mid councils, and other constituents; highlight ministries that are sustainable by the church; and encourage periodic evaluation and continuous strategic thinking and innovation to enable the mission agency to anticipate changes in the church and the world.

With input from conversations with staff and leaders across the PC(USA) and its review of feedback from other discussions, the General Assembly Mission Council staff leaders developed vision, mission, directional goal statements, and core values in consultation with the Strategy Advisory Group and the General Assembly Mission Council Executive Committee. The Strategy Advisory Group presents these for the approval of the full elected body of the General Assembly Mission Council at its meeting on February 15–17, 2012.

Below is a theological framework for the strategy planning process.

*Theological Context*

What is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and how do we, as a church, live it out? This is central to our role as the General Assembly Mission Council. To that end, the Strategy Working Group engaged in an in-depth study of the Gospel of Mark. Mark gives a vivid picture of Jesus, his message, and what it means to follow him as a disciple. The picture of following Jesus is challenging. The call of the disciples that announces the Reign of God that requires a change from those that follow: “Now is the time! Here comes God’s kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!” (Mk. 1:15 CEB). Faithfulness to the Gospel is good news—a good news that invites us to change our hearts and lives. We continue to be called to follow this Jesus, embracing this good news of repentance. More than anything else, we hope to see all Presbyterians following Jesus Christ faithfully. Thus we believe our vision should be: *Presbyterians joyfully engaging in God’s mission for the transformation of the world*. We believe a smaller vision is not worthy of our calling. Now is the time.

We follow this vision in a context changing at a breathtaking rate. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to decline in numbers at the same time that the fastest growing religious segment in the United States is among the so-called “nones.” We see church structures, including our own, built to serve a church that is disappearing while the need for the Good News is pressing around the world. We are aware of the fact that we have not done a good job engaging the church’s young adults in the adventure of faith or in reaching beyond our own. We face a time of fragmentation in our own church body. What is our calling in this context that we might see the vision before us?

Presbyterians are called to be like the twelve “appointed to be with him, to be sent out.” (Mk. 3:14 CEB) Recognizing that this basic rhythm of gathering around Christ and being sent out in his name, nurtured by Word and Sacrament, is fundamental to our life as church, we see our mission tied to new and existing worshiping communities. Our mission is to: *Inspire, equip, and connect the PC(USA) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love, and witness*. This is consistent with the affirmation in the new language of the Form of Government that the congregation is the basic form of church. These worshiping communities are not sufficient to themselves—they need connective tissue and are thereby bound together in relationships of accountability and responsibility (G-1.0101).

The Form of Government gives a rich theological vision of such communities:

The church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.

The church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.

The church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God’s transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301).

Having established the reality of what we hope to see in our vision statement and how we will accomplish it in our mission statement, we have been guided by important insights from the Gospel of Mark that shape our approach to this mission and ministry.

Jesus’ ministry consistently crossed significant cultural and ethnic boundaries. He healed the man possessed by demons who lived in the tombs in the Gerasenes, Gentile territory (Mk. 5:1–20). Jesus healed the daughter of an immigrant woman who dared to ask him (Mk. 7:24–30). In an increasingly globalized world, we, too, are called to ministry and mission across all divides.

We do so out of abundance, not scarcity. We remember that we are fed by the same one who took loaves and fishes and fed all with an abundance left over. Our reliance is on the one who provides all that we need (Mk. 8:14–21), and our ministry is founded on the conviction that it is God who brings the increase:

Then Jesus said, “This is what God’s kingdom is like. It’s as though someone scatters seed on the ground, then sleeps and wakes night and day. The seed sprouts and grows, but the farmer doesn’t know how. The earth produces crops all by itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full head of grain. Whenever the crop is ready, the farmer goes out to cut the grain because it’s harvest time.”

Jesus call to us is challenging. “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them (Mk. 8:34–35). Are we ready to lose our lives for Jesus’ sake?

We are saddened by the response of the rich man to Jesus’ command to go and sell all he had and follow, for we, too, are rich people (Mk. 10:17–31). We are then challenged and inspired to see the example of Bartimaeus, the man without sight

who was healed and threw aside all he owned to follow Jesus (Mk. 10:46-52). What does it look like for a wealthy, U.S. church in 2012 to follow the example of the disciple Bartimaeus? Part of it must be to confess our own desire for prominence (James and John), recognizing that those who long for honor in the assembly will be judged harshly (Mk. 12:39-40), but those who lose their lives for Christ's sake will be rewarded.

As we work, as we attempt to follow faithfully, our vocation is to "keep watch" for what God is doing and to align ourselves with the mission of Jesus through the power of the Spirit (Mk. 13:5-27). Just as the Peter failed during the trial of Jesus, we know that we will fail to be faithful, but we are encouraged by the promise that God will be faithful to us, even when we falter. The future is uncertain. Mark ends with the disciples afraid in the face of the empty tomb. What enabled the early disciples to be faithful in this situation? What enabled the early readers of Mark to stay faithful? "The world into which the reader is invited is one in which people fail. Longed for resolutions do not occur. Loose ends are not tied up. It is as Jesus says: 'the end is still to come.'"<sup>1</sup> The story is unfinished.

The Gospel gives us reasons to be faithful even in difficult times. And these are difficult times for the PC(USA). But just as the disciples witnessed Jesus taking a few loaves and fishes, feeding the crowds, and having enough left over to strain the baskets, we look to witness the abundance of our God even in these difficult times. We keep watch and continue to follow.

We do not know the end of the story. But we see the overwhelming attractiveness of Jesus and the Reign he proclaimed, and the promise that God will be faithful to us. And as those first disciples were called, so we are called to engage in Christ's mission for the transformation of the world. May it be so.

#### Endnote

1. Don Juel as quoted in Thomas W. Gillespie, "A Case of 'Doctrinal Adhesion,'" in *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* Vol. 24 No. 2 (2003), p. 189.

## Item 10-10

[The assembly approved Item 10-10. See pp. 61, 74.]

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following changes to Sections V.–VIII. of the *Organization for Mission*: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

### ~~V. The General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*

*"The Presbyterian Mission Agency is the body of the General Assembly in which are lodged the following responsibilities:*

*"a. to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church;*

*"b. to provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities;*

*"c. to develop and propose, for General Assembly approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency; doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the Presbyterian Mission Agency;*

*"d. to act in those specific matters assigned to the Presbyterian Mission Agency by the General Assembly or this Constitution, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions;*

*"e. to perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly.*

~~"The General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* shall advise and respond to the General Assembly on priorities, programs, and strategies for addressing matters of concern for the Ministries of our church. The primary purpose of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is to lead and coordinate the total mission program. It will cultivate a style of work that emphasizes

- coordination among ministries;
- flexible deployment of resources to match changing needs;

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- “• allocation of funding to reflect stated goals;
- “• attention to the needs and gifts of congregations;
- “• effective relationships with all ~~governing bodies~~ *mid councils*; and
- “• holding the vision described without reverting to old patterns.

“According to the *Book of Order*, G-13.0201, the General Assembly Mission Council is the body of the General Assembly in which are lodged the following responsibilities:

“a. ~~to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church;~~

“b. ~~to provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities;~~

“c. ~~to develop and propose, for General Assembly approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the General Assembly Mission Council; doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the General Assembly Mission Council;~~

“d. ~~to act in those specific matters assigned to the General Assembly Mission Council by the General Assembly or this Constitution, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions;~~

“e. ~~to perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly. (*Book of Order*, G-13.0201)~~

### “A. Policy Responsibility

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* may recommend churchwide policies to the General Assembly and is responsible for implementing policies established by the General Assembly and for establishing overall procedures for the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*, and its Ministries.

### “B. Planning and Priority Setting

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is responsible for carrying out planning and priority-setting processes. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is responsible for instituting ongoing review processes.

### “C. General Assembly Budget

“It is the responsibility of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* to recommend to the General Assembly a ~~General Assembly Mission~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Budget and Program and a Per Capita Budget. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* develops the Mission Budget. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly jointly have responsibility for developing a per capita budget and apportionment.

“All restricted and unrestricted funds (principal or income) that support the programs or functions for which the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* is responsible are allocated by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and distributed in accordance with procedures approved by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. In every case the instructions of the donors are carefully followed. Such resources presently include contributions from individuals, congregations, and related organizations; proceeds from wills and bequests; and sales of property and other assets. All funds administered by the Board of Pensions, including dues and earnings on investments, are specifically excluded.<sup>1</sup>

### “D. Personnel Responsibilities

“Regarding the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* staff, the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is responsible for the following:

“1. Approval of personnel procedures.

“2. Approval, annually, of a staff rationale that determines staff commitments for the year. Any staff deployed regionally must be approved as part of the annual staff rationale.

“3. Election of the Executive Director subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.

“4. Annual performance reviews of the Executive Director as specified in the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations* (Appendix 10), and in concurrence with the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* personnel policies.

“5. Approval and monitoring of the “Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.”

“6. Approval of compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered.

“Members of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* are not eligible for election or selection as staff during the period of their term of service.

#### “E. Reporting

The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* is responsible for submitting a report to the General Assembly. The Ministries will report regularly to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, keeping the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* fully informed about the work. Recommendations from Ministries, including matters that involve an exception or a proposed change in ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* procedures, a major shift in program emphasis, or a major budget adjustment, require action by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. Issues of social witness policy, advocacy for racial ethnic and women’s concerns, and those related to Presbyterian theological institutions are reported to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and General Assembly.

#### “F. Elected Leadership

##### “1. Organization of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*

“Direction and oversight of ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* entities deploys a majority of ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* members as members of Mission Committees and Audit Committee. The work of the Ministries is a direct expression of the planning and mission understanding of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, which is accountable to the General Assembly in this regard. The number and makeup of the committees and assignments are adjustable to accomplish the work of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* in its mission and to allow flexibility to meet changing emphases in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission. The Mission Committees are to be policy, strategy, and planning committees.

“Each Ministry evaluates its need for area program committees. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* determines how many are to be established, specifying the expertise and/or experience needed, the terms of service for members, and the duration of the committees’ existence.

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* ensures advocacy functions for women and racial ethnic persons, and advisory functions for social witness policy by providing direct access to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and General Assembly. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* also provides for the development of social witness policy.

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* ensures the continuation of a committee that includes representatives of each Presbyterian theological institution, and that will review the effectiveness and stewardship of the schools on behalf of the church, will exercise the governance responsibilities of the church to the schools, and will encourage and enhance cooperation among the church’s theological schools. The committee will be provided direct access to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and the General Assembly.

“The principal legal corporation is the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, which receives, holds, and transfers property, and facilitates the management of the church’s corporate affairs. All voting members of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* serve as members of the board of directors of this corporation.

##### “2. Membership of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*

“The membership, terms of office, and officers of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* (~~Book of Order, G-13.0202 Membership~~).

#### “G. Staff Leadership

##### “1. Executive Director

“Election and Review—The Executive Director of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* is elected by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The Executive Director is accountable to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly following election. Should the General Assembly refuse to confirm any Executive Director, the position becomes vacant immediately. Periodic in-depth reviews of the Executive Director are the responsibility of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. The Executive Director is elected for a term of four years and

may be reelected for additional terms. Initial four-year terms start on the date that work commences following election. Subsequent four-year terms commence on the day following expiration of the prior term. The Executive Director may be dismissed by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* in conformity with current personnel policies and procedures.

“Responsibilities—The responsibilities of the Executive Director include:

“a. enabling the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, in response to mission directions and policies set by the General Assembly, to lead the whole church in the implementation of directions for the life and mission of the church;

“b. supporting the organizational health of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

“c. enabling the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities;

“d. providing oversight of the work of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* as a whole and the linkages among the various parts that carry out its work;

“e. providing leadership and administrative oversight to the staff and to the staffing and personnel decision process of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*;

“f. leading and supervising the staff lodged in the office of the Executive Director including a staff rationale, position description, selection of staff, annual performance reviews and staff development;

“g. bearing direct responsibility for the coordination of planning and budgeting for the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*;

“h. leading the council in implementing policies and procedures related to inclusiveness, affirmative action, and equal employment opportunity; and

“i. presiding as president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation.

“2. Deputy Executive Directors

“Deputy Executive Directors are hired by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Executive Director subject to confirmation by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*.

“Responsibilities—The Deputy Executive Directors are responsible for the healthy functioning of their Ministries in the fulfillment of their responsibilities, as well as for the support of the wider organizational health of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“~~For detailed staff organization, refer to the GAMC website.~~

“3. Staff

“All staff are staff of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and are accountable to the Executive Director. Mission personnel have shared accountability both to the overseas partner church to which they are assigned and to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* through the Deputy Executive Director for Mission.

#### “VI. ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* Relationships

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* works in partnership with synods, presbyteries, and sessions to enable the various ~~governing bodies~~ *councils* to join together in churchwide expression of the life and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* shares responsibility with the Office of the General Assembly for the joint committees of Vocation and Mid Council Relations. In addition, the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will cooperate in the preparation and presentation of the Per Capita Budget and other opportunities for joint endeavors.

“The Ministries are responsible for carrying out the mission program for the General Assembly. The Ministries are linked together through the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and with the church on behalf of that part of the mission entrusted by God to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* is responsible for financial and corporate services supporting the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“Other relationships include the following committees:

“1. Advocacy and Advisory Committees

“The Executive Director has the responsibility for the advocacy and advisory committees. All three groups have direct access to the General Assembly and the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, and their work is coordinated through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403. The Committee shall be a prophetic voice for involving racial ethnic people in the formation of public policy, particularly where race is a factor that negatively impacts the quality of life of people of color. The committee will also monitor the implementation of policies adopted by the church that impact the quality of life of racial ethnic people in the church and in the world.

“The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church and the world; and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society as a whole.

“The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, is responsible for the process of developing and recommending social witness policy to the General Assembly. The term “social witness policy” refers to the positions adopted by the General Assembly to express its stance on and guide response to issues in the public order, including their relation to the church’s own life and mission. These positions may take the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, or social involvement reports, as defined in the *Manual of the General Assembly*, p. 65, *Forming Social Policy*, 2.a.

“2. Committee on Theological Education

“The Committee on Theological Education has direct access to the General Assembly and the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, and their work is coordinated through the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry with staff accountability to the director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry. The purpose of the Committee on Theological Education is to provide an effective linkage between the General Assembly and the theological seminaries of the PC(USA) by: providing a forum through which the church-at-large can express its concerns to the seminaries; interpreting the mission of the denomination’s theological seminaries to the whole church; overseeing the interpretation and administration of the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan); serving as a means for cooperation among the church’s theological seminaries; implementing suggestions made by the Special Committee to Study Theological Institutions as approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993); serving as an agency of the denomination for relating to theological seminaries other than those of the PC(USA); and working in partnership with ~~middle governing bodies~~ *mid councils* and agencies of the General Assembly to provide for leadership in local congregations, the denomination, and the world.

## “VII. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, (previously the Central Treasury Corporation—CTC) is a corporate entity of the General Assembly and, as the principal church corporation, will hold title to property in accordance with the 1986 Deliverance (~~see [www.pcusa.org/game](http://www.pcusa.org/game)~~), and provide accounting, reporting, and financial services for the General Assembly and its entities. All voting members of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* (previously the *General Assembly Mission Council—GAMC*) are members of the board of directors. (~~See [www.pcusa.org/game](http://www.pcusa.org/game)~~)

“The officers of the corporation include a president, an executive vice-president and a chief financial officer (“treasurer”), one or more vice-presidents, a secretary, a controller, and an associate treasurer. The president shall be elected by the board of directors for a term of four years subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Ordinarily, the offices of the president and the treasurer are held by the Executive Director of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services, respectively.

“Responsibility for managing the activities of this corporation is assigned to the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services and other Shared Services staff who have been elected officers of the corporation under the direction of the president.

“The treasurer shall prepare an annual report, audited by a certified public accountant, of the financial position and operations of the General Assembly activities for the General Assembly.

**“VIII. Other General Assembly Related Corporations****“A. Board of Pensions**

“The Board of Pensions is the legally responsible corporate body established under a civil charter for the purpose of administering the pension and benefits program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is required by law to administer these programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of its participants and members.

“The relationship between the Board of Pensions and the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is set forth in an official “Memorandum of Understanding” (see ~~www.pcusa.org/game~~) to provide the necessary and desirable cooperation between these bodies, while respecting and reflecting the special needs of the Board of Pensions as it carries out its ministry to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) within an ecclesiastical structure.

“In view of the close relationship between compensation, benefits, pensions, and financial assistance, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Board of Pensions. Consistent with the “Memorandum of Understanding” between the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and ~~Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)~~ the Board of Pensions, the chairperson of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* (or designee) serves as a corresponding member of the Board of Pensions, while the chairperson of the Board of Pensions or designee serves as corresponding member of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* proposes to the General Assembly Nominating Committee one of its members to be elected to the Board of Pensions. This person also represents the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* in regard to churchwide personnel and compensation policies. At the staff level, the Board of Pensions’ president has the privilege of the floor at the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* meetings but without vote and is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director. The Board of Pensions reports directly to the General Assembly.

**“B. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

“Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the Foundation) is a corporate entity that acts as a “fiduciary” for the General Assembly, providing investment services, holding title on behalf of the church to the investment assets of the church, providing a deferred giving and wills emphasis program, and otherwise assuring that there is strict adherence to the wishes and restrictions of donors and others who have entrusted funds to its care. The Foundation holds title to property in accordance with the 1986 Deliverance. In addition to its work on behalf of the General Assembly, the Foundation offers similar services to churches and church organizations as well as to individuals who wish to use such programs as an expression of their Christian faith and stewardship. The board of the Foundation is elected by the General Assembly through the normal nominating processes. It reports to the General Assembly with a definitive copy to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, which may comment on the report. The Foundation provides information about its work to the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* on a regular basis. The total budget of the Foundation is made available for review by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. The Foundation reports directly to the General Assembly.

“In view of the close relationship between stewardship, mission funding, and deferred giving, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Foundation. A future appendix will define such a relationship. The joint report of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Foundation, as reported to the 208th General Assembly (1996), provides agreements and understandings regarding restricted funds and is can be seen at ~~www.pcusa.org/game~~. The chairperson of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* (or designee) sits with the trustees of the Foundation with voice and without vote, for purposes of coordination. This person also represents the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* in regard to churchwide personnel and compensation policies. The board of the Foundation appoints one member to serve on the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* as a corresponding member.

“At the staff level, the Executive Director of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* is a trustee of the Foundation; the Foundation’s president has the privilege of the floor at ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* meetings, but without vote. In addition, the Foundation’s president is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director.

**“C. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation**

“The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation is a legally independent, self-supporting corporation dedicated to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is responsible for publishing books and educational materials for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and for a broad ecumenical audience around the world. The publishing program strives to extend the mission of the church to the widest possible audience, representing a wide range of religious, social, and cultural points of view.



“In view of the dynamic interrelationship between the printed word and the mission of our church, there is need for a close continuing relationship between the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. The corporation is governed by its board of directors, one of whom is the corporation’s president and publisher, and one of whom is the Executive Director. The remaining directors are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for four-year terms and shall be eligible for reelection to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. The board of directors elects officers of the corporation in accordance with its corporate bylaws.

“The chairperson (or designee) of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation is a corresponding member of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* with voice and without vote. At the staff level, the president and publisher of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has the privilege of the floor at the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* meetings but without vote, and is included as part of the Expanded Staff Leadership Team through the Office of the Executive Director. The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation reports directly to the General Assembly.

“D. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a great commission community. It tells and retells the story of salvation in Jesus Christ to successive generations. It does so in buildings that are shaped to meet the needs of worshipping, witnessing, serving congregations. Generating capital to build and rebuild church buildings is the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., (the Program) is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Program offers unsecured, interest bearing investments in various states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. In general, any individual and any organization related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may invest. The funds generated by investments become mortgage loans that are used by congregations, governing bodies, and related entities for building church buildings and rebuilding existing facilities.

“Close relationships of cooperation exist among the Program, Foundation, and ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency*. Both the Foundation and ~~Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency* have significant investments commitments with the Program.

“The Board of Directors consist of fifteen (15) members. All members are elected by the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* elects two members from among its membership. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates six at-large members, one member from among the synods, and one member from among the presbyteries. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation nominates two members and the Corporation’s Personnel/Nominating Committee nominates three at-large members. The Program reports to the General Assembly through the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*.

“The Chair of the Program’s Board of Directors and its President and Chief Executive Officer have privilege of the floor without vote at ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* meetings. They are corresponding members of the ~~General Assembly Mission Council~~ *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*. In addition, the President participates in the Expanded Staff Leadership Team plus Synod Executives Forum.”

Endnote

1. See Appendix A of this document for additional procedures related to budgets and funding.

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## Item 10-11

[The assembly approved Item 10-11. See pp. 61, 74.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) strike the requirement (listed in two places) to disburse funds within 60 days of receipt from the *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A: Financial Issues, so that the sections would read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

1. In *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A: Financial Issues, “Churchwide Mission Support,” Section E.3.a–e.:

“The obligations of designators are to:

- “a. honor restrictions that have been accepted or to consider permitting additional support of a project beyond its approved budget;
- “b. ensure conformity with all applicable civil law;
- “c. report back to all donors and contributors;
- “d. ~~disburse money received within 60 days;~~
- “e. *d.* contact all donors or contributors if restricted giving cannot be used according to its restrictions—if restrictions cannot be met and the donors or contributors do not agree to the use of funds for other purposes, the gifts are to be returned to the donor.”

2. In *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A: Financial Issues, “Churchwide Mission Support,” Section F.1.b.:

The General Assembly will observe the following minimum standards for its operations. It is expected that presbyteries and synods will also adopt and adhere to these same standards:

- “(1) Provide a detailed receipt to a contributor or congregation for all money received.
- “(2) Close monthly ~~and remit funds within sixty days of receipt.~~
- “(3) Utilize the Federal Reserve system to expedite the transfer of funds whenever and wherever possible.
- “(4) Use a standardized, detailed transmittal format for transmitting data and funds electronically between presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly.
- “(5) Establish and follow cash management policies and procedures that are designed to maximize cash management earnings.”

*Rationale*

As a matter of transparency with donors, no one is served if policy is adopted, but cannot be implemented. The former sixty-day disbursement requirement may be reasonable if all funds received are for “pass through” accounts, that is, if the funds received are not actually gifts for the ministry of PC(USA), but rather are for the ministry of a related or third party organization. Theoretically, these gifts do not require management; they are simply received and disbursed, without manual or programmatic intervention. In fact, however, by IRS regulations, all tax-deductible gifts to PC(USA) are “gifts to PC(USA)” for its mission, and require due diligence and careful planning on the part of PC(USA).

Gifts toward budget items are disbursed according to the budget needs of the ministry, which may or may not occur within sixty days.

Gifts over and above the budget may be disbursed within sixty days, but this is not the practice for all gifts. Smaller gifts are often held in good stewardship until the total accumulates to a level where the gift may be used, justifying the expense of processing the payment.

Other gifts are intentionally held for long-term use, based on approved ministry needs and budgets.

Rather than possibly misleading donors with a provision regarding the timing of gift disbursement, this recommendation seeks to delete the requirement, in order to maintain a consistency between practice and policy.

## Item 10-12

[The assembly approved Item 10-12. See pp. 61, 74.]

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve that the name of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) remain unchanged.

*Rationale*

This recommendation is in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 09-16. Recommendation 2. Request That ACREC Bring a Report and Recommendation of a New Name of ACREC to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 84, 681–82).*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a report from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), “Report on Creating A Climate for Change within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” which recommended that the term “racial ethnic” be replaced with a term that would include persons of color (ethnic and cultural groups not predominantly European in origin) that were becoming part of the demographics emerging in the United States. The General Assembly directed ACREC to consider changing ACREC’s name to reflect the growth of these new ethnic and cultural groups. With the assistance of the Reverend Dr. Virstan Choy, an ACREC subcommittee read, studied, and discussed what name would best reflect ACREC’s representation of new communities that are non-European in origin. This subcommittee was not able to make a definitive decision, and as a result, ACREC requested a two-year extension to discern whether there was a name that might more accurately reflect the work they are called to do. The 219th General Assembly (2010) granted ACREC a two-year extension.

For the past two years, the renaming subcommittee of ACREC has studied and reexamined the possibility of renaming ACREC. With professional consultation and extensive reading, the renaming subcommittee discussed various names. Ultimately, the committee voted to retain their name because they believe that race and ethnicity continue to dictate and shape the relationship between people of color and people who are primarily European in origin (termed “White”) whether the people of color are new immigrants or people whose communities are well-established. The committee determined that with their decision to keep their name, it was important to reiterate the role of race in the context of access to power and privilege, to be intentional about the inclusion of new immigrant fellowships in ACREC’s work, and to educate the denomination on the purpose and advocacy work of ACREC.

#### *Why Advocacy for People of Color Is Still the Focus of ACREC*

Allan G. Johnson, sociologist and author of the book *Privilege, Power, and Difference*, says that “White” as a classification of people is not about the color of skin; rather, it is a “code word” for who is “in” and who is not.<sup>1</sup> In examining the social history of the United States, there have been periods when certain groups have not been considered “White” but who now are. For example, Irish Catholics, Italian Catholics, and European-ancestry Jews were once not considered White, but in the decade of 1960s, this began to change. All three groups are now considered “White.” These examples support Johnson’s definition of “White” as a code word for access and status and not a skin color.<sup>2</sup> The question that needs to be addressed is not what constitutes “White,” but how does a person access the power and privilege that comes with being labeled “White?” How does one, no matter what the color of their skin, become part of the “in” crowd?

As long as there are people and groups of people who continue to meet barriers that keep them from being in the inner circle of the society they live in, there will be a need for continued advocacy for their voices. In a lecture at UC, Berkeley, in 2010, Allan Johnson spoke of “unearned” power and privilege being invisible to those who have it and have always had it.<sup>3</sup> Johnson demonstrates how individuals in the dominant culture defend themselves against accusations of racism, when in fact, it is not necessarily the individuals who are racist, but the systems in which they participate and live. United States’ society reflects a historical system of power and privilege where some social groups enter that system with the major advantage of inherited power and privilege.

A good illustration of this unearned and often unrecognized privilege is seen in Peggy McIntosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” a short and now famous article that lists privileges taken for granted by the dominant, culture of those European in origin. McIntosh says “White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks” that give unearned advantage to those who carry the knapsack.<sup>4</sup> Allan Johnson likens living in a system as exists in the U.S. to playing a game of monopoly in which one person always “ends up with everything” and everyone else “ends up with nothing” because the game is designed that way.<sup>5</sup> Even if four saintly “Mother Teresas” were playing the game, says Johnson, one would dominate the rest. Sociologists note that it is easier to detect racism in systems and institutions of our society if we look at the wider picture, rather than trying to pick out privileged individuals who are benefiting from the system because of its inherent discriminatory design.<sup>6</sup>

Given the current economic downturn, it is also important to be reminded that the dominant culture of those European in origin is always better off in these situations than the more vulnerable people of color, who often find themselves in poorer communities. Inequality and poverty are compounded for those who have little or no access to the “invisible knapsack.” Since the presidency of Ronald Reagan and the advent of Milton Friedman’s “trickle down economics,” a popular argument has been that “a rising tide lifts all boats.” In order to benefit from this kind of system, however, one must first “have a boat.” This lack of insight is a direct result of that “invisible knapsack” of privilege, and it only highlights how those with privilege cannot see past their own paradigm.

Johnson uses a very instructive metaphor by analogizing the day-to-day struggle of the working and middle classes to a game of musical chairs, with the chairs representing wealth and/or upward mobility. In the last three decades especially, as the participants of this “game” of musical chairs have worked to acquire a chair before the music stops, more and more people have found themselves on the floor without a chair, says Johnson.<sup>7</sup> More than ever before, this country has “produced more chairs” but there are fewer and fewer of them out there in the “game” for people to sit on. We have produced the chairs, says Johnson, in greater supply than ever before, but where are they? The problem, he says, is not with the production of

chairs—wealth—but with the distribution of them.<sup>8</sup> Access is becoming more difficult for most people, and most difficult for people of color.

In the midst of this severe inequality and hypersensitivity to our racial and ethnic differences comes the question of whom ACREC needs to advocate for. While it was suggested to ACREC in the past that “White” is an ethnicity that also needs advocacy, ACREC’s mandate is to speak out for those whose access to power and privilege is limited and even non-existent. Our nation is now approximately 60 percent “White,” and the PC(USA) is approximately 90 percent “White.” When “White” members of our society ask why they cannot be included as an ethnicity that needs advocacy, they are unaware of their knapsack of privilege.

An intentional effort needs to be made to educate all persons, both white and persons of color about, (1) the invisible, unearned privileges of the dominant culture, (2) how to recognize the unequal U.S. social economic system based on privilege, and (3) how to embrace the beloved community that acknowledges and respects our common humanity while celebrating differences amongst the vast kaleidoscope of faces of all children of God.

In the most unequal economic times in America since the Great Depression, now more than ever, ACREC needs to advocate for racial ethnic communities in our midst, especially the new immigrant communities who struggle the most. As our history has shown, until this trend is reversed, people of color will be by far the most affected victims of this inequality. It is ACREC’s task, as mentioned in our mission statement, to “advocate for full access for all racial ethnic/immigrant groups” and to continue to call to the church’s attention issues of concern affecting these groups, both in our church and in society.

#### Endnotes

1. Allan G. Johnson, *Privilege, Power and Difference*, 2nd ed. (Mountainview, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2006), 18.
2. Ibid.
3. Allan G. Johnson, UC Berkeley Center for Health Leadership Lecture: “Leading From Where You Are,” (Jan 2011) <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWTIGb9k59w&feature=related>> (December 12, 2011).
4. Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” In *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism*, 2nd ed., edited by Paula S. Rothenberg (New York: Worth Publishers, 2005), 109.
5. Allan G. Johnson, *The Gender Knot: Unraveling our Patriarchal Legacy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 34.
6. Allan G. Johnson, UC Berkeley Center for Health Leadership Lecture: “Leading From Where You Are.”
7. Allan G. Johnson, *The Forest and the Trees: Sociology as Life, Practice and Promise* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 163.
8. Ibid.

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- Johnson, Allan G. *The Forest and the Trees: Sociology as Life, Practice and Promise*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.
- Johnson, Allan G. *The Gender Knot: Unraveling our Patriarchal Legacy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005.
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## Item 10-13

[Item 10-13 became Item 16-07.]

## Item 10-14

**The General Assembly Mission Council, upon recommendation of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**[The assembly approved Item 10-14, Recommendation 1. See pp. 61, 76.]**

**1. Set a shared goal to be owned by the whole church to increase total Special Offering receipts to \$20 million in the year 2020—20 by 20.**

*Rationale for Recommendation 1.*

“your young ... shall see visions, and your old ... shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17)

“where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint” (Prov. 29:18)

“I am about to do a new thing ... do you not perceive it?” (Isa. 43: 19)

Modern Presbyterians embrace giving and generosity in a different way from previous generations. Donors seek an emotional connection to ministry that changes lives. Special Offerings provide a direct connection to a multitude of transformational ministries. Therefore, there is a tremendous untapped potential in Special Offerings.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the request to commission a Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, which would:

- Review the possible role and functions of Special Offerings,
- Examine the role of Special Offerings within the larger communication and funds development contexts of the denomination,
- Encourage and expand the role of Special Offerings as a connective tissue of the church,
- Identify what Special Offerings can do best and what steps need to be taken in order to enable them to do that well.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has embraced this opportunity to take a fresh look at the role of Special Offerings within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—for the first time since the reconfiguration of Special Offerings at reunion a generation ago.

This opportunity to review Special Offerings and provide recommendations comes at a crucial time, as the offerings are no longer working as they once did for the church. For the past decade, Special Offerings have been in decline. We live in a time of great transformation for the church, as evidenced by the move away from regulatory structures to approaches that are uniquely customizable locally by those seeking to be faithful in their own context. The task force believes that similar changes are required for Special Offerings, in order to transform Special Offerings to a place of esteemed commitment by the denomination to Christ’s mission.

We have initiated conversations about the offerings with leaders and members of small, mid-sized, and large congregations, both from those who participate in Special Offerings and from those who do not. We have reached out to presbytery leaders, General Assembly committee members, and front-line ministry staff in the areas funded by Special Offerings. Our goal was to build upon what is already working, and to make changes in other areas that would reconnect Special Offerings to the mission of the denomination in flexible and nimble ways.

Our recommendations, we believe, strengthen Special Offerings and are faithful to the input we heard from those we engaged. We have great hope that the recommendations, if approved, will result in increased funding for Christ’s mission ... with a specific target we are recommending for churchwide embrace: 20 by 20 (\$20 million in Special Offerings annual receipts by the year 2020).

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes that God is calling PC(USA) to a new vision of missional generosity and commitment as a denomination. Special Offerings unite us in mission. Special Offerings allow churches of all sizes to participate in mission together. Special Offerings give opportunities for Presbyterians in every place to contribute as they are able. Special Offerings allow for churches and members to choose areas of passion and impact. Together, we can do more than any of us apart.

The task force resists any approach that passively accepts the current rate of decline as inevitable, pointing to a shrinking denomination or a challenging economy. Rather, as a blessed and faithful people, Presbyterians must listen more attentively than ever to Christ’s call.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force urges the General Assembly Mission Council and the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve a bold, transformational goal that will challenge Presbyterians to higher levels of impactful mission than ever before, and to engage Special Offerings with renewed energy, fervor, and commitment.

The task force recommends a goal of \$20 million in Special Offerings receipts annually by the year 2020—this is our “20/20 Vision to Impact the world as Presbyterians united in Special Offerings mission.”

The task force believes this goal to be achievable, with appropriate investment in funds development and communications staff, technology, and infrastructure as recommended below.

Our consultants, The Alford Group, have also deemed the goal achievable. Other mainline denominations are successfully adopting church-wide unified goals for occasional offering mission endeavors and utilizing technology to champion and facilitate giving. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes that it is time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to make a bold commitment for growth in mission.

Reaching this goal in 2020 will require a 50 percent increase over the total 2010 giving level to Special Offerings. However, the recommendations of this task force strengthen each of the Special Offerings, linking them more closely to the liturgical seasons in which they are received, allowing for a season of interpretation for each offering, and providing a variety of technological means for individuals and congregations to participate in the offerings. While a 50 percent increase within a decade may seem steep, on a per-member giving basis, an increase of \$3.50 is well within reach. The question is whether we together as a denomination have a vision for doing something more together. We, as members of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, believe that we do. (See Figures 1 and 2 in game-special-offerings-task-force-rec-graphs.pdf; see also page 940.)

[The assembly approved Item 10-14, Recommendation 2. See pp. 61, 76.]

**2. Approve the following revised Special Offerings Criteria and update Appendix A, Section C.1.a. of the *Organization for Mission*: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

**“a. Criteria for ~~Participation in~~ Receiving Special Offerings Funds**

~~“The Special Offerings operate within the PC(USA) as a distinct but integrated part of the church’s overall, coordinated funds development and communication strategy. As they provide important sinew bonds for the connexional church, they and are too valuable a resource to be squandered on emphases of passing interest to church members a critical resource for the long-term mission of the whole church. The following criteria attempt to outline ways of discerning whether a particular focus ministry is eligible to be considered for funding by one of these special offerings.~~

~~“(1) Churchwide sSpecial oOfferings ministries will provide valuable mission interpretation opportunities within the overall funds development and communications strategy of the whole church.~~

~~“(2) Churchwide sSpecial oOfferings ministries will enable the church to meet historical and ongoing needs in relationship to the total mission priorities of the church, always proclaiming the name of Jesus.~~

~~“(3) Causes included in a churchwide special offering Special Offerings ministries will have demonstrated potential for churchwide donor support.~~

~~“(4) Causes included in a churchwide special offering Special Offerings ministries will specifically define specify the needs to be met, provide plans will be provided for funds’ allocation, program ministry implementation, set measurable goals, and demonstrate impact, effectiveness, and accountability to the General Assembly Mission Council.~~

~~“(5) Causes grouped within the same churchwide special offering will have a focused, coherent mission purpose.”~~

***Rationale for Recommendation 2***

This recommendation is in response to the following referral: *2008 Referral: Item 08-03. Special Offerings Task Force Report, Recommendation 3. That the General Assembly Mission Council Commission an Advisory Task Force for Special Offerings to Review the Possible Role and Functions of Special Offerings and That the Advisory Task Force Make an Annual Report to the General Assembly Mission Council, an Interim Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010) and Final Recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Special Offerings Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 22, 23, 586–615).*

The *Organization for Mission* provides for a quadrennial review of Special Offerings criteria and operating guidelines, as well as their form and distribution. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force was charged with conducting this review. In this recommendation the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force addresses the criteria for receiving Special Offerings funds as found in the *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A: Financial Issues.

The editorial changes recommended here emphasize Special Offerings’ contribution to the church’s missional identity and call. While Special Offerings are unique, they are also a part of the church’s larger vision for mission and funding.

In its research and interviews, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force discovered a widespread desire to improve the missional effectiveness of the ministries that receive funds from Special Offerings, both to maximize the impact of mission dollars and to ensure the contributor's confidence in Special Offerings ministries. The changes in the fourth criterion are directed at this concern, and define the General Assembly Mission Council as the responsible party for ensuring this level of oversight.

[The assembly approved Item 10-14, Recommendation 3. See pp. 61, 76.]

3. Approve the following revised Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings in Appendix A of the Organization for Mission, Section C.1.b.: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

**“b. Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings**

~~“In order to fulfill the promise of special offerings, the following principles and practices are necessary to will~~ guide the churchwide special offerings of the PC(USA):

*“(1) Review*

*“(a) On an annual basis, the General Assembly Mission Council Executive Director, or designee, will review Special Offerings ministries’ impact, effectiveness, and accountability against stated goals. The review will also include the appropriateness of Special Offerings ministries’ reserves. Funds development expense and staffing will also be reviewed annually with respect to goals, effectiveness, and strategies. All review findings will be forwarded to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

~~“(b) On a four-year cycle, the General Assembly Mission Council will provide a task force for the review and evaluation of the causes Special Offerings and the recipient ministries supported by churchwide special offerings, and will consider the consideration of new causes Special Offerings purposes in light of established criteria, for recommendation to the General Assembly. Between reviews, the task force created for this evaluation will continue to review performance, accountability, and accumulation of reserves on an annual basis and will forward its findings to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). Finally, this task force will send its findings and active questions to the successor task force.~~

*“(2) When allocating funds, the General Assembly Mission Council will align Special Offerings ministries with its strategic vision and mission.*

*“(3) Each GAMC Special Offerings ministry will maintain financial reserves of not more than two years of that ministry’s annual budget. Understanding the particularity of Presbyterian disaster response ministries, with commitment to long-term recovery, it is understood that disaster response funds are exempt from this requirement, provided that the GAMC has approved and annually reviews a plan for disbursement.*

~~“(4) Churchwide special offerings Special Offerings promotions will occur in a central promotions office the GAMC’s Communications and Funds Development ministry area rather than within programmatic entities.~~

~~“(5) Costs of promoting and receiving each churchwide special offering Special Offerings will be paid from receipts of the offering. After deducting each offering’s costs from total receipts, restricted and unrestricted, of that offering, all receipts will then be considered permanently restricted, and will be used only for the purposes for which they were given to the purpose of the Offering. Each offering’s Offering’s costs will be determined by the GAMC through its regular budget process.~~

~~“(6) Start-up costs for new or significantly revised special offerings Special Offerings will be expensed as incurred.~~

~~“(7) Promotion materials for a special offerings Special Offerings will relate to the liturgical season in which the offering Offering is received.~~

~~“(8) Any change in the pattern of distribution of a churchwide special offerings Special Offerings will require allow for an eighteen-month time period before becoming effective to allow adequate time for development and distribution of interpretive and promotion promotional materials.~~

~~“(9) There will be no more than five four churchwide special offerings Special Offerings in any given calendar year. The General Assembly will identify times for the promotion and receipt of offerings Offerings.~~

~~“(10) The agencies ministries receiving churchwide special offerings Special Offerings funds will prepare an annual report concerning the receipt and distribution of those special offerings Special Offerings funds for review by the General Assembly Mission Council. This report, which shall include a compilation of reports from con-~~

~~gregations and middle governing bodies where portions of the offering have remained summarizing their use, will be made available to churches and other governing bodies councils.~~

~~“(9) (11) All programs ministries receiving funds from churchwide special offerings Special Offerings will work with mission interpretation Communications and Funds Development staff to identify and develop networks of potential interpreters throughout the church.~~

~~“(10) (12) All churchwide special offerings Special Offerings will develop interpretive materials that are well-grounded in Reformed theology and appropriate to the offering’s Offering’s recommended liturgical season.~~

~~“(13) To advance mission and acknowledge generosity, congregations are asked to submit Special Offerings receipts directly to the GAMC and presbytery as designated by each Offering. GAMC will record and notify presbyteries of congregational donations and thank congregations in a timely manner.”~~

### *Rationale for Recommendation 3.*

The *Organization for Mission* provides for a quadrennial review of Special Offerings criteria and operating guidelines, as well as their form and distribution. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force was charged with overseeing this review, and proposing any necessary revisions to the operating guidelines for Special Offerings. This recommendation addresses the operating guidelines for Special Offerings, as found in the *Organization for Mission*, Appendix A: Financial Issues.

#### Guideline 1

Organizational effectiveness requires ongoing attention and continuing nurture. Representative task forces are not well suited to overseeing the regular annual review, evaluation, and improvement of Special Offerings ministries. By assigning responsibility and authority for annual evaluation to the GAMC Executive Director, to be reported to the elected GAMC, the church is ensured that Special Offerings ministries receive current attention and refinement. Likewise, by assigning responsibility and authority for review to a task force every four years, the church engages an evenhanded system of checks and balances. In this way, Special Offerings ministries receive input from, and partnership with, elected leadership, appointed leadership, and staff.

#### Guideline 2

Historically, Special Offerings ministries received funding largely independent of denominational goal setting, strategic budget planning processes, and an overall vision for denominational mission. This produced a consistent funding flow for these recipient programs, without requiring integration and coordination with other priorities, and was effective so long as the offering receipts grew to keep pace with changing needs.

Over the last decade, however, the trend line for Special Offerings receipts has fallen. Since 2007, the decline has been even more dramatic. The General Assembly Mission Council has been strategic in aligning its mission budget within an overall vision for denominational work, but Special Offerings ministries have largely remained outside that coordinated planning process. By aligning Special Offerings ministries with the General Assembly Mission Council’s strategic vision and mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) allows its elected leadership flexibility, nimbleness, and license to direct mission dollars to their areas of greatest impact.

Together we can align our efforts toward a single set of denominational priorities, through the funds allocation process.

#### Guideline 3

Financial reserves are faithful when they foster responsible planning and ensure dependable funding for the near term. Reserves are unfaithful when they go unspent amidst urgent human need. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force was charged with reviewing the reserve levels for each Special Offerings ministry. We have not found any current reserve level to be inappropriate. This recommendation provides guidance for staff on an ongoing basis, striking a balance between utilizing all available funds and proper contingency planning.

#### Guideline 9

The previous quadrennial review process called for four Special Offerings, but left open the possibility of five Special Offerings, by leaving “five” in the guidelines. The research of this task force, however, shows conclusively that the denomination is unwilling to support more than four special offerings. Less than 3 percent of specialized clergy, pastors, elders, or members felt that four Special Offerings were too few. Therefore, we recommend that the guidelines call for no more than four Special Offerings.



10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Are four special offerings:	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Too many?	19%	25%	31%	16%
The right number?	40%	44%	50%	56%
Too few?	2%	1%	1%	3%
Not sure?	39%	30%	18%	24%

Source: The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2007, Q6.

Guideline 10

Each ministry of the church is called to effective witness and mission. By setting clear and measurable goals and reviewing them annually, Special Offerings ministries will heighten impact and continue to build contributor confidence.

Guideline 13

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force worked with a consulting firm, The Alford Group, to conduct focus groups, interviews, and internal assessments of PC(USA) processes and procedures. The Alford Group found that there are inconsistencies in the denomination’s records of what funds have been contributed by specific churches and the numbers the church has on record. This inconsistency in reporting and recording makes it extremely difficult to appropriately acknowledge and thank congregations. Participating congregations report that acknowledgement was irregular or they did not recall being acknowledged for their contribution.

The Presbyterian Panel also asked questions about gift acknowledgement with regard to the Christmas Joy Offering and found that most individuals had no recollection of being thanked for their gifts.

Did your congregation receive a letter from the PC(USA) thanking the congregation for its 2010 contributions to the Christmas Joy Offering?	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Yes, and I read it or heard it read	6%	16%	44%	16%
Yes, but I didn’t read it or hear it read	3%	6%	8%	6%
No	3%	3%	4%	3%
Don’t know	88%	76%	43%	75%

Source: The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2011, Q9.

Since members are more likely to contribute to an organization that they believe will be a good steward of their contributions, and as PC(USA) works to further engage churches in the Special Offerings, it will be important to build confidence in processes and record-keeping as well as to communicate directly with churches regarding the impact of their gifts.

Currently, it is common for months to pass between congregations receiving the offering and their contributions reaching the Special Offerings ministries. The simplest process for getting dollars from the pew and into active mission is for local congregations to remit their contributions directly. For the Special Offerings where funding is shared between a presbytery and the General Assembly Mission Council, the task force proposal would encourage congregations to remit their contributions directly to their presbytery and to the General Assembly Mission Council. For the Special Offerings where General Assembly agencies are the sole recipient, then the task force proposal encourages congregations to remit directly to the General Assembly Mission Council.

In each case, the GAMC will acknowledge the gifts of congregations in a timely manner, including notification to the presbytery.

**[In response to Item 10-14, Recommendation 4, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 61, 76.]**

4. Approve the following Seasons and Ministries of Special Offerings for 2014–2017: [The following text shows the changes being suggested from the approved text of Item 08-03 from the *Minutes* of the 218th General Assembly (2008), Part I, pp. 586–87. Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

## “a. CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING:

“(1) *Season:* ~~interpreted and received during~~ *interpreted and received during throughout* the Advent and Christmas seasons in gratitude for God’s gift of Jesus Christ *to prepare and care for church leaders in every generation.*

“(2) ~~Causes~~ *Ministries:*

“(1) (a) Assistance programs to meet identified and emerging needs for professional church workers and spouses through the Board of Pensions, 50 percent;

“(2) (b) Racial ethnic ~~education church leadership development~~ through ~~Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries~~ *the General Assembly Mission Council, 50 percent.*

## “b. ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING,:

“(1) *Season:* ~~interpreted and received during~~ Lent and on Easter Sunday in response to Christ’s call to ~~us to~~ *feed the hungry, house the homeless, minister to the suffering, and empower the poor and oppressed* *sacrificial love for world.*

“(2) ~~Causes administered through the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry. Causes:~~ *Ministries: Ministries of justice, peace, development and compassion as determined bi-annually by the General Assembly Mission Council such as:*

“(1) (a) ~~Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 32 percent~~ *community development;*

“(2) (b) ~~Presbyterian Hunger Program, 36 percent~~ *disaster assistance;*

“(3) (c) ~~Self Development of People, 32 percent.~~ *hunger ministries;*

“(d) *peacemaking endeavors.*

## “c. PENTECOST OFFERING,:

“(1) *Season:* ~~interpreted and received in relation to~~ *during the* Pentecost ~~Sunday~~ *season to celebrate God’s gift of the Holy Spirit for a new generation in support of ministry with youth and young adults and in response to the needs of children at risk.*

“(2) ~~Causes~~ *Ministries: Ministries with youth and young adults and children-at-risk:*

“(1) (a) ~~Fifty percent will be used for Youth and Young Adult Ministries and divided as follows 60% allocated bi-annually by the General Assembly Mission Council for:~~

“(a) (i) ~~Theology, Worship, and Education, 25 percent (for youth & young adult ministries~~ *Ministries of discipleship with youth and young adults;*

“(b) (ii) ~~World Mission, 12.5 percent (for national volunteers in shared ministry~~ *Ministries encouraging young adult Christian service in national and international settings;*

“(e) (iii) ~~World Mission, 12.5 percent (for international volunteers in shared ministry)~~ *Ministries advocating justice on behalf of children.*

“(2) ~~Ten percent will be used for its Children at Risk programs through the Child Advocacy Office in the Peace and Justice Ministry.~~

“(3) (2) ~~40 percent Retained~~ *retained by Congregations, congregations for ministries such as Vacation Bible School, 40 percent. Congregations are encouraged to use this 40 percent for college and campus ministry ministries, camping ministries, and/or camps and conference centers, children in need, and youth mission trips in their region in addition to Children at Risk ministries. Such purposes are in keeping with the goal of keeping youth and young adult ministries at camps and college campus settings supported and vibrant.*

“d. ~~PEACEMAKING OFFERING, interpreted and received in relation to World Communion Sunday, recognizing the call to bring Christ’s peace to all creation. Causes:~~

~~“Holistic peacemaking programs sensitive to the restoration of God’s creation and including peacemaking in individuals, families, congregations, communities, the international arena, and the environment through:~~

~~“(1) General Assembly Council, Presbyterian Peacemaking, 50 percent;~~

~~“(2) Synods and Presbyteries, 25 percent;~~

~~“(3) Congregations, 25 percent.”~~

*“d. THE WORLD COMMUNION OFFERING*

*“(1) Season: Interpreted and received in preparation for and dedicated on World Communion Sunday, recognizing Christ’s Great Commission to witness “in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Mt. 28:19–20, Acts 1:8).*

*“(2) Ministries: For God’s global mission of witness and justice*

*“(a) 25 percent to be used by congregations for local witness and outreach to the world;*

*“(b) 25 percent to be used by presbyteries for shared witness and outreach to the world;*

*“(c) 50 percent to be allocated bi-annually by the GAMC for global witness and outreach beyond the United States”*

**In the spirit of Items 10-19 and 10-5 (overtures from the Presbyteries of Pittsburgh and Western North Carolina), it is important to maintain existing programs, percentages, and designees in the One Great Hour of Sharing, the Christmas Joy Offering, the Pentecost offerings [and the Peacemaking Offering]. The 220th General Assembly (2012) recommends that the [current distribution patterns be maintained for the next funding cycle and that the existing Special Offerings Task Force be asked to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the effect of new fund raising techniques, to work collaboratively with funding recipients, update progress on the 20 million by 2020 goal, and recommend additional strategies]. ~~World Communion offering be shared by Global Missions and Peacemaking and distributed in the following manner:~~**

**~~50 percent GAMC, Presbyterian Peacemaking~~**

**~~25 percent to be allocated bi-annually by the GAMC for global witness and outreach beyond the United States~~**

**~~20 percent to be used by congregations, and~~**

**~~5 percent by presbyteries for peacemaking and or outreach to the world.]~~**

**[Financial Implication: (2013) \$405,929 (2014); \$400,000 (GAMC—Restricted)]**

***Rationale for Recommendation 4.***

The *Organization for Mission* provides for a quadrennial review of Special Offerings criteria and operating guidelines, as well as their form and distribution. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force was charged with this review. This recommendation addresses the form and distribution of Special Offerings for the next quadrennium (2014–2017).

The four Special Offerings offer each Presbyterian an opportunity to demonstrate the witness of Christ locally and throughout the world. Historically, these offerings have provided a significant contribution to our mission budget, and we are hopeful that this contribution will increase over the coming years, with the benefit of some specific changes in the offerings that will make the offerings easier to promote and demonstrate a tighter connection between the gift of donors and recipient ministries.

The Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings call for a close relationship between the promotion of each offering and the liturgical season in which it is received. Our changes seek to tighten and align the offerings within each liturgical focus.

Our research suggested that each offering would benefit from a season of interpretation, rather than being limited to a single day in the life of the church, so we have made changes in each offering to expand the period in which a congregation might choose to interpret and receive the offering.

We have also sought to integrate the offerings into the visioning and strategic planning work of the General Assembly Mission Council, so that the denomination gains flexibility to use these critical funds strategically.

In most cases, the task force proposal changes the distribution pattern away from specific ministry programs, where there is less flexibility and directs the distribution instead toward topical areas of ministry. In most cases, the General Assembly Mission Council would be the body that recommends specific distribution of receipts across those topical areas of ministry, when it recommends a budget to each General Assembly. In this way, we have a holistic sense of the work of each offering, rather than solely funding the work of one office, in one ministry area, without alignment with our overall mission. As part of

this shift, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force also recommends eliminating percentage allocations that direct how funds will be used.

It is not the intent of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force to defund any ministry. Rather, we believe that ministry prioritization and funding allocations are the responsibility of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), in partnership with the General Assembly. Special Offerings are one revenue stream alongside others for funding GAMC ministries. Aligning Special Offerings with the GAMC strategic planning process requires that the GAMC have flexibility for funding allocations within those priorities in accordance with the broad designations established for the Special Offerings.

Finally, The Alford Group helped us see growth potential for the offerings by making specific suggestions for how congregations and presbyteries could use their share of Special Offerings receipts. Our recommendations include suggestions for local opportunities related to Special Offerings. By exciting churches and presbyteries about the change that they can affect in their own communities, it is possible to increase the engagement of the pastor, session, mission committee, and members. In addition, church members who see an impact close to home are more likely to increase their overall giving.

#### 1. *Rationale for Revisions to the Christmas Joy Offering*

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has sought to expand the season of interpretation for the Christmas Joy Offering by including both the Advent and Christmas seasons as possible windows of interpretation by congregations. For some, the Advent season is too busy for other emphases. For others, Advent is not imaginable without the opportunity to participate in the Christmas Joy Offering. We seek to make room for both types of congregations by expanding the season.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force also recommends a change in the primary purpose of the offering. Promotion for the Christmas Joy Offering hasn't always been clearly integrated. It has benefited "assistance programs of the Board of Pensions," and "racial ethnic education," each receiving 50 percent of the offering. To many it has seemed as though the two causes were unrelated, and had simply been tossed together as part of the reunion of the northern and southern churches a quarter-century ago. True as that may be, it has now been twenty-five years since reunion, and we believe it is time to build a new unity into this offering. By focusing our own giving through the Christmas Joy Offering on "gratitude for God's gift of Jesus Christ" in order "to prepare and care for church leaders in every generation," we believe that a single focus may be possible: the Christmas Joy Offering would be about preparing and caring for church leaders in every generation. We do that in part through the assistance programs of the Board of Pensions, and we do that in part through racial ethnic church leadership development, all in gratitude for God's gift in Jesus Christ.

The GAMC portion of the Christmas Joy Offering has supported several emphases during its history, always with a connection to racial ethnic leadership. For several years, it was specifically focused on "racial ethnic schools and colleges." Then it was changed to "racial ethnic education." It is the hope of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force that the General Assembly will choose to tighten this focus on "racial ethnic church leadership development," in keeping with the strategic leadership development goals of the GAMC.

We believe passionately that 50 percent of Christmas Joy Offering funds should be spent to develop future racial ethnic leaders for church leadership. As a task force, we have no specific recommendation on how the General Assembly Mission Council should allocate these funds. In a separate recommendation, we propose that the GAMC create a short-term task force of racial ethnic church leaders to give advice on how these funds might best be used for this purpose.

We expect that some may react to the possible loss of funding by racial ethnic schools and colleges (the current recipient, under the present distribution to "racial ethnic education.") The task force is sensitive to the needs of racial ethnic schools and colleges, and notes the critical line in the "Articles of Agreement" for reunion from 1983:

8.4 Racial ethnic educational institutions have been the primary source from which racial ethnic church leadership has developed. Consistent with the dire need for racial ethnic leadership, the General Assembly Council shall propose to the General Assembly ways whereby the General Assembly shall be able to fulfill its responsibility for education through colleges and secondary schools and for meeting the operational and developmental needs of those Presbyterian schools that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups. (*Book of Order*, Articles of Agreement, Article 8.4, p. B-8)

Guided by Article 8.4, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force acknowledges that the General Assembly Mission Council will need to revisit the funding patterns used to support and sustain Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREI).

In this paradigm the GAMC will reexamine, redefine, and refocus its funding patterns for HPREI, within the context of "racial ethnic church leadership," as called for by Article 8.4. As part of the aforementioned task force, we hope that the GAMC will continue in dialogue with the HPREI leadership and other stakeholders.

A similar issue of a special task force was also raised by the Racial Ethnic Educational Support Work Group (2006), which stated in its report:

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

The work group recommends that the National Ministries Division convene a small group of persons with relevant expertise to develop measurements and standards that will help ensure a quality education for those attending Christmas Joy Offering-supported schools and colleges—for instance, that faculties are strong, that facilities are adequate, that curriculum and instruction are competent and that there is reasonably long-range stability.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) responded by approving four recommendations:

1. The General Assembly Council, National Ministries Division, Racial Ethnic Support Work Group, recommends that the 217th General Assembly (2006) reaffirm the church's mission of racial ethnic educational support and its commitment to the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREI): Barber-Scotia College, Cook College and Theological School, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Sheldon Jackson College, Stillman College, Menaul School, and Presbyterian Pan American School. ...

2. The General Assembly Council, National Ministries Division, Racial Ethnic Support Work Group, recommends to the 217th General Assembly (2006) that a special group (including a representative of Mission Support Services (MSS)) be formed to develop educational guidelines and standards and a method for applying them in order to ensure that the Christmas Joy Offering supports institutions that can most effectively serve populations for whom access to educational opportunities would otherwise be difficult if not impossible to attain. These educational guidelines, standards, and the method for applying them should be completed, enacted and reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008). ...

3. The General Assembly Council, National Ministries Division, Racial Ethnic Support Work Group, recommends to the 217th General Assembly (2006) that until such guidelines and standards are established the Christmas Joy Offering continue to be used exclusively for the historically Presbyterian racial ethnic institutions with whom the GAC has traditionally covenanted. ...

4. The General Assembly Council, National Ministries Division, Racial Ethnic Support Work Group, recommends to the 217th General Assembly (2006) that the General Assembly Council (GAC) consider establishing a special fund and case statement to help meet the unique needs of the HPREIs. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp.1082–1089, Item 1081.)

In 2008, the General Assembly approved the General Assembly Council's response, which established institutional standards for participating in the Christmas Joy Offering:

### Institutional Standards for Participating in the Christmas Joy Offering

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors have a long history of support for minority education. That support continues through the distribution of funds collected annually through the Christmas Joy Offering, one-half of which is designated for support of Historic Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREI).<sup>1</sup> In order to be a good steward of these funds and accountable to those who contribute to the offering, the church establishes the following formula for the dissemination of monies from the Christmas Joy Offering designated for racial ethnic education.

#### I. BASE GRANTS

One half of the funds distributed shall be earmarked for Base Grants to institutions that meet the following criteria:

A. Mission. An institution must show evidence of commitment to the stated mission of its governing board and to the mission goals of the General Assembly Council (GAC) of the PC(USA). Those goals include:

1. Leadership and Vocation
2. Spirituality and Discipleship
3. Justice and Compassion
4. Evangelism and Witness

The evidence must demonstrate that an institution's mission is understood and supported by all of its constituent groups and must include a covenant between the institution and one or more church governing bodies and published statements in the institution's catalogue, promotional materials, and other public documents.

B. Audit. By November 1 each year, an institution must provide to the church an independent audit by a certified public accountant of the institution's financial condition during the previous fiscal year.

C. Strategic Plan. An institution must provide a current three- to five-year strategic plan for the institution's continued operation.

D. Accreditation.

1. Degree granting institutions must be accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-approved accrediting association. Institutions that are not accredited will have a three-year period in which to achieve accreditation.
2. Non-degree granting institutions must have an alternative educational model that is consistent with their mission to educate racial ethnic students and has been approved by the General Assembly Council in lieu of accreditation.
3. Institutions must demonstrate how they provide financial support for students.

E. Racial Ethnic Student Enrollment. Enrollment of racial ethnic students must be demonstrated by an institution's mission and substantiated by the demographics of its student body.

#### II. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Of funds not earmarked for Base Grants:

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### A. Mission Validity.

Twenty percent (20%) will be available to institutions that demonstrate mission validity by meeting the following criteria. For each criteria that is met, an institution will receive one-sixth (1/6) of the total amount for which it is eligible based on mission validity.

1. Evidence of Racial Ethnic Mission
  - a. An institution must demonstrate a racial ethnic composition within its student enrollment of at least fifty percent (50%).
  - b. An institution must demonstrate that at least seventy-five percent (75%) of its students are financial disadvantaged and eligible for need-based aid.
2. Evidence of Successful Educational Program
  - a. An institution must show evidence of having a qualified faculty to serve the enrolled student body.
  - b. An institution must demonstrate a retention rate of at least seventy percent (70%) of its students from the first to the second year for colleges or from year to year for secondary schools.
3. Evidence of Achievement
  - a. An institution must demonstrate a six-year persistence to graduation rate of at least forty percent (40%).
  - b. An institution must have in place a systematic outcomes assessment program.

### B. Institutional Viability.

Twenty percent (20%) will be available to institutions that demonstrate institutional viability by meeting the following criteria. Accreditation without sanction by the appropriate regional accrediting association is a prerequisite to receiving Institutional Viability funds. For each of the other criteria met, an institution shall receive one-seventh (1/7) of the amount for which it is eligible.

1. Evidence of Financial Integrity
  - a. An institution must show evidence of a balanced budget within constraints approved by its governing board.
  - b. An institution must be able to produce an unqualified independent audit of financial operations for the previous fiscal year.
2. Evidence of Long-Range Strength
  - a. An institution must show evidence of a systematic plan for raising funds to support the institution beyond what is received through tuition and financial aid.
  - b. An institution must show a debt-to-net-worth ratio within the recommended limits of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO).
3. Strength of Governing Board
  - a. An institution's governing board must broadly represent constituencies served by the institution and the public.
  - b. An institution's governing board must demonstrate through financial support an active participation in the work of the board.
  - c. An institution's governing board must demonstrate its responsibility for policy determination, oversight of the institution, and respect for the boundaries of its responsibility.

### C. Contingency Funds.

Ten percent (10%) will be available for institutions faced with emergency costs that have no other means of covering those costs.

## III. SITE VISITS

In order to ensure compliance with these standards, educational institutions that receive money from the Christmas Joy Offering will be reviewed every four years by a team that includes:

1. The president of a comparable institution
2. A person knowledgeable about the higher education evaluation process
3. A member of the General Assembly Council
4. The GAC associate for Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges (ex officio)

### Endnote

1. These institutions include Barber Scotia College, Cook School for Christian Leadership, Johnson C. Smith University, Knoxville College, Sheldon Jackson College, Stillman College, Menaul School, and Presbyterian Pan American School. (Source: *Minutes*, 2008 Part I, pp. 584–86, Item 08-02.)

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force recognizes the need for ongoing financial support of our racial ethnic educational institutions and observes that this is not necessarily a responsibility of Special Offerings. Article 8.4 of the Articles of Agreement directs the General Assembly Mission Council to "... propose to the General Assembly ways whereby the General Assembly shall be able to fulfill its responsibility ...” (*Book of Order*, Articles of Agreement, 8.4, p. B-8). There is a clear need to explore potential and creative means of expanding the funding base for these valuable and dynamic institutions, and the General Assembly Mission Council should propose possible solutions.

By refocusing the GAMC portion on “racial ethnic church leadership development,” the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes that the offering will become stronger and more compelling to donors. (See Figure 3 in *gamic-special-offerings-task-force-rec-graphs.pdf*; see also page 941.)

## 2. *Rationale for Revisions to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering*

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force seeks to strengthen the thematic unity of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering by linking the offering to Christ’s call to sacrificial love for the world during the Lent and Easter seasons.

In the distribution section, following our effort to link the offerings to the strategic priorities of the General Assembly Mission Council, we have eliminated the mandated percentage distributions for the Offering and funding for specific program areas in the GAMC. Instead, we recommend that the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering fund ministries within four topical areas: community development, disaster assistance, hunger ministries, and peacemaking endeavors.

Three of these areas of ministries reflect traditional causes supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, but without the specific programmatic assignment, and without a designated percentage. The fourth area represents potentially a new focus area for One Great Hour of Sharing Offering receipts.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force seeks to strengthen the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering by focusing on compelling ministry areas, rather than particular programs. The General Assembly Mission Council would have flexibility in recommending specific use of these funds, within the parameters established for the Offering, subject to General Assembly approval in the budgeting process. With this linkage between pressing needs, established purposes, strategic alignment with GAMC priorities, and donor commitments, we feel that the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will become stronger, and revenues will increase.

To better align Special Offerings, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force proposes that peacemaking endeavors be joined with the ministries of compassion, peace, and justice supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. This proposal would discontinue the Peacemaking Offering as a stand-alone offering, while ensuring that peacemaking endeavors could continue to be funded by Special Offerings. This recommendation is not intended to defund peacemaking causes, but rather is part of an effort to align Special Offerings around the strategic priorities of the GAMC planning process.

The task force believes that peacemaking causes are a much better fit with the other current One Great Hour of Sharing Offering causes than with any other offering. The task force does not see this as threatening to the other One Great Hour of Sharing Offering causes, since with the diligent focus on offering interpretation and promotion called for in this report, the task force believes that offering receipts will grow over time, creating funding for the full complement of causes.

## 3. *Rationale for Revisions to the Pentecost Offering*

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force has sought to strengthen the thematic unity of the Pentecost Offering by drawing a tighter focus on celebrating God’s gift of the Holy Spirit for a new generation. This theme unites the previous emphases of children-at-risk, youth, and young adults. After many thorough studies, surveys, and face-to-face conversations with pastors from small, medium, and large congregations, and presbytery leaders, the task force found that though the Pentecost Offering has maintained a considerable increase in receipts throughout the years, there has been little clarity of focus for the offering, and congregations have had difficulty describing its purpose, impact, and ways that the congregational portion might be used. Strengthening the focus for the offering and providing examples of ways that congregations can use their share of the offering will help to overcome this weakness.

In addition, traditionally, interpretation for, and receipt of, the Pentecost Offering has been limited to Pentecost Sunday. The task force recommendations expand the season of interpretation to include all of Pentecost, forging a creative link for congregations between the Pentecost Offering, and a congregation’s own early summer programs with children and youth.

The percentage distribution between the General Assembly Mission Council and congregations remains the same at the macro level, but the new recommendation no longer stipulates the distribution percentages for the General Assembly Mission Council. Instead, this determination will be made by the General Assembly Mission Council, based on its strategic planning process, and subject to the approval of the General Assembly during the budgeting process, as with the other Special Offerings.

#### 4. *Rationale for the Creation of a World Communion Offering*

With great expectations, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force proposes a new special offering, the World Communion Offering, to be dedicated on World Communion Sunday. Receipts would be used to support God's global mission of witness and justice.

Jesus said, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded" (Lk. 12: 48). The American church has a special place, call, and responsibility for engaging ministry in partnership outside of the United States.

Such an offering meets the criteria for a successful offering:

- A strong liturgical connection exists between partaking of the Lord's Supper together and reaching out communally to share God's love with the world.
- Interviews revealed widespread, passionate donor interest in global mission, without an easily accessible opportunity for funding that passion. A Special Offering focused on global mission would provide that opportunity for Presbyterians and potentially increase donor engagement.
- Interpretation opportunities abound to engage a wide audience of donors.

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes that the Peacemaking Offering has maximized its potential to solicit donor support as a stand-alone offering. The Peacemaking Offering has consistently produced about \$1.1 million each year, for the past twenty years. While there have been years in which occasionally the offering has had higher or lower receipts, over the past twenty years, response to the Peacemaking Offering has been flat. (See Figure 4 in [gamc-special-offerings-task-force-rec-graphs.pdf](#); see also page 941.)

In addition, the number of congregations participating in the Peacemaking Offering has remained relatively flat over the past eight years.

	2003	2007	2011
One Great Hour of Sharing	91%	90%	87%
Christmas Joy	80%	78%	77%
Peacemaking	55%	53%	53%
Pentecost	37%	40%	42%

(Source: Response of pastors to Presbyterian Panel surveys. 2003 and 2007 data included in "The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2007." 2011 data from "The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2011.")

The Pentecost Offering, while producing lower receipts and engaging less participation than the Peacemaking Offering, is a newer offering, and the response, both in terms of revenue and engagement, is increasing over its shorter tenure. The task force feels that it is wiser to strengthen the Pentecost Offering within its current focus. We affirm the ministry of peacemaking as an essential calling for Christ's church, and therefore recommend moving "peacemaking endeavors" to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, and to repurpose the Special Offering on World Communion Sunday to the unmet purpose of global witness. We believe this proposed Special Offerings pattern will maximize the long-term potential for engaging donors and funding the mission of the denomination.

By making this recommendation, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force is not intending to defund any peacemaking cause; rather we believe that peacemaking causes are a better fit with the current One Great Hour of Sharing Offering causes. The task force does not see this as threatening to the other One Great Hour of Sharing Offering causes since by increasing the focused promotion called for by this report, the task force believes that offering receipts will grow over time, creating funding for the full complement of causes, including peacemaking efforts. In addition, the GAMC may also choose to fund peacemaking endeavors from funds other than Special Offerings receipts.

The new World Communion Offering will be grounded in the scriptural call to spread the gospel of Christ around the world, beginning at home. Accordingly, a portion (25 percent) of offering receipts will be retained by congregations for their efforts of witness and outreach to the world. Another portion (25 percent) of the receipts will be sent to presbyteries for their shared ministries of witness and outreach to the world. The remainder (50 percent) of World Communion Offering receipts will be sent to the General Assembly Mission Council for global witness and outreach beyond the United States.



In 2007, the Presbyterian Panel asked participants about the possibility of creating an Offering that would benefit international mission personnel. More than 40 percent of members and elders and a majority of clergy supported the concept, and, among those in favor, more favored the possibility as a replacement for one of the other Offerings, than as an additional Offering. The majority of those who favored an Offering for international mission personnel as a replacement for one of the other Offerings overwhelmingly favored the replacement of the Peacemaking Offering:

Which offering should an international mission personnel offering replace?	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
One Great Hour of Sharing	4%	4%	1%	0%
Pentecost	18%	13%	36%	42%
Peacemaking	43%	62%	53%	38%
Christmas Joy	18%	17%	6%	14%
Not sure	16%	5%	4%	4%
All or part of two or more	2%	0%	1%	2%

(Source: The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2007.)

Under this recommendation, the General Assembly Mission Council will be responsible for making specific allocations from the World Communion Offering for global witness and outreach beyond the United States as part of its regular budgeting process, for General Assembly approval. This change would be phased in over an eighteen-month period.

**[The assembly approved Item 10-14, Recommendation 5. See pp. 61, 77.]**

**5. Celebrate and affirm efforts to coordinate funds development strategies among the General Assembly Mission Council, the Office of the General Assembly, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.**

*Rationale for Recommendation 5.*

The Task Force's research showed time and time again, "donor weariness" among Presbyterians in the pews. Congregations, presbyteries, the General Assembly Mission Council, the Board of Pensions, and many other causes bearing the denominational seal are repetitiously soliciting funds from the same individuals. Likewise, church leaders are confused and conflicted about which ministries of the church are allowed to solicit funds, from whom, using what methods, and with what authority. The Unified Budget model is in its final days while its successor system is ill-defined, poorly coordinated, and clumsy. This disorder cries out for communication and coordination between those who are soliciting funds. We commend those efforts.

**[The assembly approved Item 10-14, Recommendation 6. See pp. 61, 77.]**

**6. Delay the full implementation of a new World Communion Offering until 2015, and continue the current distribution of the Peacemaking Offering during 2014. The GAMC may create a pilot program for the new World Communion Offering in 2013 and 2014, with a selection of congregations who have not historically participated in the Peacemaking Offering.**

*Rationale for Recommendation 6.*

The Operating Guidelines for Special Offerings allow an eighteen-month window for implementing changes to Special Offerings. Accordingly, the changes being considered by the 220th General Assembly (2012) impact the 2014–2017 quadrennium for Special Offerings.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) will also be asked to approve the 2013–2014 General Assembly Mission Budget upon recommendation from the General Assembly Mission Council.

The recommendation to replace the current Peacemaking Offering with a new World Communion Offering, if approved by the General Assembly, would take effect in 2014, in the middle of a GAMC budget cycle. Due to the complexity of recommending a budget two years in advance (during 2012 for 2014), with an unproven funding stream (the new World Communion Offering, if approved by the General Assembly), the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force requests the General Assembly to delay the full implementation of the new offering by one year.

A delay would allow the General Assembly Mission Council to bring its budget recommendation, incorporating the new World Communion Offering, and changes to the One Great Hour of Sharing distribution, for the 2015–2016 cycle, to the

221st General Assembly (2014) for approval. This delay allows additional time for the development of the new Offering, and additional time for the transition away from the Peacemaking Offering as a source of funding for peacemaking ministries, prior to the shift to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

During 2013 and 2014, the General Assembly Mission Council would be empowered to begin pilot projects in advance of fully implementing the new World Communion Offering among congregations who do not participate in the Peacemaking Offering.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-14

*Advice and Counsel on 10-14—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 10-14.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns sees that the impact of this action would affect drastically the racial ethnic and disadvantaged communities in the following ways:

- The racial ethnic community would lose the support that it is currently receiving for racial ethnic colleges and schools. These institutions have served functions that in this day and time cannot and are not attractively or successfully addressed in any other ways.
- The racial ethnic colleges and schools are still addressing the needs of first generation college educated students. It is true that mainline colleges and institutions are seeking to reach out but the unique supportive and educational needs of some to many racial ethnic students are uniquely met in the environment of the racial ethnic colleges and institutions.
- Historically, the institutions have played a major role in evangelizing, recruiting, and developing leadership in the racial ethnic community and building racial ethnic churches. We can make direct ties between the decrease in membership in our church and leadership of some racial ethnic groups to the withdrawal and demise of support for racial ethnic schools and institutions that essentially educated Presbyterians as a way of church building.

Today we are attempting to develop models that are certainly a part of church building but the larger issue is related to our sense of oneness.

The Special Offerings, e.g. The Christmas Joy Offering, allows the identification with this specific concern and so it has not had the diminishing returns that some of the others have had. Being able to identify with specific racial ethnic institutions and special groups like racial ethnic and low income pastors caused a focused response and therefore drew the response to help.

Self-development as an area of the special offerings allowed the focus on self-help in the disadvantaged and racial ethnic communities that was an important linkage between the church and the community. It was empowering for the recipients and enabling for the givers.

The biblical concept of the “haves” sharing with the “have-nots” is good bible that all might enjoy the blessings of God.

The direction of this report does not encourage the concept of more involvement/participation.

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## Item 10-15

**[The assembly disapproved item 10-15. See pp. 61, 75.]**

*The Methodology Task Force Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Design for a Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA)*

The Status of Women Methodology Task Force recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012):

1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC, soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to provide full funding in the amount of \$143,750 to support the research outlined in this report.

2. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to oversee the appointment of a subcommittee to serve as a Coordinating Committee for the Study of the Status of Women. The coordinating committee will be composed of seven members and be created by ACWC in collaboration with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and the Office of Theology, Worship, and Education (TWE) and the Board of Pensions. Committee members will include: one member to represent ACWC, ACREC,

ACSWP, and TWE that will be chosen by each committee; at least one theologian; at least two sociologists of religion; and three members of the Task Force to Design the Study of the Status of Women.

3. Urge the Board of Pensions (BOP) to provide access to [individual level] compensation data of male and female members that can be merged with data from Research Services to form an analytic dataset. Prior to the release of this data, researchers will identify and adopt appropriate research practices to maintain the confidentiality of compensation data.

4. Direct the coordinating committee to report the progress of the study to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with a final report due at the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

### ***Rationale***

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2008 Referral: Item 09-12. Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA), Recommendation 1. Create a Task Force to Design a Mechanism for the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the Church That Will (a) Assess the Presence, Participation, and Effectiveness of Women at All Levels of the PC(USA), Both Elected and Employed, (b) Explore and Analyze Attitudes About Women in Leadership, and (c) Describe the Treatment of Women in Leadership Positions, Including How They Are Compensated as Compared with Men—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 961–64).*

The 218th General Assembly (2008) passed a “Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA).” This Design for a Study of the Status of Women is a result of that action. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) sent a resolution to the 218th General Assembly (2008) that called for a church-wide study of the status of women on all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The ACWC is the committee designated by the church to work toward full inclusiveness and equality in the church and in society and to provide a prophetic witness to and for the church on existing and emerging issues concerning women. The resolution called for the creation of a task force “to design a mechanism for the study of the status of women at all levels of the church” with three main goals:

- a. assess the presence, participation, and effectiveness of women at all levels of the PC(USA), both elected and employed;
- b. explore and analyze attitudes about women in leadership; and
- c. describe the treatment of women in leadership positions including how they are compensated as compared with men. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 961)

In response to the resolution described above, the 218th General Assembly (2008) mandated that a task force be created, stipulating, “This task force of seven members shall include two current or past members of ACWC, one current or past member of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and four people chosen for their statistical and sociological expertise. A majority of the task force members shall be women” (*Ibid.*).<sup>1</sup>

*Members of the task force:* Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, chair (ACWC), teaching elder (Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky), associate professor of theology, Bellarmine University; Courtney Hoekstra, associate for Advocacy Committee Support (staff); Eric Johnson, data analyst for [BookRenter.com](http://BookRenter.com); Deborah Kapp, teaching elder (Presbytery of Chicago), Edward F. and Phyllis K. Campbell associate professor of urban ministry, McCormick Theological Seminary; Lois Gehr Livezey, ruling elder (Presbytery of New York), professor emerita, McCormick Theological Seminary; Lillian Oats (former member of ACWC), ruling elder (Presbytery of the Grand Canyon); Carmen Rosario (ACREC), teaching elder (Presbytery of New York City), temporary supply pastor, Ft. Washington Heights Presbyterian Church.

Two additional members served on the Methodology Task Force at the beginning of the process, but needed to resign from the committee because of other commitments. Deborah Block (teaching elder, Presbytery of Milwaukee) and Patricia Petty Morse (ruling elder, Presbytery of National Capital) participated in meetings as the task force began its’ work. Block also served as chair of the committee at the beginning of the process.

#### *A. Introduction to the Design for the Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA)*

The Design for the Study of the Status of Women that follows is the result of action taken by the 218th General Assembly (2008) and the summary of the work completed by the task force named above. It is important to note that the goal of the task force was to design a study and not to conduct the actual research for the study. The discussions of the task force were far-reaching and identified broad areas of concern where research is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the status of women on all levels of the church.

##### *1. Study Grounded in an Understanding of the Church as a Community of Shared Partnership*

The task force is diverse in age, gender, race/ethnicity, ecclesiastical status, and experience. Each task force member came to the task with a different understanding of the need for a church-wide study of the status of women. However, throughout our discussions we recognized that members of the task force shared a common assumption about the church—the mission and ministry of the church itself is best understood as a community of shared partnership.

Jesus authorizes and empowers the disciples and apostles for ministry instructing them to work in partnership with each other (Mt. 18:1–35, Lk. 10:1–20) and cautioning them against competing to be greater than one another and redefining what it means to be “great” (Mk. 10:35–45). Jesus challenged his society’s norms of who was “the greatest” or “most valued” by welcoming children, by breaking social and religious boundaries by eating with tax collectors, consorting with Gentiles, and healing those named “unclean,” by challenging the authority of religious and political leaders, and by calling women who had been pushed aside to stand up and act upon their faith.

As part of our work, the task force discussed the theological basis for our work in the model of “church in the round.” Each member of the task force shared her or his perspective on the theological basis for a study of the status of women. During our discussion the story of Jesus’ healing a bent over woman in Luke 13 emerged as a powerful metaphor of Jesus’ concern for women today who are underpaid, undervalued, and overburdened by responsibilities for caregiving. In the story, Jesus sees that the woman is unable to stand up straight and he enables her to be set free.

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, ‘Woman, you are set free from your ailment.’ When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. (Lk. 13:10–13, NRSV)

Since its earliest beginnings Christian communities have formed and found their identities both living as and in alliance with those who have been pushed to the margins of society. *Koinonia* is the Greek word most frequently used in the New Testament to refer to the community of people seeking to follow in the way of Christ (see Acts 2 and 24). *Koinonia* refers to a sense of partnership through which people come together to share as any might have need.

Confessional statements included in *The Book of Confessions* of the PC(USA) also emphasize an understanding of the mission and ministry of the church as a community of shared partnership among equals. The Barmen Declaration states:

The various offices in the church do not establish a dominion of some over the others; on the contrary, they are for the exercise of ministry entrusted to and enjoyed upon the whole congregation

We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church, apart from this ministry could and were permitted to give to itself, or allow it be given to it, special leaders vested with ruling power. (*The Book of Confessions* 8.20–21)

The Confession of 1967 clearly defined those joined to Christ and the church as “commissioned to serve as [God’s] reconciling community” (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.10). The Brief Statement of Faith emphasizes that “the Spirit give us courage . . . to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace” (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4).

In the gospels and in our confessional statements, the notion that some members of the church would be perceived as more important than others is clearly challenged. In contrast, the church as a community of shared partnership among equals with a mission of reconciliation in the church and for the world is celebrated.

## 2. *Access for Women Leaders to Serve as Full Partners Gained Slowly Over Time*

And yet it is clear that the church has been called at different times to examine and to reexamine its own understanding of ministry and mission as a community of shared partnership. Centuries passed before women in Reformed faith communities were considered full partners in ministry as ordained leaders in the church. Many Christian communities today still have not honored women’s service through ordination.

In Reformed communities of faith, the question of women’s ordination was raised as early as the 16th century as women reformers such as Marie Dentière, a woman preacher in Geneva, Switzerland, argued for women’s right to preach on the basis of the biblical witness. Dentière’s writings, however, were considered too radical for the time, perhaps even dangerous in light of the social context, and ultimately suppressed by the Council of Geneva. Dentière was not the only woman who became a leader in the sixteenth century movement for reform. There were many other women who prophesied, such as Ursula Jost, cared for refugees like Katherine von Bora, and led the movement in other ways.

Women’s ordination was not fully supported in Reformed churches until long after the 95 Theses were nailed to the door at Wittenberg and the magisterial Reformation began. In the U.S., women were not ordained as elders in the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) (the northern Presbyterian church) until 1930 despite prior many attempts to argue for women’s ordination as elders, deacons, and ministers. The General Assembly of the UPCUSA defined arguments for women’s ordination as *Causes of Unrest Among Women in the Church*. Women were not ordained as ministers of Word and Sacrament in the northern church until 1955; it was not until 1965 that the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) (the southern Presbyterian church) voted to ordain women to serve in offices as ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of Word and Sacrament.

Space limitations of this report make it impossible to fully outline the history of women’s ordination, but it is important to make an additional observation that all women did not gain access to ordination as elder, deacon, or minister of Word and Sacrament at the same time. In churches and denominations with less hierarchical decision-making structures (Pentecostal,

Holiness, and Congregational churches ordained women in the 19th century) women were ordained earlier than in churches with more hierarchical decision-making structures. Geographical location and race and ethnicity were also important factors in the struggle for women to be ordained in Protestant churches in the U.S. Within the Presbyterian church, it took longer for women of color to be ordained.

## B. *Equal Partners in Christ's Mission? Factors Meriting Examination*

In 1981 Jane Parker Huber penned the lyrics to the hymn "Called as Partners in Christ's Service." The hymn exemplifies the vision of shared partnership among equals. The third verse reminds the church

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, In a small or global sense, Help us bear each other's burdens, Breaking down each wall or fence. Words of comfort, words of vision, Words of challenge said with care, Bring new power and strength for action, Make us colleagues, free and fair.

A church that is fully alive is able to explore barriers and burdens in order that we may join with God in repairing and renewing ourselves for Christ's mission. And so we now turn to such factors which merit examination.

### 1. *Gaining Access to Ordination Does Not Guarantee the Equal Treatment of Women*

The fact that women have gained significant access to leadership positions as pastors, elders, and deacons in the last eighty years is reason to celebrate, but not necessarily evidence that the church has lived into its own ideal as a community of shared partnership. The church has assumed that gaining access to ordained positions implies that women are treated as equal partners. The two graphs, listed as Figure 1 and Figure 2 in the file *gamc-status-of-women-task-force-graphs&charts.pdf*, p. 942, are based upon the 2010 Comparative Statistics<sup>2</sup> gathered by Research Services of the PC(USA) and show gender of PC(USA) members, elders, deacons, commissioned lay pastors (CLPs), candidates, and active ministers. Six in ten members of the PC(USA) are women and yet only 33 percent<sup>3</sup> of all active ministers in the PC(USA) are women. Women are not equally represented among leaders ordained as ruling elders, deacons, and teaching elders on all levels of ministry in the church.

Mainline seminaries report that the majority of their students are women; this fact represents more than a shift in their student bodies, but also in the number of women who are now candidates for ministry. How will this shift impact leadership in the church? The 2007 Presbyterian Panel study on "Women in the Churches" reported that a narrow majority of congregants, 58 percent, would feel "very comfortable" with women as pastors. Equally important is the fact that among those surveyed, only 48 percent of Presbyterians would be "very comfortable" with women of color fulfilling a pastoral role. According to a recent study conducted by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), racial ethnic women represent the fastest-growing student population in 2011 in seminaries accredited by ATS. Considered also in light of the fact that racial ethnic women represent the fastest-growing student population in Presbyterian seminaries the church may experience problems in the future if we do not seek to understand and resolve these biases.

### 2. *The PC(USA) Lacks Adequate Data to Examine the Relationship Between Leadership and the Dynamics of Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Age*

The 218th General Assembly (2008) directed

... the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, the Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to collect, organize, and report data for all research in the church (such as comparative statistics, Presbyterian Panel, data gathered by the Vocation's office on inquirers, candidates and clergy, the Stated Clerk's annual statistical report, etc.) in a disaggregated form by race, ethnicity, gender, and age, so that data on women of color and young adult women of color may be identified separately for analysis, where possible and as permissible by law. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, 965)

At the time of the writing of this design by the methodological task force, this disaggregated data was not yet available. Collecting, organizing, and reporting such data will be central to the study's ability to accurately portray the status of women of color in the church.

The data collected up to the present time by the PC(USA) focuses primarily on equity issues related to women clergy, particularly clergy compensation, and does not examine the intersecting dynamics of gender, race, ethnicity, and age.<sup>4</sup> Our current approach to gathering data reflects our polity. Presbyteries maintain records regarding congregations and clergy. This method of collecting information also assumes dominant male-defined norms of leadership and past models of membership in presbyteries. For example, the majority of Christian educators are women but we have little to no data over time that would reflect changes in employment, salaries, benefits because there is no national mechanism designed to track this data.

Data gathered by the PC(USA) to date compares to studies conducted by other denominations. For example, the United Methodist Church has done some study of traditional and stereotypical gender norms in relation to the experiences of women clergy and clergy spouses (which are primarily women in the United Methodist Church).

In the work done by the Methodology Task Force, we found that other denominations who have conducted studies of the status of women in their churches recognize that the data that they have gathered remains incomplete. Statistical data and analysis done by the PC(USA) and other denominations provides little or no information about women who are not ordained

as deacons, elders, or ministers (women serving as administrative assistants, preschool directors, custodians, etc.), but are still employed by congregations or other church-related organizations or who fulfill volunteer leadership roles. There are several studies available that examine the status and role of women in various denominations, including the U.S. Congregational Life Survey, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women of the United Methodist Church, and the Episcopal study of clergy careers and clergy women. The studies explore primarily clergy roles and some aspects of changing dynamics of work in the U.S. and how that is affecting clergy.<sup>5</sup> Investigating the status of non-clergy women leaders would enhance a larger ecumenical understanding of women's status and roles.

Comparative statistical reports do not provide adequate information to examine dynamics in relation to both race/ethnicity and gender. For example, there has never been a Presbyterian Panel that focused on gathering data about race and ethnicity. In addition, in 2008, the ACSWP asked that the 218th General Assembly (2008) approve recommendations "to uncover and correct unjustified disparities in the church caused by gender and/or race stereotypes."<sup>6</sup> *God's Work in Women's Hands* presents a list of recommendations emphasizing the strong need to gather information and employ evaluative tools that could be helpful in illuminating disparities based on gender and race. The recommendations also would direct entities such as local congregations, presbyteries, the Office of Vocation, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Foundation to engage creative strategies to uncover and correct any disparities that do exist. We discovered three pay equity studies being designed by three different offices (Human Resources, the Office of Vocation, and Research Services). Another problem is that Research Services does not have access to information collected by the Board of Pensions and that is critical for studying issues of pay equality.

Finally, there is no common repository within the national offices of the PC(USA) for data, information related to programming, or other issues concerning women in the PC(USA). As offices have made transitions in recent years, particularly the office of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, historical data related to past work has been lost. Currently, the limited number of staff makes it difficult to maintain complete records even regarding current projects such as Deborah's Daughters, a conversation group for women leaders in the PC(USA).<sup>7</sup> A church-wide study on the status of women could enable such a repository to be created.

### 3. *Women Report Gender Stereotypes Still Shape Norms for Ministry*

Despite access to ordained positions women still report feeling limited or restricted by traditional norms for ministry defined according to gender stereotypes. Several books have been published that tell stories about the attitudes and problems women confront when breaking through the "stained glass ceiling." *Voices of Experience: Lifestories of Clergywomen in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, edited by Alice Brasfield and Elisabeth Lunz and published in 1991, represents just one example. More recently, in 2011, a group of younger women clergy published *The Girlfriends' Clergy Companion: Surviving and Thriving in Ministry*, which gives practical advice for surviving the many challenges that still face women clergy. Other efforts have been made by ACWC, the National Network of Presbyterian Clergywomen, and the office of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries PC(USA) to collect the stories of women's experiences in ministry through such efforts as the Women of Color Consultations and Deborah's Daughters. Stories of women's experiences are often discounted as merely subjective and anecdotal evidence, but the cumulative nature and consistency of these stories cannot simply be discounted. Many women have been alienated from the church when they have not been honored as equal partners in leadership. And the church, in turn, has lost ministers who it had affirmed as having been called by God.

There is also a need to gather data that has been gathered by the PC(USA) and assessed in a way that gives insight into difficulties that women face when trying to fit into leadership roles defined primarily by traditional and stereotypical gender norms.<sup>8</sup> The UPCUSA and PCUS merged in 1983 and formed the PC(USA). The PC(USA) has always ordained women. Why then are members of congregations still hesitant to welcome women into pastoral roles, particularly when they are women of color? What continues to shape gendered understanding of norms for pastoral ministry? On the other hand, in what ways are traditional norms for pastoral roles changing and how does the changing shape of norms for ministry relate to the increased number of female clergy and how women exercise their vocation of ministry?

### 4. *New Patterns for Leadership Are Emerging*

Women's leadership takes a variety of forms and cannot only be understood and defined according to traditional male norms and patterns. Few will disagree that gender impacts one's identity in ordained ministry, but our understanding is more limited when thinking about the variety of forms of women's leadership in congregations. For example, evidence offered for equality and to underscore the proven and effective leadership of women often highlights women who have been called to serve as Head of Staff of "tall steeple" or "pillar" congregations. According to the 2010 Comparative Statistics the frequency of women holding senior pastor positions in congregations with more than 1,000 or more members is only 4.7 percent. The majority of women serve in congregations of fewer than 300 members (see Figure 3 in [gamc-status-of-women-task-force-graphs&charts.pdf](#); see also page 943). Women are also disproportionately represented among clergy serving non-parish ministries such as chaplaincies and social ministries when considering their overall representation among clergy. (In 2010, there were 8,882 active male ministers compared to 4,382 active female ministers.) Study is needed to explain the cause(s) of these trends and the degree to which they are a function of various discriminatory patterns.

Another dynamic also needs to be addressed. Effective leadership cannot be defined only in terms of women who succeed in “rising to the top” of the ecclesiastical job ladder. Serving as head of staff in a large congregation shows some progress in terms of the perception of women’s abilities to lead, but it is not the only and should not be the primary gauge of effective ministry. Some of the most effective and fulfilling ministries for women are within smaller congregations as well as outside established congregations themselves in new church developments, chaplaincy, social ministries, para-church organizations, denominational leadership, volunteer positions, etc.<sup>9</sup> Further, this “tall steeple” measure of effectiveness and fulfillment is itself a false standard even when applied to men. For the whole church, including all its leaders, to thrive, many different skills are needed and many measures of “success” and “fulfillment” must be used.

Women have made up a large majority of Christian educators. Historically, Christian educators have played important leadership roles in congregations, presbyteries, and the PC(USA) denominational offices. However, there is little or no data available about certified Christian educators because they are not members of presbytery. Certified Christian educators and certified associate Christian educators are only tracked by the denomination at the time of certification. At the present time, there is no denominational process that tracks changes in employment or salaries and benefits of certified Christian educators. Historically, women have made up the majority of those serving in positions as Christian educators. Without data concerning the circumstances (i.e. compensation, work hours, etc.) of their employment, we, as a church, cannot adequately understand the status of women on all levels of the PC(USA) in the past or in the present.

Moreover, definitions of leadership in church and society are changing. Many will agree that new definitions of leadership, mission, and ministry of churches are emerging in our church and broader culture. Mission and ministry are often understood as bi-vocational, practiced through networking (virtual and real), focused on local communities but with a more intentional and conscious global focus, and with a growing emphasis on lay empowerment. How have and will these emerging definitions of leadership, mission, and ministry specifically impact women leaders in PC(USA) congregations and in ministries beyond the local church?

In addition, workers in our culture (both women and men) have changed their attitudes toward the path of their own career. “Climbing the ladder” was once a popular metaphor used in reference to a clear upward path for one’s career. Paths to “success” in any chosen vocation are not so easily defined today. Many workers have chosen to “climb the lattice” rather than “climb the ladder,” do job sharing, are more interested in flex time, emphasize the strong desire and need for family medical leave for a variety of reasons, and recognize the importance and fulfillment of dual career families. Similar studies to that proposed here have been conducted by the United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church. The United Methodist Church and Episcopal studies reference the important impact dual-clergy and dual-career families are having on choice of call, mobility, etc. but neither study fully explored changing ideas about what constitutes effective and fulfilling career paths. The PC(USA) has never conducted such an exploration of the impact on our changing perceptions of work on leaders in our church. What impact will changing attitudes toward individuals’ and couples’ career paths have on leadership in the PC(USA)?

##### 5. *A Church-wide Study of the Status of Women Is Timely*

Perhaps most important is the fact that a church-wide study of the status of women is timely. We are living in a time in which both church and society are experiencing rapid change. Mainline denominations no longer experience the influence and status that they once held. The globalized economy is changing realities for all workers and the church. Christians in the U.S. are more aware than ever before of the interdependence of nations, peoples, and the earth. Historians and sociologists continue to underscore demographic shifts in the U.S. and the “erosion of white America.”<sup>10</sup> Shifts in the population are challenging the historical assumption that the majority of U.S. citizens identify with whiteness. Immigrants today are coming primarily from Latin America, Asia, and Africa. The largest numbers of immigrants to the U.S. are Hispanic and Latino/a; a slight majority of those immigrants are women. These facts and shifts are making an impact on our church and have been identified in other reports such as the report of the Joint Commission on Leadership Needs on *Raising Up Leaders for the Mission of God*. But, many of the reports make no mention of the impact of these shifts on our understanding of women’s leadership. All leaders across the church—women together with men, leaders of white majority, racial ethnic churches, and multiracial, multiethnic churches—will have to work in partnership to help the church respond to God’s call in this new day as we endeavor to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Despite intentional and sustained efforts since the 1970s within the church and the academy to expand the church’s language and to broaden the church’s theological imagination, the church is still prone to theological anemia and biblical myopia. The PC(USA) has not yet fully celebrated, welcomed, and embraced theologies emerging from the experience of people who are marginalized because of their race, ethnicity, gender, or class. Among other evidence of the church’s theological anemia is the fact that there is no confessional statement that draws directly upon women’s experiences despite the vital contribution women have made to the history of the church. Nor has the church been able to recognize the important ways that contributions from feminist, womanist, liberationist, and post-colonial theologies have exposed the experiential nature of all theology, not simply that of women or other marginalized peoples. What we see depends on where we stand, no matter who we are.

Language about who we are and who God is shapes our ability to see and celebrate God's action in our midst. But too often, scales remain on our eyes, distorting our vision. Among other evidence of the church's theological anemia and biblical myopia is the fact that a large majority of members in PC(USA) churches remain comfortable with the use of exclusively masculine language for God and there is no confessional statement that draws directly upon women's experiences. The General Assembly (GA) took action in 1971, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1998, 2000, and 2010 encouraging the use of inclusive language in worship, education, publications, and theological and biblical reflection."<sup>11</sup> And yet the 2007 survey reported fewer than half of the PC(USA) congregations use expansive, biblical language for God in worship. In addition, large majorities—87 percent—either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement that “using male terms for God seems natural to me”; 47 percent believe that “God is best understood in masculine terms.” Only 19 percent of the laity agreed that “the Bible contains many female images of God”; a much larger percentage of clergy (66 percent) agreed with this statement.

Theological dialogue and debate surrounding contextual theologies in both the church and academic circles in the last forty years also bears the potential to nourish and enrich the churches' theological imagination. Two-thirds of all Reformed Christians reside in the Global South. Some of the strongest and most relevant ecumenical statements such as the Accra Confession of the World Council of Reformed Churches regarding the changes we are experiencing in the world are coming from the Global South. Contextual theologies emphasize the need to make connections between race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Making these connections advances the church's understanding of social, political, and economic injustices experienced by those pushed to the margins of church and society and the way in which God reveals Godself in the struggle of people against oppression. Have we as a church been able to fully estimate the impact that our lack of attention to inclusive language and contextual theologies has had on the well-being of all our members? How might the church more fully embody a community of shared partnership by welcoming and engaging theologies emerging from the experiences of people living on the margins? How do different cultural constructs of gender and attitudes toward women impact the practice and theology of our church? What potential problems may we face as a denomination and what divine opportunities may we miss if we do not examine connections between race, gender, and class more closely and pay more attention to the ways we speak about God?

### C. *The Proposed Design for the Study of the Status of Women in the PC(USA)*

Much more could be said, but the circumstances of women described above and the limited amount of sociological and ecclesiastical data regarding intersections of race/ethnicity and gender concerning the leadership in the church, suggests strong enough evidence of the need to reexamine leadership in a church that understands itself as a community of shared partnership. Therefore the Task Force to Design a Study of the Status of Women on All Levels of the Church proposes that a comprehensive study be conducted in two main research areas, theological and sociological. The study will focus on five broad questions:

- Where are women doing the work of leadership and how do women themselves define their own leadership within the PC(USA)?
- What is the status of women in these positions, relative to men?
- What factors support/hinder women's level of representation and participation in decision making?
- In what ways are our perceptions of leadership in the church shaped not only by gender but also by race, ethnicity, class, and age?
- How do our current definitions of leadership reflect the Reformed theological traditions of the church and how do these definitions of leadership specifically impact women?

#### 1. *Theological Research Questions and Methodology*

The Task Force to Design a Study of the Status of Women on All Levels of the Church recommends that a coordinating committee (see recommendations for membership and oversight of the coordinating committee on page 826) be constituted. One of the tasks of the coordinating committee will be to plan and execute a theology consultation that focuses on women's leadership and the Reformed theological tradition. The theology consultation should include pastors, lay leaders, and theologians with relevant areas of expertise to accomplish the goals that follow. The main purpose of the consultation is to explore the importance of contextual theologies for a church and society in the midst of change.

Questions to be addressed at the consultation should include but are not limited to the following:

- What theological anthropologies are most relevant in shaping an understanding of the full humanity of women and people of color? How do we as human beings understand ourselves in relation to God?



- How does our language about God shape our understanding of who God is and how God leads? How do we articulate a theological framework that acknowledges that all women and men are created equally in God's image and explores the gifts of women's ministries in that light?
- In addition to the Bible and Reformed traditions, what other sources of knowledge should we draw upon to inform our understanding of leadership and church in order to serve in the midst of a rapidly changing world?
- What are Reformed understandings of leadership, and how have they evolved since the 16th century to include women together with men as leaders in the church?
- How have women leaders in Reformed traditions defined their own understanding of leadership and what can we learn from these women?
- How is our understanding of leadership informed and/or challenged by feminist, womanist, mujerista, and other theologies forged from critical reflection upon women's experience?
- What are the most relevant characteristics of Reformed ecclesiology for the church today? How do they relate to our own contemporary discussion of the church as a community of shared partnership?

The coordinating committee will be responsible for ensuring that all members of the church will have access to discussions held at the theology consultation either by producing a print and/or online resource.

## 2. *Sociological Research Questions and Methodologies*

A second task of the coordinating committee will be to plan and implement three sociological analyses of the status and experience of women in the church, one qualitative, one quantitative, and a concluding survey that will be a quantitative/qualitative mix.

*Quantitative* analyses are usually studies of big data sets of numbers, which, when analyzed, provide a broad picture of what is happening in a given population—in this case the PC(USA). Data can be analyzed for a given time period, such as the analysis we see in *Presbyterian Panel* reports or the annual *Comparative Statistics*, or they can be analyzed longitudinally, examining how certain realities like, for example, the numbers of women serving as solo pastors, have changed since 1983. People who are skilled in statistical analysis can use a broad range of techniques to identify trends, discern what dynamics match up with those trends, and begin to explain what might account for this or that. How the data are analyzed and what is discovered depends on what questions a researcher asks.

The quantitative analysis that the task force proposes will be a statistical analysis of the data that are available to the PC(USA). Using methods such as regression, multilevel regression, and event history analysis the study will, in part, address four of the five primary research questions identified in Section C. above of this report<sup>12</sup>:

- Where are women doing the work of leadership in the PC(USA) (the first half of question 1)?
- What is the status of women in these positions, relative to men?
- What factors support/hinder women's level of representation and participation in decision making?
- In what ways are our perceptions of leadership in the church shaped not only by gender but also by race, ethnicity, class, and age?

An analysis of data, such as those found in previous Presbyterian Panel surveys, annual reports, the Church Leadership Connection, and the Presbyterian samples for the U.S. Congregational Life Survey can provide significant (though not exhaustive) insight into the questions identified above. When these existing data and the questions above are probed in depth, the task force anticipates that the church will have a significant opportunity to learn more about how women participate in leadership at all levels of church life in congregations, governing bodies, schools, seminaries, and other church-related institutions. The church will gain a keener grasp of what factors support or constrain women's ministry. The church will also gain deeper insight into the varying experiences of men and women in ministry, including similarities and differences in compensation, career trajectories, and decisions to leave ministry.

*Qualitative* analyses examine different kinds of data than those examined in quantitative studies. Rather than looking at numbers, qualitative studies examine narratives, descriptions, documents, and other artifacts that allow researchers to identify how people experience and interpret certain aspects of their lives. Such studies tend to be focused in scope, and produce a rich understanding of the dynamics that shape a set of circumstances and the meaning that people attach to them. The rich interpretive and explanatory findings of qualitative research are good complements to quantitative studies.

The qualitative study that the task force proposes will be informed by the quantitative study, and will constitute a series of structured interviews that will, in part, address four of the five primary research questions identified above in Section C. of this report<sup>13</sup>:

- How do women themselves define their own leadership within the PC(USA) (the second half of question 1)?
- What factors support/hinder women's level of representation and participation in decision-making?
- In what ways are our perceptions of leadership in the church shaped not only by gender but also by race, ethnicity, class, and age?
- How do our current definitions of leadership reflect the Reformed theological traditions of the church, and how do these definitions of leadership specifically impact women?

The task force proposes that structured interviews be conducted, in person or by telephone, with men and women who serve as teaching elders, certified Christian Educators, commissioned ruling elders, and who represent the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of the denomination. Interviewees will be selected systematically using the denomination's data sources, and questions will be based on the most salient differentiating factors identified by the quantitative analysis. The purpose of these interviews will be to hear the stories of people's call, their experiences of being hired and employed by the church and/or elected by the church, their understandings of vocation and leadership, and their experiences as leaders. The interviews will include both prompted and unprompted sections.

In addition the task force proposes that structured interviews be held with members of congregational pastoral nomination committees and personnel search committees at regional and national levels, and who also represent the denomination's diversity. The purpose of these interviews will be to solicit stories of call from the perspective of those who hire women and men to staff the ministries of the church; and to hear of the processes, understandings of leadership, attitudes and criteria that shaped various search processes and their outcomes.

The task force anticipates that the qualitative portion of the study will help the church understand how leadership is called forth, supported, and sometimes constrained in various church communities. The study will also identify best practices that support and encourage women in their ministries.

Because research projects often raise questions as well as answer them, the task force also proposes that funds be set aside to conduct a follow-up survey through the Presbyterian Panel to explore further the findings that emerge from the structured interviews. Such a survey will examine attitudes about women and leadership, and could be compared to earlier panel surveys that examined similar issues; a comparison like this will help the church understand how attitudes and practices about women's leadership have changed over the years. The task force assumes that this survey will, like most Presbyterian Panel surveys, be a mixed-method gathering of both quantitative and qualitative data.

#### *Existing Data and Bibliography*

A variety of resources and some data necessary to conduct a Church-wide Study on the Status of Women on All Levels of the Church are already available. Some of the resources that the task force reviewed are listed below:

##### *Studies and Resources Available Online:*

"Called to Serve: A Study of Clergy Careers, Clergy Wellness, and Clergy Women." Conducted by Episcopal Church and released in 2011. Available online: <http://download.cpg.org/home/publications/pdf/CalledToServe.pdf>.

"Career Paths of Clergy: Describing Change Since 1994." U.S. Congregational Life Survey. Available online: <http://www.uscongregations.org/pdf/RRA2010ClergyCareersCW.pdf>.

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. United Methodist Church. Website: <http://www.gcsrw.org/Statistics.aspx>.

"Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies," Report of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force to the 218th General Assembly of the PC(USA), 2008. [http://www.PC\(USA\).org/resource/hearing-and-singing-new-songs-god-shunning-old-dis/](http://www.PC(USA).org/resource/hearing-and-singing-new-songs-god-shunning-old-dis/).

"Profile of Pastors and Associate Pastors," Cynthia Woolever. Part of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey. Available online at <http://www.uscongregations.org/>.

"Women in the Church," The November 2007 Presbyterian Panel. Available online: [http://www.PC\(USA\).org/resource/Women-in-the-Church/](http://www.PC(USA).org/resource/Women-in-the-Church/).

Women and Religion, Resources provided online by Hartford Seminary. Available at: [http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/women\\_religion.html](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/women_religion.html).

*Articles and Books:*

Alice Brasfield and Elisabeth Lunz, editors. *Voices of Experience: Lifestories of Clergwomen in the Presbyterian Church (USA)*. Louisville: Presbyterian Publishing House, 1991.

Edward C. Lehman, Jr. *Women Clergy: Breaking Through Gender Barriers*. New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1985.

Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair J. Lummis, and Patricia Mei Yin. *A Brief Description of Clergwomen: An Uphill Calling*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Melissa L. Derosia, Marianne J. Granno, Amy Morgan, Amanda Adams Riley *The Girlfriends' Clergy Companion: Surviving and Thriving in Ministry*, The Alban Institute, 2011.

## Endnotes

1. See Appendix I, Recommendations from the “Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels of the Church.”
2. See “Statistics, Reports, and Articles—Research Services.” [http://gamc.PC\(USA\).org/ministries/research/statistics-reports-and-articles/](http://gamc.PC(USA).org/ministries/research/statistics-reports-and-articles/).
3. “The Top 10 Most Frequently Asked Questions About the PC(USA).” Research Services of the PC(USA). [http://gamc.PC\(USA\).org/ministries/research/10faq/](http://gamc.PC(USA).org/ministries/research/10faq/)
4. One of the most significant reasons for this is that data is gathered through presbyteries in which ministers are members and the Board of Pensions.
5. See Cynthia Woolever, “Career Paths of Clergy: Describing Change since 1994.” 2010 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Research Association. <http://www.uscongregations.org/pdf/RRA2010ClergyCareersCW.pdf>.
6. *God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation*, 38. Approved by 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, 2008. Report available online at [http://www.PC\(USA\).org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/acswppayequity.pdf](http://www.PC(USA).org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/acswppayequity.pdf) It is worth noting that the Human Resources department of the General Assembly is currently studying compensation patterns of men and women at the GA offices in Louisville. This data should be available by 2012.
7. <http://allwomen.ning.com/group/deborahsdaughters>.
8. See “Clergy, Family, and Spouse Study.” General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, <http://www.gcsrw.org/ClergyFamilyandSpouseStudy.aspx>
9. In 2002, the Advocacy for Women’s Concerns, in response to action taken by the 212th General Assembly (2000), conducted a survey of “Clergwomen’s Experiences in Ministry: Realities and Challenges.” The survey examined trends related to the decreasing number of women in ministry, but did not look at the ways in which women identified themselves with effective and fulfilling ministries. To see the 2002 report, [http://oga.PC\(USA\).org/publications/clergywomenexp03.pdf](http://oga.PC(USA).org/publications/clergywomenexp03.pdf).
10. Hua Hsu, “The End of White America,” *The Atlantic* (January/February 2009). <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/01/the-end-of-white-america/7208/>.
11. “Inclusive Language with Reference to the People of God,” Women’s Ministries, National Ministries Division and Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. [http://allwomen.PC\(USA\).org/pdf/wellchosenwords.pdf](http://allwomen.PC(USA).org/pdf/wellchosenwords.pdf).
12. Briefly, regression is a method of analysis that allows researchers to understand the correlation between two variables, for example, the correlation between women teaching elders’ age and their employment status. Multilevel regression allows researchers to examine the correlation between a variable and multiple levels of another variable, for example, the correlation between their age and the employment status of women teaching elders in local congregations, regional judicatories, and the national church. Event history analysis is a method of analysis that helps researchers track things like employment history, noting when and to what position a teaching elder has been called, how long she stayed in that position, etc. The method also allows researchers to break down the data by gender, presbytery, congregational factors, and other data included in annual statistical reports.
13. A structured interview is an interview that has a standardized set of questions. Because all interviewees are asked the same questions, researchers can then compile and compare answers, and, where differences exist between, say, men and women, begin to identify and describe what those differences might be. Structured interviews can include multiple choice questions that have fixed answers, open-ended questions to which people respond with a narrative answer, or both.

## Appendix I

Recommendations from the “Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA)”

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 218th General Assembly (2008) do the following:

1. Create a task force to design a mechanism for the study of the status of women at all levels in the church that will:

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- a. Assess the presence, participation, and effectiveness of women at all levels of the PC(USA), both elected and employed;
- b. Explore and analyze attitudes about women in leadership, and
- c. Describe the treatment of women in leadership positions including how they are compensated as compared with men.

This task force of seven members shall include two current or past members of ACWC, one current or past member of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and four people chosen for their statistical and sociological expertise. A majority of the task force members shall be women. This task force will report to the 219th General Assembly (2010);

2. Direct the General Assembly Council (GAC) to:

- a. Provide sufficient funding and staff support for the task force;
- b. Explore additional funding for research, data collection and analysis in consultation with the task force; and,
- c. Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

3. Equip all GAC staff and members to be responsive to the needs of all women as part of their continuing commitment to valuing the gifts that all persons bring to the PC(USA). Continue to encourage General Assembly Council staff and members to reflect on and incorporate the values articulated in the “Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 540ff.).

### Appendix II

#### The Schedule of Meetings

##### *Conference Calls*

June, 4 2009: Initial call to begin forming the Status of Women task force.

February 15, 2010: Discussion of the task force’s financial status and prospects for seeking further funding resources; also partners for the research this study will require.

March 15, 2010: Discussion some of the *issues* for women in leadership in the church (significance of mentoring—or lack thereof, impact of women’s leadership on change in the structures of the church and what “tipping point” is required for women’s leadership to change the structures) and the *outcomes* we seek for the task force and the research to follow.

September 27, 2010: Clarification of the budget for the task force; Decision to follow-up on inviting new members of the task force.

October 20, 2010: Continuing discussion of how to *focus* our work in response to the GA resolution—again focusing on issues to be addressed (and how), the information needed, and the outcomes sought.

December 17, 2010: Conversation with Cynthia Hess and Bob Drago of the Institute for Women’s Policy Research. We also reviewed the data we have from the PC(USA) and U.S. Congregational Life Survey, other denominational studies (especially the Episcopal study).

January 19, 2011: Conversation with Gloria Albrecht about her work with the ACSWP report *God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation* (2008). Our discussion highlighted some of the limits of the data as well as lack of comparable classification systems. Discussion of the Methodist study.

March 30, 2011: The discussion continued to build on proposal for sociological research—with respect to the need for multiple methodologies and concern to acknowledge the complexity of the issues of leadership; also the importance of sorting out the role of gender amidst contextual factors.

June 27, 2011: Reviewed first draft of the introduction; set schedule for compiling the draft.

July 25, 2011: Continued discussion on next draft of introduction; discussion of process and theology.

August 25, 2011: Review of draft; discussion of methodology; setting meeting dates and agenda.

December 16, 2011: Discussed final draft of report.

##### *Face-to-face Meetings (Presbyterian Center, Louisville KY)*

January 25, 2010: Initial discussion of methodology, the diversity of constituencies to be studied, leadership, partners for the work of the task force.

February 16, 2011: We reviewed the history of the Status of Women project, “agenda” of the task force and developed a “grid” of questions, detailed questions (on norms, data, policies, practices, and processes within religious institutions), that must be addressed in the design we construct for ongoing work on the status of women study.

September 27–28, 2011: Developed theological framework for the report. Determined recommendations for General Assembly. Met with representatives from Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries, Presbyterian Women, and Research Services

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Appendix III

Matrix of Existing Resources Provided by Research Services

Databases Research Services Receives from the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)

1. Congregations. For each congregation we have all information that comes in on the Session Annual Statistical Form (SASR) each year (e.g., membership, average worship attendance, gender and race ethnicity of members, gender of active elders and deacons, baptisms, church school enrollment, finances, etc.). This is the information that's reported in the annual *Minutes*, Part II-B, *Statistics*. We have SASR data going back many years, so we can look at change over time, if needed. Note that proposed revisions to the SASR include eliminating gender of members, elders, and deacons. The 220th General Assembly (2012) will likely decide on the revisions with the changes to take effect in 2013

2. Ministers. The minister file has information about all ministers (active and retired) and commissioned lay pastors including sex, date of birth, date of ordination, race ethnicity, address, current occupational code, and PIN of church being served (if applicable). The occupational codes are listed in the *Minutes*, Part III-A, *Directory* on page 2 under Ministers. We have reported this information yearly in *Comparative Statistics*, which will allow us to track gender over time. The minister file does not contain salary information or career history, although OGA has told us they are working on a career history file.

Research Services Own Primary Databases

1. Clerks Annual Questionnaire (CAQ). Each year we put together this survey that every congregation is asked to complete (in 2010, 66 percent did). The questions vary from year to year and address issues that various entities of the church want to know about PC(USA) congregations. For example, an office might want to identify congregations that are using a particular program or curriculum. The CAQ would allow them to do that. This would be the vehicle to learn about the number and gender of church staff.

2. Presbyterian Panel. The Panel provides information about members, elders, and ministers of the denomination based on responses of random samples of individuals in each group. We have information about demographic characteristics of these groups, their religious backgrounds, and their current church participation. Panelists respond to four surveys each year for three years; each survey covers a topic of interest to an office or entity of the church. The current Panel includes about 1,200 ministers—27 percent of pastor panelists are women, and 45 percent of panelists who are ministers serving in non-pastoral positions are women. Data go back to 1973. Updated information about Presbyterian views regarding women in leadership could be gathered through the Panel.

3. U.S. Congregational Life Survey (US CLS). This survey was given in worship in a random sample of congregations from a wide variety of denominations. A random sample of PC(USA) congregations also participated. All worshipers in participating congregations completed a survey. Results include information about worshipers' characteristics, the ways in which worshipers are involved in their church, their beliefs, etc. Each participating congregation also completed a profile that gathered many details about the congregation (size, types of programs, number of worship services, features of the largest worship service, etc.). Finally, one key leader in each participating congregation (head of staff, solo pastor, CLP) completed a leader survey about ministry. In 2011 we also invited all full-time PC(USA) associate pastors to complete the leader survey. The leader survey includes questions on entry into ministry, theological education, salary and benefits, hours worked, and some career history information. We have data for 145 women and 338 men serving as key leader in PC(USA) congregations in 2008/2009 (most are solo pastor or head of staff) and 383 male and 363 female associate pastors. In 2001, 412 male and 97 female key leaders in PC(USA) congregations participated.

4. Annual EEO/AA Analysis. This survey is conducted each year for the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) Human Resources office in response to a General Assembly mandate. Every General Assembly agency, presbytery, synod, PC(USA) seminary and conference center is asked to report their staff by gender, race-ethnicity, full-time or part-time status, and exempt or nonexempt status. In 2010 the response rate was 80 percent, meaning we do not have this information for all entities. We have data from 2005 forward.

Other Data Sources Not Covered Here

1. Board of Pensions. The Board of Pensions has other databases on plan members (e.g., ministers, other staff of PC(USA) organizations) to which we do not have access.

2. OGA/General Assembly Committee on Representation. OGA tracks General Assembly commissioners by age, gender, and elder vs. minister commissioner for each assembly. The GACOR collects data from synods annually on the gender of their committees, boards, and councils. The GACOR or OGA may also collect such information for General Assembly boards and committees.

**Data Sources That Research Services Has Access to That Can Be Used for Examining the Representation of Women Across the PC(USA)**

	OGA Congregation File	OGA Minister File	CAQ	Presbyterian Panel Samples	US CLS PC(USA) Sample	EEO/AA Reports	Possible Alternative Source
Ministers							
Gender		Yes		Yes			
Specific call		Yes					
Salary					Yes		BoP
Career history					Some		OGA?
Key leader (senior/solo) and full-time associate pastors							

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Gender		Yes			Yes		
Specific call		Yes					
Salary					Yes		BoP
Career history					Some		OGA?
CLPs' gender		Yes					
Christian Educators' gender							APCE
Elders' gender	Yes			Yes			
Deacons' gender	Yes			Yes			
Members' gender	Yes			Yes	Yes		
Staff of GA entities							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Salary							BoP or Agencies
Mid-council staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Salary							BoP?
Seminary faculty and staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Conference center staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Gender of:							
Congregational staff other than pastors			1992				Replicate 1992 CAQ
PC(USA) college and university faculty and staff							APCU?
Elected boards/committees of GA entities							COR/OGA
Elected boards/committees of mid-councils							COR/OGA?
Other elected boards							COR/OGA?
PC(USA) candidates and inquirers							COTE or Vocations
GA commissioners							OGA

Appendix IV

Cost Estimate Provided by Research Services for Analysis of Existing Data

In consultation with the task force, Research Services has been asked to develop an estimate of costs involved in assessing women's representation across many entities of the denomination, as specified in (a) above. This estimate covers costs to gather gender distribution data only. Results will show the percentage of people in various groups who are women. This estimate does *not* include costs to study salary difference between men and women, to compare men and women on various characteristics, to examine the effectiveness of women at all levels of the PC(USA), or to address goals (b) or (c) above.

The task force identified these PC(USA) groups and entities as the focus of this study:

- ministers of Word and Sacrament
- commissioned lay pastors
- Christian educators
- ruling elders
- active deacons
- members of PC(USA) congregations
- staff of the six General Assembly agencies (Board of Pensions, General Assembly Mission Council, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc., Presbyterian Publishing Corporation)

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- staff of mid councils (presbyteries and synods)
- faculty and staff of PC(USA) seminaries
- faculty and staff of PC(USA)-affiliated colleges and universities
- staff of PC(USA) conference centers
- congregational staff other than pastors
- PC(USA) college and university faculty and staff
- elected boards and committees of GA entities
- elected boards and committees of mid councils
- other elected boards
- PC(USA) candidates and inquirers
- GA commissioners

The task force also expressed interest in looking at trends over time, where possible.

Research Services has identified sources of gender representation information for many of these groups (see Attachment A). For groups where Research Services already has data, research costs will cover extracting data from appropriate sources and compiling this information.

To gather such information for some groups will require obtaining data from outside sources (where available) or collecting data (when outside sources will not release the information or when no outside source exists). For example, no source exists for examining the current gender composition of congregational staff (including administrative staff, custodians, etc.). Research Services last asked about this topic on the 1992 Clerk’s Annual Questionnaire—a form that all congregations are asked to complete each year. Replicating those questions in the future will allow us to look at women’s current representation among congregational staff and to compare their representation today to that of 1992. Similarly, the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU) may have data on the gender of faculty and staff at PC(USA)-affiliated colleges and universities. If APCU does not have this information, Research Services will develop an appropriate data-gathering tool and request the information from each college and university.

Research Services will prepare a narrative report and statistical overview summarizing the findings.

Because the availability of gender data for some groups is unknown, this is an estimate of costs to conduct this project. It is possible that gathering data for certain groups might prove so expensive or problematic that they cannot be included in this study.

<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Extract gender data from multiple sources over multiple years	\$5,000.00
Use of CAQ to collect gender data for congregational staff	\$3,000.00
Development and implementation of other data gathering methods where current data are not available	\$7,000.00
Computer Services and Data Analysis	\$1,000.00
Miscellaneous (telephone, supplies, etc.)	\$250.00
Report of Results	\$1,000.00
Research and Project Management	\$4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,250.00</b>

**Data Sources to Which Research Services Has Access That Can Be Used for Examining the Representation of Women Across the PC(USA)**

*Prepared by Research Services*

	<b>OGA Congregation File</b>	<b>OGA Minister File</b>	<b>CAQ</b>	<b>Presbyteri- an Panel Samples</b>	<b>US CLS PC(USA) Sample</b>	<b>EEO/AA Reports</b>	<b>Possible Alternative Source</b>
Ministers							
Gender		Yes		Yes			

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Specific call		Yes					
Salary					Yes		BoP
Career history					Some		OGA?
Key leader (senior/solo) and full-time associate pastors							
Gender		Yes			Yes		
Specific call		Yes					
Salary					Yes		BoP
Career history					Some		OGA?
CLPs' gender		Yes					
Christian Educators' gender							APCE
Elders' gender	Yes			Yes			
Deacons' gender	Yes			Yes			
Members' gender	Yes			Yes	Yes		
Staff of GA entities							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Salary							BoP or Agencies
Mid-council staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Salary							BoP?
Seminary faculty and staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Conference center staff							
Gender						Yes	
Full-/Part-time						Yes	
Exempt/Non-exempt						Yes	
Gender of:							
Congregational staff other than pastors			1992				Replicate 1992 CAQ
PC(USA) college and university faculty and staff							APCU?
Elected boards/committees of GA entities							COR/OGA
Elected boards/committees of mid-councils							COR/OGA?
Other elected boards							COR/OGA?
PC(USA) candidates and inquirers							COTE or Vocations
GA commissioners							OGA

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-15

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-15—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 10-15 be approved.

This report describes the background and rationale for a study of women in the PC(USA) and proposes five research questions to be examined using available databases, plus additional collection of both qualitative and quantitative data.

*Rationale*

The report makes a strong argument for the need to examine the status of women at all levels of the church. This wide scope is necessary if the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council are to fully understand the roles women perform and the barriers and facilitators to women’s leadership in the PC(USA). The PC(USA) has established a strong foundation for equal status of men and women within the church—at all levels of church work. This foundation is evident in *Minutes* of the General Assembly as cited in the policy statement, *God’s Work in Women’s Hands* [<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/acswppavequity.pdf>], approved by the 218th General Assembly (1999). Relevant to the wide scope of this commitment is the following statement: “God works through all persons in a variety of ways without regard for a hierarchy based upon gender” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 80, 591).



There has been no comprehensive study of women's roles in the church and as the church considers how it will function in a multicultural society of the 21st century, it will be especially useful to understand the nature of women's leadership currently and the contributing factors of race/ethnic, income level, and age. Answers to the five research questions will be useful toward envisioning and planning because this information will not only describe current leadership of women throughout the denomination, but should also tell us about our understandings of leadership and what organizational or cultural facilitators and barriers impact women's level of representation and participation in decision-making. This information is necessary to develop strategies to enhance future leadership and the status of women in the PC(USA).

While the proposed design is very general, the recommended design includes a mixed methods approach and identifies where quantitative and qualitative data would be collected and employed. Potentially useful data sources are identified in order to utilize secondary data and avoid duplicate data collection.

Although the cost of such a study may seem high, analyses that include the variables of gender and other important cultural and social conditions such as race/ethnicity, age, and income are complex. They also require large sample sizes and data collected from multiple perspectives (e.g., perspectives of women in leadership, perspectives of the members of organizational entities whose authority promotes and regulates leadership). Both the wide scope of the study (the status of women at all levels of the church) as well as the intent to understand the barriers, facilitators, and visions of women's leadership in some depth require a budget sufficient to compile a variety of datasets and produce useful analytical results.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-15**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-15—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly approve Item 10-15.

*Rationale*

The ACREC concurs with the assessment of the need to learn more about the situations and experiences of women of color throughout the church as detailed in the report. The proposed methodology has the potential to glean valuable information and insights into the experiences of women of color in the church that would allow the church to make decisions and take actions moving forward that pay greater attention to both the gifts and the needs of women of color. From there, the church can more faithfully celebrate and utilize the gifts of women of color and work to correct the negative attitudes and actions that exist toward women of color in the church today.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-15**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-15—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 10-15.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns strongly recommends approval of Item 10-15 and concurs with the Advice and Counsel memorandum from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. This report presents the background for a study of women in the PC(USA) and outlines research questions and the process for the study and reporting back to the General Assembly.

This effort to create a Status of Women Research Project began in 2006. Now is the time for approval. The report sets out a reasonable time span for the overview and good membership requirements for the task force. With the continual downsizing of program within the denomination and the effort to transform the church into a 21st century response to the work of Jesus Christ, it is imperative to know the status of women throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A study of this magnitude has never been done in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

It is clear from the 2007 Presbyterian Panel Survey that although people think and say women participate equally, the individual comments reveal a continuing backlash toward women's participation and a bias toward male leadership. Personal stories from clergywomen and women of color throughout the church remind us that the church is far from achieving its intended goals. A study including uncovering the reality of "women's equality" in the church is essential to inform programmatic development to realize full inclusion of women.

Women hold up more than "half the sky" in the church, yet they are not equally represented in decision making. Providing concrete disaggregated statistics will clarify where strategies need to be developed to ensure changes and will also put to rest the debate regarding just how much equality women do have in the church today. Approval of Item 10-15 is essential to the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The church's commitment to valuing women as equal partners in Christ's mission needs analysis at every level of the church, from volunteer to teaching elder. Gender and racial discrimination still exist and need to be examined so that all members can learn how they inadvertently contribute to discrimination.

The research efforts are finely drawn, and they can provide valuable information for the future of the church. They can help identify best practices toward fostering a willingness to be open to and celebratory toward the gifts of all and lead into the future for women in the PC(USA), providing a model for secular society of the value of women's leadership.

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### GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 10-15

*Comment on Item 10-15—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment on Item 10-15:

The GACOR supports this motion and respectfully asks the assembly to consider expanding it further by seeking and reporting disaggregated data research, which helps the church to better understand how far the PC(USA) has come in its support of women in leadership as well as assess the work yet to be done.

#### *Rationale*

The GACOR has collected and reported data in a disaggregated means when possible. Most reliably it does so with regard to teaching elders within the PC(USA). What we have learned is that while the numbers of women in ministry are increasing, there are still nearly two male clergy for every female clergy, and the numbers are even more disconcerting when we look at the number of young women of color within the office of teaching elder. In addition, the research from the 2007 Presbyterian Panel study on "Women in the Churches" shows a continued reluctance on the part of members of the PC(USA) to fully embrace women in a pastoral role. The GACOR encourages the assembly to approve this recommendation and enable deeper learning in this area so that the church can better understand the resistance women experience, and the hesitations that still exist in order to learn how best to become a more faithful church that is fully open to the Spirit who "calls women and men to all ministries of the Church" (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Line 64).

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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## Item 10-16

[The assembly approved Item 10-16 with comment. See pp. 61, 75–76.]

The General Assembly Mission Council, on behalf of the Women of Color Consultation Committee, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), especially mid councils, to continue welcoming and embracing the leadership of women of color in all ministries of the church and encourage the church to identify, train, and equip racial ethnic young women in all levels of the church's life and ministry.

2. Encourage presbyteries and synods, or their successive bodies, to create venues that encourage and support the building of relationships across cultural lines, including bridge-building among cultures, intentional learning communities, worship, fellowship, and mission.

3. Direct the Office of Theology Worship and Education to strive to incorporate the voices of racial ethnic women in curriculum and theological resources.

4. Direct the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW ministry areas, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, to plan a Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) that focuses on the inclusion of women of color of all ages in leadership and decision-making in presbyteries and synods, and/or their successor bodies. The next WoCC shall be held no later than the fall of 2013 and be reported on to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

5. Direct the Office of Vocation to conduct an annual review of the committee on ministry and the committee on the preparation for ministry's guidelines and handbooks to ensure gender and racial ethnic equity as it relates to inquirers and candidates in the call process.

6. **Direct the Office of Vocation, in consultation with congregations, presbyteries, and seminaries, to identify and encourage prospective racial ethnic women to consider pastoral ministry.**

7. **Encourage Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA) to renew its commitment to cross-cultural relationships by heightening a sense of interconnectedness with racial ethnic women through its cross-cultural ministries, therewith embracing the concept of “Ubuntu: I am because we are.”**

**Comment:** Even though the overall 2011 consultation was beneficial and sought to do what it was tasked to do according to the 2008 report, *Hearing and Singing New Songs to God*, we acknowledge that there were painful events that transpired during the consultation for many of its participants. Specifically, generational conflicts, issues of internalized oppression, intersections of race, gender, and class and white and male privilege occurred. These were moments of learning opportunities that were missed. The 2008 report, *“Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies,”* continues to address the problems and issues raised at the 2011 Women of Color Consultation.

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$34,325, (2014) \$3,370—GAMC—Unrestricted]

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are a final response to the following: *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” Recommendation 4. Direct the General Assembly Council, in Consultation with Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, to Plan a Women of Color Consultation That Focuses on the Full Participation and Leadership/Decision-Making Roles of Women of Color of All Ages in Synods and Presbyteries. Plans for Next Consultation Reported to the 219th General Assembly (2010), Report of the Consultation and Recommendations to Be Submitted to the 220th General Assembly (2012)-From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964-77).*

## Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies

### Women of Color Consultation Committee Report

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:27–28)

The women of color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) express their love of Jesus Christ and of the church. However, too often their voices are not heard, their gifts not recognized and celebrated, and their desire for full participation in the church is ignored. Women of color have a vision of an inclusive, diverse, and joyful church, echoing the words of Paul in Galatians 3:27–28, “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” We yearn for a glimpse of the kingdom of God that is here and now, that includes all as one in Christ.

#### A. *Background*

On October 20–23, 2011, 120 racial ethnic women gathered for the Women of Color Consultation in Charlotte, North Carolina. This was in response to a referral from the 218th General Assembly (2008), Item 09-13 “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” In October 2004, more than 180 women of color from across the church came together in Atlanta where they met with approximately forty staff and elected consulting partners for a national consultation. The 2004 consultation was the first opportunity for women of color to meet together since 1993.

The 2011 consultation included women from sixteen synods and one international participant. The consultation included persons serving throughout the PC(USA) as teaching and ruling elders, seminarians, and those serving in different settings. Group dialogue centered on themes from the great hymns of the church, including:

*Blest Be the Tie That Binds:* Participants focused on ways in which we can value the traditions of our history while recognizing and celebrating the new among us. Participants discussed the church in transition and how women of color can be vital in leadership in the midst of the changes in our churches.

*Cry of My Heart:* Participants shared stories of incidents that have been cultural barriers as they have served in leadership positions. They dialogued around ways to overcome cultural barriers that hinder women of color in leadership and that prevent them from being considered for leadership positions.

*We Are One in the Spirit:* Participants affirmed that there is a need for continued antiracism training and resources in presbyteries and synods. They suggested that there are still unresolved issues around prejudice and racism that need to be addressed.

*We Have Come This Far by Faith:* Participants looked at current and future leaders, and stories were heard about persons who have completed the ordination process but have not yet been ordained. Breaking through the glass ceiling, pay equity, and clergy support were all topics discussed.

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*Fairest Lord Jesus:* Participants engaged in conversation concerning equity issues of women of color in the church. Pay equity, specialized ministry, calls as head of staff and solo pastor, as well as other types of calls were discussed.

*It Is Well with My Soul:* Participants explored ways in which women of color may enhance their spiritual lives as they seek to be in leadership in the church. It examined current spiritual practices and introduced helpful new practices.

*God of Our Life, Through All the Circling Years:* Participants dialogued around concerns related to the roles of women of color in the emerging church. The group considered the opportunity for leadership positions and full participation in decision-making in the church.

*What Does the Lord Require of You:* Participants discussed making room for new leadership. It examined ways to address underused leaders, how to identify leadership instead of just filling a slot, provide training opportunities, and what are some of the issues related to using commissioned lay pastors rather than ordained clergy.

*All the Gifts That God Has Given:* Participants focused on how to mentor and provide opportunities for youth and young adults to serve in the church. One of the questions considered was, “How is the PC(USA) or the institutional church encouraging/discouraging youth and young women of color?” Other issues discussed were representative leadership, worship, and institutional polity.

### B. Summary

There were many suggestions recommended by women who participated in the Women of Color Consultation. A number of these suggestions were already being implemented by various offices within the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly. However, to hear these suggestions voiced in the plenary session indicates that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must work more effectively in communicating the existing programs and ministries already occurring and having been implemented since the Women of Color Consultation in 2004. Special attention should be given to how to most effectively communicate the programs and ministries that support women of color to grassroots leaders and Presbyterian women from diverse racial ethnic backgrounds. Some of the suggestions offered at the consultation that are presently being implemented by the General Assembly Mission Council include:

Racial Ethnic Leadership Development—Office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW (RE&WMIPW).

Diversity in Leadership Network—Office of the Executive Administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council.

Antiracism Training—Office of Gender and Racial Justice in RE&WMIPW. (Local facilitators also provide training in different regions in the church.)

Cultural Proficiency Training—Office of the Executive Administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council.

Racial Ethnic Referrals & Church Leadership—Office of Vocation.

Pathways Program—Office of Vocation. (Theological and practical mentoring and training for youth leaders.)

Racial Ethnic Young Women Together network—Office of Young Women’s Leadership Development in RE&WMIPW.

Cross Cultural Ministries Initiative—Office of Cross Cultural Ministries in RE&WMIPW.

### C. Conclusion

The Women of Color Consultation provided racial ethnic women in the PC(USA) a space to talk about life and ministry within the denomination. There were stories of struggle, grief, anger, tears, perseverance, laughter, triumph, and hope for the future. Within the church, women of color have come far since the ordination of Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon, the first African American woman ordained as clergy in the Presbyterian church (UPCUSA, 1974); the Reverend Blanqui Ontario Rivera, the first Latina woman ordained to ministry in the Presbyterian church (UPCUSA, 1975, the Reverend Rebecca Reyes was ordained in the PCUS in 1979 and the Reverend Ofelia Miriam Ortega was ordained to ministry in Cuba in 1967), the Reverend Elizabeth Kwon, the first Korean American clergywoman in the Presbyterian church, who transferred her ordination from Japan (UPCUSA, 1978); the Reverend Holly Haile Smith, the first Native American woman ordained to ministry in the Presbyterian church [PC(USA) (1986)]; and the Reverend Roula Alkhouri, the first Middle Eastern clergywoman in the PC(USA) (2000). The first women deacons were ordained in 1906, and the first women elders were ordained in 1930. Although we rejoice in this progress, the reality is we have come several steps forward, and unfortunately, several step backwards. The collective voices of the women gathered for the Women of Color Consultation expressed that the Presbyterian system is still resistant to women’s leadership.

As new generations of racial ethnic leaders emerge, the obstacles that continue to prevent women leaders from freely serving must be overcome. Thus, racial ethnic women press onward and continue to hear and sing new songs to God. Our hope is that the church will listen to these voices and respond with actions that will bring us closer to becoming a witness to the reign of God.

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**ACWC AND ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-16**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-16—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advise that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove the recommendations in this report.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns together advise that the 220th General Assembly (2012) not approve the recommendations of the 2011 Women of Color Consultation Report to the 220th General Assembly. Rather, we advise that the 220th General Assembly (2012) reaffirm and recommit to living into the report and recommendations of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies” which was approved at the 218th General Assembly (2008) (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acrec/pdf/wocctaskforcereport.pdf>).

The Report of the 2011 Women of Color Consultation highlights the good that was accomplished through the gathering in Charlotte, North Carolina; however, it does not adequately address or respond to the more difficult and painful events that transpired at the consultation for many of its participants.

While the recommendations are palatable, they glaringly omit the financial implications necessary to act on some of the recommendations, incapacitating the church’s ability to faithfully respond. Furthermore, the recommendations do not address some of the root issues that led to the misunderstanding and pain experienced at the consultation.

We believe the report of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies,” more aptly addresses the problems and issues raised at the 2011 Women of Color Consultation.

The Task Force’s report calls us to dismantle internalized oppression and privilege with a timeline as follows:

1. The intersections of race, gender, and class by 2010;
2. Internalized oppression (race and gender) by 2012;
3. White privilege and male privilege by 2014.

Unfortunately, neither the task force’s recommendations nor the spirit of the report were consulted, adhered to, or reflected in the planning and implementation of the 2011 Women of Color Consultation (WoCC).

We believe that the recommendations and analysis that came from the task force to the 218th General Assembly (2008) are stronger and more directly address the concerns of women of color in the PC(USA).

As such, we advise that rather than approve the recommendations of the 2011 Women of Color Consultation, the 220th General Assembly (2012) reaffirm and recommit to the report and recommendations of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies.” Additionally, we recommend that we commit part of the GAMC budget to broaden the scope and effectiveness of some of the work that came out of that 2008 report. For example, while some work has been done with regards to antiracism training (as directed in #4 of that report), the work unfortunately remains largely unknown and participation has been optional in nearly all cases. While the church cannot force all of its members to participate in training, certainly employees and staff of the church on the national and local levels could be required to participate.

Further, we would urge the assembly to refer to the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns’ resolution in relation to some of the ways the work from that report could be done more effectively. See Item 10-20.

Our hope would be that future Women of Color Consultations would be carried out with greater attention paid to the original intention behind bringing women of color together for this event as described in “Hearing and Singing New Songs” and that our denomination would recognize the need to continue lifting up and celebrating the voices and gifts of women of color.

Real change and transformation are still needed within the PC(USA), and we have a terrific resource in “Hearing and Singing New Songs.” Our recommendation is to go back to that document to continue its implementation in a more intentional and effective manner.

## Item 10-17

### *Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Recommendations and Rationale*

#### **A. Recommendations Regarding Leadership Development**

The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

[The assembly answered Item 10-17, Recommendation A.1., by the action taken on Item 16-07. See pp. 48–51, 61, 76, and 1462.1]

1. Encourage presbyteries and direct the six agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to develop and maintain websites and publications in the Spanish language in addition to the English language so that Spanish speakers might have full access to information regarding the work and ministry of the church.

#### ***Rationale for Recommendation A.1.***

In spite of the multilingual presence in our church, currently only a few selected PC(USA) resources and statements are translated into languages other than English. Presently, callers to the Presbyterian Center who do not speak English are faced with difficulties in getting the information they need. The PC(USA) website is predominantly in the English language. Thus many current and prospective church members cannot read or hear information in their own languages, preventing them from full participation in the connectional church. As we look toward the future of the church, we can make the ministry of the PC(USA) accessible to those who do not speak English.

The January 2012 Research Study commissioned by the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group was conducted by Research Services; at the request of the group, Research Services prepared a version of the survey in Spanish. Of the total 266 persons surveyed, 142 (53 percent) self-identified as Hispanic/Latino/a. Of those who identified as Hispanic/Latino/a, 86 (61 percent) took the Spanish version of the survey. This fact indicates a preference and a need to have Spanish-language materials available especially with respect to official denominational communications and resources.

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation A.2. See pp. 61, 76.]

2. Encourage presbyteries to create staff positions, cross-cultural commissions, and/or committees of sufficiently qualified people that will resource congregations to explore and carry out new ways of ministering with Hispanic/Latino/a communities. These could include, but are not limited to, developing new churches, organizing Bible study fellowships, providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes as well as Spanish classes, engaging in/promoting social action and ministry, and supporting the development of “nesting” and cross-cultural congregations.

#### ***Rationale for Recommendation A.2.***

Knowledge of cultural, linguistic, social, and other characteristics of a certain community is paramount to inform and determine how strategies intended to reach out to those communities will be shaped and carried out. Staff and/or committees that understand the Hispanic/Latino/a realities in the United States are necessary in order to develop effective, faithful ministries with Hispanics/Latinos/as as well as to serve as “bridge builders” among all churches in the presbytery.

The January 2012 Research Study found that the Hispanic/Latino/a leaders surveyed indicated a preference for presbyteries to sponsor programs and initiatives designed specifically for Hispanic/Latinos/as. Furthermore, the study also found that the “presence of Hispanic/Latinos/as in key decision making groups” (within the presbytery) was the most commonly indicated positive influence on effective implementation of a strategy for Hispanics/Latinos/as.

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation A.3. See pp. 61, 76.]

3. Urge presbyteries to examine the cultural contexts in which their congregations do ministry and help church members and leaders broaden their understandings of community. Furthermore, urge presbyteries to offer the benefit of antiracism and immigration issues educational opportunities to learn how white privilege and power, as well as other discriminatory attitudes and practices, limit the potential for building up the body of Christ.

#### ***Rationale for Recommendation A.3.***

The church is a community opposed to racism, yet many presbyteries and congregations resist the call to understand fully how internalized privilege informs attitudes about people of color and how racism continues to harm the Body of Christ. Today, more than ever, helpful tools and training models exist for improving negative attitudes toward people of color. Such training will help Christians minister more effectively in a broken world, grateful for God’s love for all and prepared to discern together how to grow in understanding of one another.

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation A.4. See pp. 61, 76.]

**4. Empower and resource the Racial/Ethnic/Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women program and the Theology, Worship, and Education areas of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) in cooperation with the National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus to develop and implement programs and resources that will help Hispanic/Latino/a communities engage in cross-cultural opportunities amongst the different Spanish-speaking cultures and nationalities.**

*Rationale for Recommendation A.4.*

Hispanic/Latinos/as in the United States come from more than twenty countries. Though these countries share a common language, each has unique linguistic and cultural characteristics. These unique characteristics often include political, socioeconomic, and historical differences, which can sometimes create divisions amongst Hispanic/Latino/a communities. These varied Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian groups need to engage in intentional, ongoing dialogue regarding how they can work together and thereby more effectively impact the church.

**B. Recommendations Regarding Theological Education**

**The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation B.1. See pp. 61, 76.]

**1. Request the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to revisit underlying cultural assumptions not limited to but including those related to language and socioeconomic groupings in the ordination exams, and make recommendations to the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates (PCCEC). Such recommendations will be identified by a prior study.**

*Rationale for Recommendation B.1.*

Certain cultural assumptions exist within the ordination exams that cause unintentional but significant disadvantages to many Hispanic/Latino/a students. The PCCEC has known about these longstanding cultural challenges, and has sought to address them, but has not yet been able to adequately resolve them. With a better understanding of cultural assumptions and challenges, certain obstacles can be easily removed (i.e., versions of the Bible, translation issues, illustrations based on contexts not found in Hispanic/Latino/a congregations, etc.). Drawing from standardized exam studies (GRE, SAT, etc.), a comparative analysis can be conducted to discover the common cultural issues associated with the construction of public examinations. Theological schools need this study to inform their curricula in order to prepare students for exams.

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation B.2. See pp. 61, 76.]

**2. Direct the COTE to partner with Presbyterian theological educators and PC(USA) seminary faculty and senior staff to identify funding and to participate in the Hispanic Summer Program's "Through Hispanic Eyes."**

*Rationale for Recommendation B.2.*

The January 2012 research study found that the issue of cultural awareness and sensitivity merited important consideration, especially among those involved in the formation of Presbyterian inquirers and candidates for ministry. One model, the Hispanic Summer Program (an ecumenical program founded in 1988 and based in Chicago, Illinois), has proven to be especially successful in increasing the cultural awareness and sensitivity of its participants. Currently the program is accessible to seminary presidents and academic deans (registration fee required), though the program would be beneficial to a much wider audience of theological educators.

The Hispanic Summer Program supplements and enriches the theological and ministerial education offered in seminaries and universities, with academic courses and other activities directly addressing Hispanic/Latino/a history, ministry and theology. (See <http://www.hispanicsummerprogram.org/>.)

According to the January 2012 research study, Hispanic/Latino/a leaders indicated that PC(USA) seminary-sponsored programs/workshops designed specifically for Hispanic/Latino/as were more helpful than the programs/workshops of any other sponsoring entity. [Other entities listed included General Assembly/national church sponsorship, presbytery, synod, and non-PC(USA) sponsoring entities.]

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation B.3. See pp. 61, 76.]

**3. Direct the COTE to collect and compile from PC(USA) seminaries data regarding the race, ethnicity, denominational affiliation, and gender composition of faculty, board members, and students and provide a comparative annual report to each seminary president and board.**

*Rationale for Recommendation B.3.*

A decline from previous levels in recruitment and retention of Hispanic/Latino/a faculty, especially those who are Presbyterian, and the lack of success so far in building a sizable cohort is a matter of real concern. Appeals for inclusion have had limited impact. This recommendation wishes to try offering comparative figures so that particular schools can benchmark their success against others and thereby find an incentive for change.

**C. Recommendations Regarding New Church Developments (NCDs)**

The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation C.1. See pp. 61, 76.]

**1. Encourage presbyteries to develop a vision and strategy and to prioritize and allocate resources for Hispanic/Latino/a NCDs, new worshiping communities, and other ministries; and encourage presbyteries to share these visions/strategies and to work in partnership with the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office.**

*Rationale for Recommendation C.1.*

Mid councils have a responsibility for developing new communities of faith to further the mission of Jesus Christ. In order to do so, a vision and strategy are needed, which should include a focus on the growing Hispanic/Latino/a population. Once a strategy has been developed, sharing this strategy with the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office will foster communication and grow a connectional body among the communities and the PC(USA).

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation C.2. See pp. 61, 76.]

**2. Encourage presbyteries, in partnership with PC(USA) seminaries, to identify Hispanic/Latino/a inquirers, candidates, and commissioned ruling elders who demonstrate leadership qualities appropriate for NCD ministry, and share this information with presbyteries and the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office.**

*Rationale for Recommendation C.2.*

Specific leadership skills are needed to initiate, implement, and sustain NCDs. Individuals possessing such skills should be availed various resources that will encourage and support the development of NCDs and other new worshiping communities.

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation C.3. See pp. 61, 76.]

**3. Encourage presbyteries and GAMC ministry areas to provide resources for Hispanic/Latino/a commissioned ruling elders, seminary students, pastors, and other interested leadership to participate in local, regional, and national NCD events and services to foster enrichment and education of the NCD program.**

*Rationale for Recommendation C.3.*

The January 2012 research study found that in addition to the primary importance of leadership development programs/workshops designed specifically for Hispanic/Latinos/as, survey participants also indicated “evangelism” (targeted toward Hispanic/Latinos/as) as a secondary area in need of additional resources and training. Some presbyteries are working intentionally to nurture Hispanic/Latino/a NCD leaders, but others where the Hispanic/Latino/a presence is growing are not acknowledging such growth or providing appropriate NCD support and training for Hispanic/Latino/a leaders. The Office of Evangelism and Church Growth of the GAMC has a program for the training of Hispanic/Latino/a NCD pastors through a coaching program. More programs such as this are needed at a local level.

**D. Recommendations Regarding Youth and Young Adults**

The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation D.1. See pp. 61, 76.]

**1. Direct the Office of Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support and the Office of Resources and Relationships with Hispanic/Latino/a constituencies to convene a group of people (young adults and adults) to serve as a mentoring network for youth and young adults in the different regions where they are needed.**

[Financial Implication: Recommendations A.1., A.4., D.1.: (2013) \$19,225 (2014), \$12,525—GAMC—Unrestricted]

*Rationale for Recommendation D.1.*

Currently no systemic mentoring strategy designed for Hispanic/Latino/a youth and young adults exists. Such a mentoring process would provide youth and young adults with a trusting relationship with a caring leader who will help foster



discipleship. The creation of this mentoring network will provide support and motivation for local leaders and help them inspire youth and young adults to a higher commitment to Jesus Christ, resulting in their involvement at all levels of the church's mission.

According to the January 2012 Research Study commissioned by the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group, the survey participants indicated that the Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic/Latino/a constituencies in the PC(USA) [215th General Assembly (2003)] has been more effectively implemented nationally than regionally. However, the study also found that leadership initiatives and programs designed specifically for Hispanics/Latinos/as would be most effectively implemented at the regional level.

**[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation D.2., with amendment. See pp. 61, 76.]**

**2. ~~[Direct]~~ [Encourage] the Office of Ministries with Youth and encourage other PC(USA) entities to incorporate cultural proficiency/sensitivity training in relation to Hispanic/ Latino/a young people as a part of the training process for leadership of all events, gatherings, and resources (including providing interpreters for Spanish-speaking participants, bilingual worship, and multilingual promotional resources).**

*Rationale for Recommendation D.2.*

Due to the changing nature of the church, events for youth and young adults should accurately reflect the diversity of the larger society. Young people should be able to connect their own lives and experiences to the contents presented through worship and faith encounters. The church as a whole can benefit from the rich diversity that already exists within it. All leadership should be aware of and include the gifts of all of God's children.

**[The assembly approved Item 10-17, Recommendation E. See pp. 61, 76.]**

**E. Other Recommendations**

**The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office, in conversations with its constituencies, to effectively implement the PC(USA) Hispanic National Strategy [approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003); *Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 531ff] into a strategic plan that will provide guidance to Hispanic/Latino/a communities and groups for partnering with the General Assembly, mid councils, and PCUSA) seminaries in addressing these matters. This should happen in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus to monitor progress and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

*Rationale for Recommendation E.*

The January 2012 research study found widespread unfamiliarity about the 2003 Hispanic National Strategy among all groups surveyed. Specifically, nearly seven of 10 (68 percent) of Hispanic/Latino/a leaders indicated some degree of unfamiliarity with the 2003 strategy. Of those more familiar with the strategy, many indicated that it had not been implemented effectively, particularly at the regional level. This lack of awareness and lack of effective implementation can be attributed to the absence of a clear communication strategy, a centralized monitoring system, and well-defined evaluation mechanisms. These areas can be improved with the development of a well-designed strategic plan that includes, as measurable objectives, the recommendations of this report.

*Overall Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 15-09. On Convening a Conversation to Develop a Strategy for Addressing Hispanic/Latino Participation at All Levels of the Church (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1164).*

The recommendation was as follows:

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) recommends that the 219th General Assembly (2010) convene a conversation within the larger church to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the concern for Hispanic/Latino/a leadership at all levels of the church that would include and be led by no fewer than two representatives appointed or elected by each of the following groups: the PC(USA) Hispanic/ Latina/o Caucus, the PC(USA) Office of Vocation, the Advisory Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Committee on Theological Education, and the General Assembly Mission Council. Other groups and/or appropriate individuals may be invited into the conversations with all individually responsible for reporting to their respective groups and corporately back to the 220th General Assembly (2012). – COTE (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1164)

The *Book of Order*<sup>1</sup> states, “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups ... shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0403). In an ever-increasing multicultural and multiethnic United States society, the statement above takes on new meaning and relevance.<sup>2</sup>

The 2010 U.S. Census indicates that communities of European descent are a minority in many areas of the country. Certainly, by mid-century or even before, demographers predict, the racial-ethnic population “will outnumber whites throughout the nation.” Among these “emerging majorities,” Hispanics/Latinos/as constitute the fastest-growing ethno-cultural group, at over 55 million strong.<sup>3</sup> Many consider this reality an opportunity to enhance their world view and to learn from others who hold different perspectives on life and faith. Unfortunately, many others react negatively to this projected increase in the Hispanic/Latino/a population. Racist attitudes have crystallized in anti-immigration laws in many parts of the country, especially in the South, with the overt intent of targeting Hispanics/Latinos/as. Even the church struggles to make the changes necessary to reflect these present dynamics and to prepare for what the future will bring. For the most part, strategies intended to make the church more ethnically inclusive lack both resources and full institutional support. In spite of many years of official efforts by the General Assembly Mission Council and the development of programs aimed to help the church become more ethnically inclusive, on the last count, the PC(USA) was still approximately 91 percent white. Even as the growth rate is more stable within racial ethnic communities, these figures reflect not so much the success of any effort to increase the ethnic diversity of the church as much as the rapid attrition of its white members. Thus the percentage of people of color in the PC(USA) is growing in large part because white communities are declining.<sup>4</sup> While the United States moves toward an increasingly multiethnic and multicultural future, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appears to move counterculturally, maintaining primarily a monocultural, ethnocentric church while, at the same time, declining in numbers.

God created a diverse world of forms, colors, languages, cultures, and peoples (*ethne*) and “saw everything that [God] had made, and indeed, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31a). In time, God’s own offspring—Jesus Christ—through the Incarnation, became a human being born as a Jew within the context of the Roman Empire. Raised in Galilee “of the nations,” his milieu included the cultural experience of Macedonians, Persians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Syrians, Romans and indigenous Canaanites. His genealogy included Canaanites and Moabites. He spoke Aramaic and Hebrew, perhaps even Greek. Jesus ministered to Samaritans and Roman citizens, as well as to his own Jewish people. The gospel gives witness to Jesus who, since birth, experienced outsider status and whose presence attracted those who felt marginalized by society. Jesus reached out to them and found them worthy of inclusion at the table of fellowship. Jesus died for the world (Jn. 3:16) and sent his followers to all nations (Mt. 28:19). He broke down societal, cultural, religious, and racial barriers by speaking to and accepting water from the woman at the well, an ethnic and social outcast (John 4). By the power of the Spirit, Jesus’ Word gave birth to the church on the day of Pentecost as a multilingual/multicultural community (Acts 2:1–13), a community that welcomed the diverse gifts of its members and lived in true solidarity by the sharing of common resources (Acts 2:43–47) and by accepting everyone as equal partners in ministry and mission despite differences in ethnicity or nationality (Acts 6 and 10ff).

If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a predominantly white, English-speaking denomination, is going to thrive and have effective, faithful ministries in a multicultural and multiethnic society, then it must develop strategies to face the challenge of becoming a more intentional community of inclusion. The church must evolve from a model of diversity that seeks inclusion through mere representation and quotas toward a model of equality, hospitality, and justice, based on full partnership in mission, so that it can be a church in true solidarity with peoples from different cultures, ethnicities, and languages. The church that shares and welcomes the diverse gifts of its people, in service and leadership, becomes a first fruit of God’s Realm; a true house of prayer for all nations (Mk. 11:17).

#### *Recent Actions*

Specifically regarding the Hispanic/Latino/a constituency and the need to continue to improve outreach efforts to those constituents, in 2003 the General Assembly approved the Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic-Latino Constituencies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This comprehensive strategy’s purpose was to encourage and resource the entire church to engage in ministries with and outreach to the Latino communities throughout the country.

In late 2009, representatives of the Hispanic/Latino/a National Presbyterian Caucus met with the Committee on Theological Education in San Anselmo, California, to present their concerns about the recent loss of the only two Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian professors in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries. The request included plans for intentional recruitment of Hispanic/Latino/a professors and students by PC(USA) seminaries as well as changes in the core curricula of these institutions to prepare students from all ethno-cultural backgrounds to minister effectively cross-culturally given the present and future dynamics.

This conversation led the COTE to direct an action to the 219th General Assembly (2010) that in essence asked the church to “convene a conversation within the larger church to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the concern for Hispanic/Latino/a leadership at all levels of the church.” The General Assembly approved this request.

The conversation group met via conference call as well as at one face-to-face meeting in June 2011. At the June meeting, the group realized that they needed more information about Hispanic/Latino/a ministries in the PC(USA). To this end, the group commissioned a national research study with the primary objective of cataloguing educational programs, workshops, and other initiatives designed specifically for Hispanics/Latinos/as and evaluating the impact of these programs/workshops on the ministries of the participants. A secondary goal of the research study was to evaluate the awareness and implementation of the National Hispanic Strategy approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003).

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

The group contracted with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Research Services, who conducted this national study in January 2012. The overall sample of 266 participants contained 149 Hispanic/Latino/a leaders (ruling elders and teaching elders), 94 mid council executives, 12 leaders from PC(USA) seminaries, and 11 PC(USA) agency chairs and senior staff. The complete results of the study are included in Appendix A.

### *Conversation Group Members*

Tony Aja, convenor, and Sandra Luciano-Andujar (National Presbyterian Hispanic/Latino Caucus); Stephen C. Hsieh and Carmen Rosario (Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns); Iain Torrance and Mindy Douglas Adams (Committee on Theological Education); Martha Miller (Office of Vocations); Olanda Carr (General Assembly Mission Council); Daniel Beteta, Ruben Armendariz, and Jose’ Irizzary (invited partners-at-large).

### Endnotes

1. *Book of Order* 2009–2011, before the changes that were approved in 2011.
2. Phillip Jenkins asserts that “The religious future of the Christian world is in the hands and under the influence of Global South Christians, most of them people of color with very different world views, culture and languages from the presently dominant white, Western church.” The Presbyterian national churches in Mexico and Guatemala together, for example, are more numerous than the PC(USA), with a combined membership of more than three million congregants. Many of these Presbyterian Christians from the “Global South” are also new immigrants who now reside in the United States.
3. More than half of the growth in the total U.S. population between 2000 and 2010 resulted from an increase of the Hispanic population. Between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic population grew by 43 percent, rising from 35.3 million in 2000 to 50.5 million in 2010. The rise in the Hispanic population accounted for more than half of the 27.3 million increase in the total U.S. population. By 2010, Hispanics comprised 16 percent of the total U.S. population of 308.7 million (National Institute for Latino Policy and 2010 Census).
4. Jack Marcum, Ph.D., coordinator of Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), July 1, 2011. Dr. Marcum explained in a recent PowerPoint presentation at a national church gathering: “While the total number of PC(USA) congregations declined from 11,260 in 1998 to 10,657 in 2009, most of the churches that closed were white. In contrast, the growth that has occurred in the past decade has generally been among immigrant ethnic churches.”

### Appendix A

#### Comparative Analysis and Findings

#### *of a survey conducted for the*

#### *Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Group of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

[For text of this appendix, see hispanic-latino-report-appendix-a.pdf or pages 944–72.]

### Appendix B

#### English to Spanish Translation of Recommendations and Rationale

[For text of this appendix, see hispanic-latino-report-appendix-b.pdf or pages 973–81.]

### **ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON 10-17**

#### *Advice and Counsel on Item 10-17—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 10-17 be answered by the advice and counsel of ACREC to Item 05-12 (Mid Council Commission Report of the General Assembly), which was to approve an alternate resolution to read as follows:

“1. Instruct the Moderators of the 218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012) to appoint a Racial Ethnic Ministry Commission.

“2. Empower the appointed commission to develop strategies to address the questions raised in the reports noted above, and to be granted adequate budget for this work.

“3. Direct the commission, in consultation with representative groups, to develop strategies toward the path forward for the PC(USA)

“a. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow established and emerging racial ethnic congregations;

“b. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow multicultural congregations;

“c. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support new immigrant congregations;

“d. for the growth of understanding of the issues race, culture, and ethnicity raise within the Christian community, including development of churchwide strategies to raise consciousness of white privilege.

“4. Provide commission staffing from both the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council.

“5. Give representation on the commission to the following groups:

“a. racial ethnic caucuses

“b. new immigrant congregations and ministries

“c. racial ethnic congregations

“d. multicultural congregations

“e. Women of Color Joint Working Group

“f. mid council staff

“g. ACREC

“h. GACOR;

“and that all decisions would be made by consensus in order to ensure voice for all commission members.

“6. Direct the commission to consult with other groups as needed, both within and outside the PC(USA), to develop workable and sustainable strategies.

“7. Bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns hears echoes of voices from across the church in the report’s Recommendation 8, which calls for the formation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force. Specifically in reports to this General Assembly, calls have been made for

- a national consultation to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA) (Item 16-03, African American Church Growth Strategy Report, Recommendation 1);
- the development of a national strategy for Hispanic/Latino Church Growth, and infrastructure built to support this new strategy (Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report, Recommendation e.);
- a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA) (Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, Recommendations 1–6);
- recommendations to develop effective strategies for the development of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshiping communities; train seminary students in emerging cultural realities, and develop strategies within our seminaries to work toward curricular and faculty reform and change, that we might train racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders more effectively; develop multilingual resources and translation capacities to better witness within our increasingly diverse society; explore disparities in compensation between those of more and less represented groups in our church; develop resources to support the growth of new immigrant ministries and congregations, and increase the understanding among Presbyterians of white privilege that we might repent and be renewed and empowered for more faithful service (Item 16-07, Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, Recommendations 1.c., 3.a., d., e., 4., 5., 6.b., c., f., and 8, respectively, pages 1462ff).

These, in addition to the recommendation from the Mid Council Commission to develop a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force, make it clear that while Presbyterians have been thinking about racial ethnic and new immigrant ministries for over a century—and while many faithful ministries have been launched in many contexts that have borne much fruit—we know and are voicing in many arenas our awareness that there is still much work to do. Race, culture, and language still divide us, marring the image of Christ we share with a world in need and blunting our witness to the good news. The current excitement about developing “1001 New Worshipping Communities” will not be realized without the engagement and investment of racial ethnic Presbyterians. To date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not addressed issues of race and cul-

ture sufficiently to ensure either that the needed engagement would happen, or that the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians would be heard in the conversation.

Therefore, to faithfully steward the resources entrusted to us by taking a proactive approach to a number of overlapping initiatives and recommendations, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to answer all the recommendations noted above with the approval of this recommendation.

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**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 10-17**

*Comment on Item 10-17—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises approval of Item 10-17, Recommendations A.1.–E.1., and offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment:

The Conversation Group has yielded abundant fruits that will nourish important ministries of the greater PC(USA) for years to come, especially if the assembly acts on the recommendations and assists council in implementation. This approach may also suggest a helpful model for future General Assembly actions that seek to bring reconciliation to hurting communities who have experienced systemic discriminatory practice and demonstrate disparities in achievement where inequity is entrenched.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 10-17**

**[Received June 29, 2012]**

*Comment on Item 10-17—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

1. *GAMC Comment on Recommendation A.1.*

The Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support and the Office of Spanish Language Resources and Relationships currently has bilingual websites, in Spanish and English. The GAMC and OGA also provide the *Book of Order*, *The Book of Confessions*, the *Presbyterian Hymnal*, “Living the Vision” (Hispanic/Latino-a emphasis), “Living the Vision” (multicultural emphasis), the Hispanic/Latino-a Strategy, the Hispanic/Latino-a Strategy Manual for Implementation, Engage (an evangelism resource), and some Christian Education curriculum in the Spanish language. Presbyterian Women also provides some of its resources in Spanish for Latina Presbyterian Women and some Special Offerings resources are in Spanish.

[See Joint OGA/GAMC comment on Item 16-07, page 1483, for additional information regarding translation efforts and anticipated costs.]

2. *GAMC Comment on Recommendation A.4.*

The GAMC, through the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area, is engaged in the work of equipping, connecting, and inspiring Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterians through its office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support.

The primary focus of the Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support is to provide leadership to Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterians and to partner with mid councils in the areas of evangelism and church growth, encouraging the development of new Hispanic/Latino-a worshipping communities and the transformation of existing congregations. Staff in this office provides assistance and support to the National Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterian Caucus and its twelve regional caucuses, the National Hispanic Latina Presbyterian Women, the National Hispanic Latino Presbyterian Men, and the National Hispanic/Latino-a Youth and Young Adults group. We also provide a witness to the whole church by articulating the unique Hispanic/Latino-a Reformed cultural heritage and tradition.

In 2011, two Hispanic/Latino-a New Church Developments and eight new Bible Study groups were started, as well as one Spanish language regional commissioned ruling elder program. There are currently eleven Presbyterian commissioned ruling elder and leadership development programs established around the country. The office also provides resources in English and Spanish to Hispanic/Latino-a constituents in the church.

3. *GAMC Comment on Recommendation C.3.*

*A Handbook for Hispanic/Latino New Church Development*, a bilingual resource, was published a few years ago by the Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support office and Congregational Ministries Publishing. This bilingual handbook offers pastors, presbyteries and church leaders practical ways to build Hispanic/Latino-a new worshipping communities. The handbook is intended to inspire readers with stories of successful new church developments and to equip them with information on new models of ministry for Hispanic/Latino-a evangelism and church growth. More than 550 of these

handbooks, as well as 1,055 Presbyterian Spanish language worship books (Libro de Adoracion, Geneva Press, published in 2009) and 9,306 Presbyterian Spanish language hymnbooks (El Himnario Presbiteriano, Westminster John Knox Press, published in 1999) were sold. Congregations and presbyteries are using these resources to help them as they grow new worshipping communities and also for bilingual and multicultural worship.

The Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support held eleven regional church growth training events in locations in the United States and Puerto Rico, and 100 pastors and leaders attended a national continuing education practical theology event last year. Also, a national youth and young adult network was organized, and a national consultation on the future of Hispanic/Latino-a ministry will be held later this year in partnership with the Hispanic/Latino-a Caucus.

Hispanic/Latino-a ministry in the church is occurring and will continue to be the central focus of the GAMC's Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support. Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women is committed to growing new Hispanic/Latino-a worshipping communities in partnership with mid-councils and developing transformative racial ethnic and immigrant leaders as we strive to become a more diverse church.

#### 4. *GAMC Comment on Recommendation D.2.*

The GAMC is pleased to present the following report of its work in the area of ministries with youth with special attention to cultural proficiency and Hispanic/Latino/a ministry. Because of its extensive work in this area and the ecumenical nature of some of our work, we would request that the Office of Ministries with Youth be "encouraged" rather than "directed" to incorporate this cultural proficiency/sensitivity training in relation to Hispanic/Latino/a young people as part of the training process for all of its events. This change would place the Office of Ministries with Youth on par with the encouragement given to every other PC(USA) entity, rather than singling it out as the only office to receive specific direction.

The area of Office of Ministries with Youth is pleased to examine how it might expand and deepen its ministries with Hispanic/Latino young people (12–18 years old) as well as work in partnership with other GAMC staff and programs to do the same. The national youth ministry program is aware and has been aware of the shifting demographics in the Hispanic/Latino culture, particularly as they relate to children, youth, and families of children and youth. In response to the future increase of Hispanic/Latino young people in churches, classrooms, and communities, the national youth ministry program and associated partnerships and ministries began considering, in 2010, how to adapt its current and future programs to connect with the needs of these youth and adult youth leaders (see "Current Steps" below). There is room to improve and an open-ness to examining current program goals in light of the information presented by this conversation group. There has always been a strong commitment to presenting leadership from a wide range of cultural, geographic, and theologically diverse Christian communities in national youth ministry endeavors. The Office of Ministries with Youth and its cosponsors in youth ministry intentionally include speakers, teachers, small group leaders, and pastoral care staff from Hispanic/Latino communities.

A number of programs and ministries desire to more deeply reflect, reach, and influence young people—adolescence/youth being a particular culture itself. The Office of Ministries with Youth receives requests and is pleased to examine ways and partnerships to include the suggestions and desires of programs seeking to deepen their accompaniment of young people. The priority for the Office of Ministry with Youth is to provide, as much as possible, given staff and budget realities, experiences, events and resources that connect deeply with young people and deeply connect them with Jesus Christ.

#### *Current Programs and Initiatives*

The Office of Ministries with Youth is currently in process of having all Quicksheets (online, youth ministry resources) translated linguistically and culturally into Spanish—with the goal to post the resources in spring/summer and fall 2013. It is imperative with resources created to connect with a specific demographic that they not only be translated into the respective language (Spanish) but that they are also accessible and relevant to the specific youth and youth workers of this community (Hispanic/Latino youth group or youth leader); ensuring that adolescent rites of passage, congregational celebrations, spiritual formation, youth/adult dynamics, and Presbyterian/Reformed theological tenets are well-attended. Quicksheets are, at this time, the primary print resource being published by the Office of Ministries with Youth. The Vision Statement for Youth in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is already translated and offered online with a Spanish option.

A new series of Youth Ministry articles is currently in conversation and in the early phase of design that focuses on youth ministry in a variety of Presbyterian church cultures and communities. These include: Hispanic/Latino Youth and Youth Ministry, Korean American Youth and Youth Ministry, Asian Pacific Youth and Youth Ministry, African American Youth and Youth Ministry, Small Church Youth Ministry, Urban Youth, New Immigrant Community Youth and Youth Ministry, Communities of Youth At Risk (Foster care, Residential Home, Low Income, etc.), and Native American and American Indian Youth. The series is in the first phase, authors are being invited, consultants researched and format designed. These will be pdf resources available online at [pcusa.org/youth](http://pcusa.org/youth) ministry. The GAMC staff related to Hispanic/Latino congregations and resources have been consulted and have been valuable advisors. Funding becomes available for these resources in winter 2014.

#### *Presbyterian Youth Triennium*

The Presbyterian Youth Triennium (PYT) included cultural sensitivity training for its primary group of volunteer leaders and community life staff during orientation and pre-event training. This segment of the training, while not being exclusively focused on Hispanic/Latino youth and culture, did indeed include Hispanic and Latino features, including information regard-

ing positive growth in numbers of Hispanic/Latino youth at the Triennium and in Presbyterian churches, increased need for theological illustration including Hispanic/Latino people, and the need for increased sensitivity/awareness on the part of Triennium leadership to the particular needs of young people coming from predominantly Hispanic/Latino communities. \*The Triennium community is still predominantly Caucasian, in registration, but has experienced a very steady growth in youth and adult leaders of backgrounds other than Caucasian, particularly growth in African American and Native American youth. During the 2010 Triennium a national Hispanic Presbyterian event was held very near to the time of the Triennium. This might have prohibited more Hispanic young people from attending the Triennium. Compared to 2004 and 2007—there were fewer Hispanic youth in attendance at the 2010 event. The 2013 Triennium staff has had conversation with GAMC colleagues responsible for Hispanic/Latino leader development and congregational ministry about ways in which to incorporate a possible pre-event for Hispanic/Latino youth and youth leaders that would allow these Triennium participants to gather and participate with both communities. This event would be funded by the Triennium budget. The Triennium is held for the purpose of connecting, inspiring, and instructing the full spectrum of Presbyterian youth, representing all cultures, zip codes, and stages of older adolescence.

The Office of Ministries with Youth sees great value in deepening the awareness of and sensitivity to Hispanic/Latino youth and church issues and needs. To this end, the Office of Ministries with Youth will work with colleagues to include training of the PYT staff and production team so that improvements and enhancements might be made in the foundational plans of Triennium activities. There are two major Triennium planning meetings left to complete; adding a cultural sensitivity component to the planning process has already been discussed and enthusiastically welcomed by the staff. Staff will work to secure leadership aware of both the needs of Hispanic/Latino youth and the way in which this sits within the larger youth community.

The Office of Ministries with Youth, in fall 2011, confirmed three prominent Hispanic Presbyterian leaders to be platform leaders at the 2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium. The Triennium staff is pleased and excited to announce that the Reverend Dr. Claudio Carvalhaes will serve as a preacher during the event; the Reverend Jorge Gonzalez will serve as music leader; and Presbyterian youth worker, Omayra Gonzalez-Mendez, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, will serve as a recreation leader.

The Triennium, and other previous national youth ministry events, offers translation, for all requested languages and for attendees who request translation. For some newer events, such as Faith in 3D and Pathways, there are plans to offer translation of workshop designs and/or language translation if requested.

In addition to the above plans for the Triennium, there will be, for the first time, a Youth Worker Track. The Youth Worker Track will focus on leader development/youth ministry training for adult youth workers. The Office of Ministries with Youth has worked with the Triennium staff to incorporate a special Hispanic/Latino Youth Leader training into the design. Presenters are being identified and invited.

#### *Further Developments and Potential Programs*

The Office of Ministries with Youth works in partnership with the Princeton Theological Seminary Institute for Youth Ministry. Currently, there are plans for a bilingual forum (focused on offering Hispanic/Latino or Spanish speaking youth workers training and enrichment) at an upcoming Princeton Youth Ministry Forum. Discussion about the need for this event began in spring 2011 and conversation/planning continues presently. Possible dates include fall 2013 or winter 2014. The IYM Forum for Youth Ministry is an annual continuing education event for youth ministry leaders (adults). The Office of Ministries with Youth will cosponsor this event.

- Pathways Youth Leader Seminars: Workshops could be translated. Events could be held in predominantly Hispanic/Latino churches and incorporate bilingual leadership/presentations.
- Presbyterian Youth Book Club: Spanish language versions of the featured books could be added to the links.
- Teen Suicide Prevention Resources: Spanish language version could be created and added.

## **Item 10-18**

### *Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church*

#### **A. Relating to Budgets for General Assembly Mission Program**

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation A.1. See pp. 61, 74.]

#### **1. Presbyterian Mission Program—General Assembly Mission Program Receipts and Expenditures Actual Compared to Budget for 2010 and 2011.**

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) incorporate into the Minutes the report of the General Assembly Mission Program Receipts and Expenditures Actual Compared to Budget for 2010 and 2011.**

[The display that is found in gamc-budget-charts-A-1.pdf, or pages 982–85, is the report of actual revenue and expenditures for the years 2010 and 2011.]

***Rationale***

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

- B. The General Assembly Council shall:
  - 1. Report to each General Assembly:
    - a. Actual total financial resources used to support the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the expenditures during the most recently completed year. (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

**2. *Presbyterian Mission Program—Revised General Assembly Mission Budget and Program 2012.***

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation A.2. See pp. 61, 74.]

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) receive the revised report of the 2012 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$89,091,490.**

[The display that is found in gamc-budget-charts-A-2.pdf (also on pages 986–87) is the report of the 2012 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program.]

***Rationale***

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

- B. The General Assembly Council shall:
  - 1. report to each General Assembly: ...
    - b. adjustments, if any, approved by the General Assembly [Mission] Council for the current budget year.
  - 2. adjust if necessary the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program as adopted by the General Assembly ... (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation A.3. See p. 74.]

**3. *Presbyterian Mission Program—General Assembly Mission Budget and Program 2013 and 2014.***

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the 2013 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$81,576,103 and the 2014 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program in the total amount of \$78,196,031.**

[The display that is found in gamc-budget-charts-A-3.pdf (see also pages 988–91) is the report of the 2013 General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the 2014 General Assembly Mission Budget Program.]

***Rationale***

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy Governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

- B. The General Assembly Council shall: ...
  - 3. recommend to the General Assembly the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program for the next succeeding budget cycle. Displayed in the recommendation shall be:
    - a. all projected financial sources; and
    - b. anticipated uses of financial resources in light of mission objectives. (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

The General Assembly Mission Council is required by the Constitution to prepare and submit a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-3.0113).



**B. *Relating to Reserved or Committed Funds***

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation B.1. See pp. 61, 74.]

**1. *Unrestricted and Committed Funds***

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) receive the report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, regarding unrestricted and committed funds as of December 31, 2011.**

***Rationale***

The report of the unrestricted funds is divided between uncommitted and committed funds. The display found in game-budget-charts-B.pdf (also pages 992–96) indicates those funds as well as the activity of those funds and the status of the total reserves as of closing December 31, 2011. The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted the following policy:

**A. *Presbyterian Mission Program Fund***

1. A fund composed of all unrestricted and uncommitted receipts and assets intended for the support of the General Assembly mission program.

2. Sources to maintain this fund shall include all unified revenue available for the General Assembly Mission Program, including but not limited to:

- a. unified income including receipts from congregations, presbyteries, or individuals;
- b. unrestricted gifts, legacies, bequests
- c. unrestricted investment income;
- d. gift annuity excess reserves;
- e. such nonrecurring income as the General Assembly Council shall direct by general or specific policy statement; and
- f. under expenditure of the unified portion of the General Assembly Mission Budget.

3. The Uncommitted Funds portion of the Presbyterian Mission Program Fund at year end must be equal to at least 30% of the Unified portion and direct mission support of the General Assembly Mission Budget, which minimum provides for

- a. cash flow needed for mission purposes;
- b. guarantee of the current unified budget. (Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 377)

**C. *Relating to Support for General Assembly Mission***

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation C.1. See pp. 61, 75.]

**1. *John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds***

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) allocate the annual income realized in 2011 and projected for 2012 from the John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds in support of the budget for the general mission work of the General Assembly.**

***Rationale***

Current practice is to recommend to each General Assembly the allocation of annual income from these two funds in light of wording in the donors' wills that requires this annual process.

Portion of the will of Edmund P. Dwight (May 23, 1903):

I will and bequeath to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, to be used for the establishment of the Christian Religion, that the light of the gospel may be made to join more perfectly...

Portion of the will of John C. Lord (January 2, 1873):

... to the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., for religious and charitable uses, to be called the John C. Lord Fund, the annual interest of which is to be disposed of and distributed by the said General Assembly at each annual meeting for the furtherance of the Gospel of our Blessed Saviour, at home or abroad, as the Assembly may deem best. ...

The applicable provisions of the two wills facilitate the annual income realized from these funds to be used in the General Assembly's General Mission Budget.

Income from these funds in 2011 were \$27,597.60 and it is projected that the income from these funds in 2012 will be approximately \$24,857.42.

[The assembly approved Item 10-18, Recommendation C.2. See pp. 61, 75.]

## 2. *Special Offerings 2011*

**The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) incorporate into its Minutes the following summary of receipts from Special Offerings for the years 2010 and 2011.**

[The charts that are found in gamc-special-offerings-C-2.pdf (also page 997) show the summary of receipts for Special Offerings for the years 2010 and 2011.]

**D. 1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council not to implement the 218th General Assembly (2008) action regarding cost allocation and recovery with respect to the Theological Education Fund in the 2013–2014 General Assembly Mission Budgets.**

2. Direct the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), in consultation with the Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010) and with the Committee on Theological Education (COTE), to appoint a special committee on the funding of theological institutions, with a charge to review the funding relationship of theological institutions to the General Assembly and the church, and to propose any needed changes, including a strengthened funding mechanism for the support of theological institutions by the church. The special committee should make its report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). The special committee should consist of thirteen members, all of whom should be persons who are especially knowledgeable about theological institutions. One member should be the director of COTE, and a second the director of the GAMC Theology, Worship and Education ministry area. The remaining eleven should include two elected members of COTE, five PC(USA) seminary presidents, and a GAMC member. Other members would likewise be persons with knowledge and experience in the field of theological education, one of whom should have expertise in fundraising. The special committee will hold up to three face-to-face meetings (an initial meeting for two days, and up to two additional one-day meetings). Conference calls and other technological resources would be used for other meetings in order to reduce costs.]

**[Financial Implication: (2013) \$20,360, (2014) \$12,655—Per Capita—OGA; (2013) \$266,000, (2014) \$247,000—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

### *Rationale*

Special Offerings enable an important part of the General Assembly Mission Program. In 2010, income from these offerings totaled approximately 18 percent of total income for the mission program of the church and 27 percent of the mission gifts from congregations. In 2011, income from these offerings totaled approximately 23 percent of total income for the mission program of the church and 33 percent of the mission gifts from congregations.

## Item 10-19

[The assembly answered Item 10-19 by the action taken on Item 10-14. See pp. 61, 77.]

*On Restoring the Objectives of the One Great Hour of Sharing—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.*

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force Report so as to

1. restore the objectives of the One Great Hour of Sharing to the three programs presently funded by OGHS: i.e., Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of Peoples;
2. maintain the already determined percentages for the distribution of the offering;
3. provide for a separate avenue for the funding of the Peacemaking Program.

### *Rationale*

The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force (SOATF), in its report to the 220th General Assembly (2012), recommends that the Peacemaking Offering be added to the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, thus having the offering designated for four ministries (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of Peoples, and Peacemaking).

The SOATF proposed that the current fixed allocation for the OGHS offering be removed so that the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) would determine the allocation annually.

Including four ministries in OGHS, rather than the three ministries that are now included, will dilute the clear focus that OGHS now has on addressing critical human need around the world.

The One Great Hour of Sharing is the major avenue through which we participate in ecumenical relief and development ministries with other Protestant and Orthodox communions in the United States, as well as around the world.

Having a clear percentage for the distribution of the OGHS offering provides clarity for planning the future programs of those three ministries.

Annual decision-making by GAMC for OGHS distribution would work against the clarity that would stimulate giving, as well as mission planning and implementation in presbyteries and local congregations.

Interpretation of the OGHS in local congregations would be much more difficult.

## Item 10-20

[The assembly approved Item 10-20. See pp. 61, 75.]

*A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

**The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**1. Call on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to recommit to honoring and celebrating women of color, extending the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God to 2022.**

**2. Direct the Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to communicate by the end of 2012 with congregations, presbyteries and synods, seminaries, campus ministries, and conference centers asking them to recognize the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and incorporate it in worship, conferences, training events, and other activities.**

**3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to provide annual funding in the amount of \$7,000 for the Joint Working Group (up to eight members) to meet independently of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns once each year, to be incorporated into the per capita budget every year.**

**4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to include the Joint Working Group in the planning of future Women of Color Consultations.**

**5. Direct General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to lift up the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God in its web-based and print publications periodically throughout the decade.**

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies, Recommendation 3. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to Create a Permanent Joint Working Group on Women of Color in the Church, to Be Made Up of Two Members of ACREC and Two Members of ACWC, Appointed by the Leadership of Each Committee—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).*

The Joint Working Group was formed as a permanent committee as a result of the recommendations that came from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, which were approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), (*Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77*). They had their first meeting in July of 2009 in conjunction with a joint meeting of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC). They met again in January 2010, doing the work of monitoring the church’s response to issues and concerns raised in the initial Women of Color Consultation. They brought to the attention of both advocacy committees a number of issues directly affecting women of color. The Joint Working Group has not met since, due to the inability of the group to currently function under the parameters originally established for them. The ACWC is recommending new provisions for the Joint Working Group in order that this permanent monitoring committee established by the 218th General Assembly (2008) can continue to carry out its mandated work.

As reported to the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Women of Color Joint Working Group along with ACWC and ACREC have been discouraged by the lack of or inadequate responses to their referral monitoring inquiries. By the 219th

General Assembly (2010), two years of the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God had gone by largely unrecognized. While the referrals from the 218th General Assembly (2008) called for the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God to be communicated widely, requests from the Joint Working Group and the advocacy committees asking for such promotion and education resulted in no action. This decade (2009–2019) was intended to call the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to hear and sing new songs—those of women of color—in order to more faithfully represent and reflect *all* people of God, celebrating in particular the lives and gifts of women of color. (See *Hearing and Singing New Songs To God*: <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acrec/pdf/wocctaskforcereport.pdf>. Clearly, the Joint Working Group has found this lack of response discouraging and disheartening. While some effort has recently come from the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to acknowledge the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, these efforts to publicize the Decade have come almost three years after it was supposed to have begun. The Joint Working Group suspects this sudden action is in direct correlation with the need to report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on what has been done, and would draw the assembly’s attention to the late date at which this minimal action has been taken.

In passing the recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, the 219th General Assembly (2010) reaffirmed the commitment of the PC(USA) to be a community of “full participation and representation” of every member of the body of Christ (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403), while also acknowledging that this commitment still requires a tremendous amount of intentionality and work—especially when it comes to the genuine and equitable inclusion of women of color in the life and decision making of the church. Sadly, in 2012, three years after the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God was to have begun, very few people in the denomination know what it is.

Restructuring within the GAMC (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) has also had a direct effect on the Joint Working Group. When the Joint Working Group was formed, the advocacy committee staffing situation was of a different model from what exists now. This has direct bearing on the Joint Working Group’s ability to come together to meet. When the Joint Working Group was formed, each advocacy committee had their own staff person to resource them with expertise in their particular area of advocacy and to assist them in completing their work. This allowed the two committees to meet once a year at the same time in the same place, where they would use a portion of their time to come together to share their work with one another and often work together on intersecting issues. Due to restructuring of the GAMC (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency), since 2010, the two advocacy committees have shared one staff person. Since one person cannot resource and assist two groups at one time, the advocacy committees can no longer meet simultaneously. The Joint Working Group (who also share the same staff person as the advocacy committees) is thus unable fulfill the directive from the 218th General Assembly (2008) to meet when the advocacy committees meet together.

When they were able to meet directly following those simultaneous advocacy committee meetings, the Joint Working Group (four of whose members are on the advocacy committees) was able to save tremendously on travel cost. Four of their (up to) eight members were able to have their travel covered by the advocacy committees, with whom those four were already meeting anyway. Neither advocacy committee incurred any extra cost, as this was one of their regularly scheduled meetings. The only travel cost the Joint Working Group had to pay was for their two to four at-large members. Given the structure of the current staffing situation, this scenario is no longer possible, meaning that in order for the Joint Working Group to continue to meet once a year as mandated by the 218th General Assembly (2008), their budget must be increased. They have to this point only been allotted only \$3,060 a year, which cannot cover travel and meeting expenses for six to eight people.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) has the opportunity to recommit to our call to be a church that more faithfully and fairly reflects the diversity of the body of Christ. Given that the 218th General Assembly (2008) saw fit to create the permanent Joint Working Group, the church has a responsibility to continue to support this group. The booklet describing the history, context, and mandate of the Joint Working Group, called *Hearing and Singing New Songs to God* (<http://www.pcUSA.org/media/uploads/acrec/pdf/wocctaskforcereport.pdf>), is available online, so making this resource and the context of the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God known would cost little to nothing. To begin the Decade again would serve to show our willingness to admit that we haven’t yet done what we committed to do, but that from this point we will indeed lift new songs to God and in our actions reflect our commitment to celebrating the lives and gifts of women of color in this denomination.

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#### **GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 10-20**

*Comment on Item 10-20—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers this comment on Item 10-20 to the 220th General Assembly (2012):

The GACOR answered a referral (from 2010) related to the original report approved in 2008. The GACOR has distributed the report (in 2009) to all presbyteries and synods accompanied with a letter written by the Stated Clerk, recommending the report for study and use. In the Summer 2011, GACOR provided workshops at the Big Tent 2 meeting on the intersections of race and gender and incorporated an intersectional approach to its own Biennial Synod COR Training Events in Fall 2009 and 2011. We have seen tremendous value in the work and commend it to the larger church.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

## Item 10-21

[The assembly approved Item 10-21. See pp. 61, 75]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Promoting the Opportunity to Host Christmas International House.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to do the following:**

**1. Communicate electronically (or using the most cost-effective method) the opportunity of hosting Christmas International House to our 173 presbyteries by August 1, 2012, asking that at least one church in each presbytery be a host this year from December 18 to January 2, 2013.**

**2. Ask each presbytery to communicate this vision of hospitality among each of their congregations for 2012 with a goal of 200 programs hosting at least two students each for this next Christmas. [This can be accomplished by contacting Lisa Majoros at [www.cih.org](http://www.cih.org) or [www.amis-inc.org](http://www.amis-inc.org).]**

### *Rationale*

God calls us to welcome the stranger in our land.

Paul, in Acts 17, says God has established the times and the boundaries of the peoples of the world that they might seek "God."

In 1955, 35,000 international students and scholars from 120 nations studied in the United States.

In 2011, more than 600,000 international students from more than 200 nations studied in colleges and universities in the United States.

The U.S.A. educates more than a million international students and scholars every five-to-ten years with a BA, MA, PHD, and other graduate degrees.

These international students and scholars will be the future leaders of their nations in politics, economics, social life, and religion.

Presbyterians have been involved in global mission for more than 175 years in more than eighty nations.

Today these international students and scholars have brought the mission field to our doorsteps, as our congregations are located next to every college or university all over the U.S.A.

We call upon our congregations' mission and peacemaking committees and Presbyterian Women to reach out to them year-round in a ministry of friendship and hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ. The Atlanta Ministry with International Students, Inc., is a proven model for international student outreach (<http://www.amis-inc.org/>); as well as PRISM (Pittsburgh Region International Student Ministries [office@prismphg.org](mailto:office@prismphg.org)) and ISI (International Student, Inc., [www.isionline.org](http://www.isionline.org)) will train churches across the country.

We call on our mission and peacemaking committees and Presbyterian Women to consider hosting Christmas International House, a ministry of hospitality during the Christmas Holiday from December 18–January 2nd of each year. The international students are responsible for their transportation from their city to your city, but after they arrive your congregation or community will host these women and men in their homes, and they will learn about us and about our faith during the holy season of Christmas (<http://www.christmasih.org/>); and

This ministry of friendship and hospitality turns away international students every year because there is no room in the inn.

Nine of every ten international students in this country are never invited into an American family's home much less a Christian home.

Through our PC(USA) congregations, let us open the doors to these international students and create a new room in the inn through the gift of friendship, hospitality, and the love of our members.

Cody U. Watson, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
Kate Keep, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic

## 10-Info

### A. *Report of the General Assembly Mission Council on Current Task Forces, Work Groups, and Ad Hoc Committees*

As instructed by the 204th General Assembly (1992), the General Assembly Mission Council presents to the General Assembly annually, the work of all task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies established by the General Assembly Mission Council, its divisions, or other assembly entities (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, pp. 144, 147, 277–78).

All ministries and the Executive Director's Office were requested to disclose information on how many task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies were currently at work in their entity. Of the entities responding, sixty-four such groups are currently operating. Fifty-three of the groups were reported as having ongoing responsibilities. The other eleven groups have set completion dates with a written report expected by the entity, the General Assembly Mission Council, or the General Assembly itself. Whenever it is possible, the General Assembly Council assigns tasks to an existing part of its structure. All persons serving on a board, committee, task force, or work group with an expected life of more than two years are selected through the General Assembly Nominating Committee process.

#### 1. *Evangelism & Church Growth*

Ongoing responsibilities: Mission Development Resource Committee, Ghost Ranch Governing Board, Stony Point Center Governing Board, Mountain Retreat Association Board of Trustees of Stock (Montreat).

#### 2. *Compassion, Peace, & Justice*

Ongoing responsibilities: Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People, Jarvie Commonwealth Service Committee.

#### 3. *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

(1) Theology of Compensation—data and policy follow-up—Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)

(2) Human Rights Update Team—Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)

(3) Economic Crisis Resolution Team—Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)

(4) Peace Discernment Steering Team—Interim Report to 220th General Assembly (2012) and then full report to 221st General Assembly (2014)

(5) Advisors for *Unbound: An interactive journal of Christian Social Justice*, both from the church more broadly and from staff in the building. Face-to-face meetings only at General Assembly and Big Tent.

#### 4. *Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women*

African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force, Violence Against Women on the U.S. Mexico Border Study Team, Racial Ethnic Immigrant Church Growth Strategy Task Force, Climate for Change in the PC(USA) Task Force [ends with 220th General Assembly (2012)].

Ongoing responsibilities: National Black Presbyterian Caucus, National Hispanic Latino Presbyterian Caucus, Native American Consulting Committee, National Council of Korean Presbyterian Churches, Coordinating Committee on Korean American Presbyteries, Korean English Ministries (EM) Consultation Continuation Committee, National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus, National Asian Presbyterian Council, President's Roundtable of the Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges, Secondary Schools Roundtable, Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team, Coordinating Committee of the National Network of Presbyterian College Women, Core Team of Racial Ethnic Young Women Together, National Cambodian Presbyterian Council, Chinese Presbyterian Council, National Filipino Presbyterian Council, National Taiwanese Presbyterian Council, National Thai Presbyterian Council, National Vietnamese Presbyterian Council, African Immigrants Network, Brazilian Immigrants Network, Southeast Asian Network, Racial Ethnic Caucuses and Councils, Presbyterian Multicultural Network, National Black Presbyterian Women, National Hispanic Latina Presbyterian Women, National Asian Presbyterian Women, National Korean Presbyterian Women, African Presbyterian Women, Native American Presbyterian Women, Native American Presbyterian Men, National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Men, National Black Presbyterian Youth Council, National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Youth & Young Adults, National Asian Youth Council, National Korean Youth Council, American Indian Youth Council.

#### 5. *Theology Worship & Education*

Ongoing responsibilities: Committee on Theological Education.

6. *World Mission*

Ongoing responsibility: Human Trafficking Work Group, Media Security Task Force, U.S. Advisory Committee/Jinshian Memorial Program.

7. *Vocation*

Ongoing responsibility: Educator Certification Council.

8. *Communications and Funds Development*

Special Offerings Advisory Task Force—Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

9. *Executive Director's Office*

On-going responsibility: The Mid Council Advisory Board is a representative group of mid council leaders who meet with GAMC staff leaders to discuss ways that the GAMC and the mid councils can work together in partnership. The Middle Governing Body Advisory Board helps plan a biennial gathering of mid council leaders and key GAMC staff.

10. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns(ACREC) and Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC):*

Status of Women Task Force—Report to the 220th GA (2012).

Ongoing responsibility: Women of Color Joint Working Group.

**B. *Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Report of Progress—From the General Assembly Mission Council.***

2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis

1. *Overview*

By action of the 197th General Assembly (1985), the General Assembly Mission Council is required to report annually the equal opportunity information of all PC(USA) agencies, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods.

At the request of the Office of Human Resources, Research Services handled the collection of data for the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis for 2011. Based on the success of Web-based data collection for previous years, we followed similar procedures for 2011.

The Web-based data collection instrument was developed, tested, and deployed by Research Services. A point of contact in each organization or entity was invited by email to provide data for the organization. (The original invitation is included here as Attachment A.) An initial email invitation was sent January 12, 2012. Three reminder emails were sent to all non-responding organizations on January 17, 2012, January 24, 2012, and February 1, 2011. Responses were accepted until February 13, 2012.

2. *Invited Organizations*

The following agencies and organizations were requested to provide their workforce analysis data: Board of Pensions; General Assembly Mission Council; Hubbard Press; Jarvie Commonweal Service; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation; Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc.; Presbyterian Publishing Corporation; Office of the General Assembly; and all conference centers, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods associated with the PC(USA).

3. *Response Rate*

Of 213 invited organizations, data were received from 154 organizations, for a response rate of 72 percent. (Two email invitations to presbyteries were returned as bad email addresses for which no other working email address could be found.) Attachment B shows organizations that provided their data. Of responding organizations, a majority (83 percent) used the Web form, and 17 percent (or 26) submitted hard copy by fax, email, or interoffice mail.

4. *Results*

Attachment C shows the results for responding organizations and presents the percentages of employees by gender and racial-ethnic category.

Table 1 (next page) summarizes this information and provides similar data for 2005 for comparison.

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

It is interesting that in all but one category covered by the report, the number of employees has decreased since 2005—in many cases a substantial reduction. The exception is the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, which increased by one staff person between 2005 and 2011. In terms of the percentage of racial-ethnic staff (non-White) and women, there has been little change overall among all PC(USA) staff, but substantial changes within some categories.

Table 1

Change in Staffing Patterns, 2005 to 2011

	2005			2011			Change		
	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women
Board of Pensions	191	35%	67%	185	32%	68%	-6	-3%	+1%
General Assembly Mission Council	464	26%	71%	312	25%	70%	-152	-1%	-1%
Office of the General Assembly	68	22%	71%	65	28%	71%	-3	+6%	0%
Presbyterian Foundation	105	21%	62%	64	23%	64%	-41	+2%	+2%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	13	8%	69%	14	14%	71%	+1	+6%	+2%
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	34	24%	53%	26	19%	54%	-8	-5%	+1%
Hubbard Press	16	0%	63%	14	29%	50%	-2	+29%	-13%
Jarvie Commonweal Service	15	33%	60%	13	31%	69%	-2	-2%	+9%
Conference Centers:									
All reporting (4/3)*	186	28%	62%	79	58%	66%	-107	+30%	+4%
Mean per reporting organization	46			26			-20		
Presbyteries:									
All reporting (133/123)*	1,138	14%	63%	817	17%	61%	-321	+3%	-2%
Mean per reporting organization	9			7			-2		
Synods:									
All reporting (12/13)*	77	16%	61%	67	10%	57%	-10	-6%	-4%
Mean per reporting organization	6			5			-1		
Theological Institutions:									
All reporting (5/8)*	488	26%	54%	421	24%	60%	-67	-2%	+6%
Mean per reporting organization	98			52			-46		
Total	2,795	21%	63%	2,077	23%	63%	-718	+2%	0%

\*Numbers in parentheses show the number of organizations in the category that reported in 2005 and in 2011. Looking at change when the number of reporting entities has changed could lead to inaccurate conclusions and should be done cautiously.

5. *Recommendations for the Future*

The data collection process went smoothly again this year. Inquiries from organizational representatives focused primarily on two topics: (1) types of employees to include (e.g., should term employees, independent contractors, and staff who were there only part of the year be included) and (2) racial ethnic categories (e.g., how to report employees who have not specified their race/ethnicity and those who self-identify as Middle Eastern). Instructions for next year should include answers to such questions.



## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Requesting this information in January seems to be more effective than doing so in December. This year, we received far fewer complaints about being a bad time of year for this process.

Prepared by:  
Research Services  
A Ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
February 17, 2011

### Attachment A

Original Email Invitation and Sample Form

January 12, 2012

To:

General Assembly Mission Council	Hubbard Press
Office of the General Assembly	Jarvie Commonwealth Service
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	Synods
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc.	Presbyteries
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation	Conference Centers
Board of Pensions	Theological Institutions

Subj: Important 2011 EEO/AA Workforce Analysis Information Needed

The General Assembly Mission Council requests your workforce analysis data for the 2011 EEO/AA Workforce Analysis Report (the numbers of full-time and part-time, exempt and non-exempt employees by gender and race/ethnicity for last year). We are **required** to compile and report the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) workforce analysis data under the General Assembly's directive and commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (197th General Assembly (1985) Minutes, Part 1, Journal, pg. 202, Oversight of Equal Employment Opportunity Implementation, 27.149).

We are compiling this information electronically again this year. Please follow the instructions below. We suggest downloading a copy of the form so you can gather the needed information before you access the survey on the Web. To view the survey (in Adobe Acrobat format) before you submit your answers, click on this link: [http://gamac.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2011eeoaa\\_eoyform.pdf](http://gamac.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2011eeoaa_eoyform.pdf). Alternately, send an email to [research@pcusa.org](mailto:research@pcusa.org) requesting a copy of the form and we'll send it as an attachment.

Please forward this information to the appropriate person in your organization if you are not the person responsible for your organization's workforce analysis data.

- Go to the survey Web site at: <http://surveys.pcusa.org/eeoaa2011.aspx>
- Enter the password **XXXX** assigned to your organization.
- Complete the workforce analysis form. (Definitions are provided below and on the downloadable form.)
- If you prefer, complete the downloadable form and fax it back (502-569-8736).

The deadline for your organization's information is Tuesday, January 31, 2012. [Later extended to February 8, 2012.]

If you need additional information or have questions, please contact Lisa Robbins (800-728-7228, x 5710 or [Lisa.Robbins@pcusa.org](mailto:Lisa.Robbins@pcusa.org)).

If you have trouble with the survey Web site, please contact Research Services (800-728-7228, x 2040 or [research@pcusa.org](mailto:research@pcusa.org)).

Note: Sometimes an organization's firewall prevents transmission of responses to the survey site. If the survey returns you to a page after you've entered your responses, please re-enter your responses. It should work on the second attempt. We apologize for this problem.

We appreciate your assistance and cooperation.

Lisa Robbins  
Human Resources Director  
General Assembly Mission Council

Racial Ethnic Categories: These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only *one* category.

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black and/or African American (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic and/or Latino: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Two or More Races (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons who identify with more than one of the other racial categories.
- White (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Other Definitions:

- Exempt: Employees who are *not* entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).
- Non-exempt: Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).
- Full-time: Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.
- Part-time: Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

EEO/AA End-of-Year 2011 Report

To be completed online at [www.pcusa.org/eoaaareport](http://www.pcusa.org/eoaaareport) (Definitions provided on next page.)

First, provide data about your organization’s *exempt* employees, those *not* eligible for overtime pay.

Q-1. Please report your total number of exempt *male* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Males:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino males .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____

Q-2. Please report your total number of exempt *female* employees in each category—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Females:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino females .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) females ..... \_\_\_\_\_

Second, provide data about your organization’s *non-exempt* employees, those eligible for overtime pay.

Q-3. Please report your total number of non-exempt *male* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-Exempt Males:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino males.....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____

Q-4. Please report your total number of non-exempt *female* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-Exempt Females:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino females.....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____

Definitions for Use in Completing the Form

Racial Ethnic Categories: These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only *one* category.

- American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black and/or African American (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic and/or Latino: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Two or More Races (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons who identify with more than one of the other racial categories.
- White (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Other Definitions:

- Exempt: Employees who are *not* entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).
- Non-exempt: Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).
- Full-time: Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.
- Part-time: Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

Questions? Call Lisa Robbins at 800-728-7228, ext., 5710

Trouble with the survey? Call Research Services at 800-728-7228, ext., 2040

Completed forms may be returned by fax. Please provide your contact information:

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax completed form to: (502) 569-8736.

Thank you for your help!

Attachment B

2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis

RESPONDING PRESBYTERIES

Abingdon	Greater Atlanta	Newton	Savannah
Alaska	Heartland	North Central Iowa	Scioto Valley
Albany	Holston	North Puget Sound	Seattle
Arkansas	Homestead	Northern Kansas	Shenandoah
Baltimore	Hudson River	Northern New England	Shenango
Beaver-Butler	Inland Northwest	Northern New York	Sheppards & Lapsley
Boise	James, The	Northern Plains	Sierra Blanca
Boston	John Knox, The	Northern Waters	Southeastern Illinois
Carlisle	Kiskiminetas	Northumberland	Southern Kansas
Cascades, The	Lake Huron	Ohio Valley	Southern New England
Central Florida	Lake Michigan	Olympia	St. Andrew
Central Washington	Lehigh	Pacific, The	Susquehanna Valley
Charleston-Atlantic	Los Ranchos	Palisades	Tampa Bay
Charlotte	Mackinac	Palo Duro	Trinity
Cimarron	Maumee Valley	Peace River	Tropical Florida
de Cristo	Miami	Philadelphia	Twin Cities Area
Denver	Mid-Kentucky	Pines	Upper Ohio Valley
Des Moines	Milwaukee	Presbiterio del Noroeste	Utah
Detroit	Minnesota Valleys	Presbiterio del Suroeste	Utica
East Iowa	Mississippi	Prospect Hill	Washington
East Tennessee	Missouri River Valley	Pueblo	West Jersey
Eastern Oklahoma	Missouri Union	Redstone	West Virginia
Eastminster	Monmouth	Redwoods, The	Western Kentucky
Elizabeth	Muskingum Valley	Sacramento	Western New York
Flint River	National Capital	San Diego	Western Reserve, The
Florida	Nevada	San Fernando	Winnebago
Foothills	New Brunswick	San Francisco	Wyoming
Genesee Valley	New Covenant	San Gabriel	Yellowstone
Geneva	New Harmony	San Joaquin	Yukon
Glacier	New Hope	Santa Barbara	
Grand Canyon	Newark	Santa Fe	

NON-RESPONDING PRESBYTERIES

Atlantic Korean-American	Giddings-Lovejoy	Midwest Hanmi	San Jose
Blackhawk	Grace	Mission	South Alabama
Cayuga-Syracuse	Great Rivers	New Castle	South Dakota
Central Nebraska	Hanmi	New York City	South Louisiana
Cherokee	Huntingdon	North Alabama	St. Augustine
Chicago	Indian Nations	Northeast Georgia	Stockton
Cincinnati	John Calvin	Peaks, The	Transylvania

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Coastal Carolina	Kendall	Pittsburgh	Tres Rios
Dakota	Lackawanna	Plains & Peaks	Wabash Valley
Donegal	Lake Erie	Presbiterio de San Juan	Western Colorado
Eastern Korean	Long Island	Providence	Western North Carolina
Eastern Oregon	Middle Tennessee	Riverside	Whitewater Valley
Eastern Virginia	Mid-South	Salem	

### RESPONDING SYNODS

Alaska Northwest Covenant	Mid-America Mid-Atlantic	Southwest Sun
Lakes and Prairies	Northeast	Trinity
Lincoln Trails	Rocky Mountains	
Living Waters	Southern California and Hawaii	

### NON-RESPONDING SYNODS

Pacific	Puerto Rico	South Atlantic
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### RESPONDING THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary	Dubuque Theological Seminary, University of	Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary	Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Columbia Theological Seminary	Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico	McCormick Theological Seminary	San Francisco Theological Seminary

### NON-RESPONDING THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Auburn Theological Seminary	Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary	Princeton Theological Seminary Union Theological Seminary
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### RESPONDING CONFERENCE CENTERS

Ghost Ranch—Abiquiu	Ghost Ranch—Santa Fe	Stony Point Center
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### NON-RESPONDING CONFERENCE CENTER

Montreat

### RESPONDING AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Board of Pensions Presbyterian Church Foundations	General Assembly Mission Council Hubbard Press	Jarvie Commonweal Office of the General Assembly	Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation
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For the 2011 EEO AA Staff Analysis, see [game-2011-eeo-aa-staff-analysis-report.pdf](#) (see also pages 1027–1030).

## 2010 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action

### Workforce Analysis

#### Overview

By action of the 197th General Assembly (1985), the General Assembly Mission Council is required to report annually the equal opportunity information of all PC(USA) agencies, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods.

At the request of the Office of Human Resources, Research Services handled the collection of data for the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis for 2010. Based on the success of Web-based data collection for previous years (2005 through 2009 were handled by Research Services), we followed similar procedures.

A Web-based data collection instrument was developed, tested, and deployed by Research Services. A point of contact in each organization or entity was invited by email to provide data for the organization. (The original invitation is included here as Attachment A.) Initial email invitations were sent January 24, 2011. Two reminders emails were sent to all non-responding organizations on February 2, 2011 and February 8, 2011. Responses were accepted until February 18, 2011.

#### Invited Organizations

The following agencies and organizations were requested to provide their workforce analysis data: Board of Pensions, General Assembly Council, Hubbard Press, Jarvie Commonweal Service, Presbyterian Church Foundation, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Office of the General Assembly, and all conference centers, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods associated with the PC(USA).

#### Response Rate

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Of 211 invited organizations, complete data were received from 168 organizations, for a response rate of 79 percent of all organizations. (No email invitations were returned as bad email addresses.) Attachment B shows organizations that provided complete data. Of responding organizations, a majority (86 percent) used the Web form, and 24 percent (or 41) submitted hard copy by fax, email, or interoffice mail.

### Results

Attachment C shows the results for responding organizations and presents the percentages of employees by gender and racial-ethnic category.

Table 1 (next page) summarizes this information and provides similar data for 2005 for comparison.

It is interesting that in all but two categories covered by the report, the number of employees has decreased since 2005—in many cases a substantial reduction. The exceptions are the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program. Even in categories where *more* organizations reported in 2010 than in 2005 (presbyteries and theological institutions), the number of staff in the combined reporting organizations decreased.

Table 1

Change in Staffing Patterns Since 2005

	2005			2010			Change		
	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women	Number of Staff	% Racial Ethnic	% Women
Board of Pensions	191	35%	67%	188	32%	66%	-3	-3%	-1%
General Assembly Mission Council	464	26%	71%	291	26%	66%	-173	0%	-5%
Office of the General Assembly	68	22%	71%	84	27%	71%	+16	+5%	0%
Presbyterian Foundation	105	21%	62%	69	23%	59%	-36	+2%	-3%
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program	13	8%	69%	14	21%	71%	+1	+13%	+2%
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	34	24%	53%	27	22%	52%	-7	-2%	-1%
Hubbard Press	16	0%	63%	15	0%	67%	-1	0%	+4%
Jarvie Commonweal Service	15	33%	60%	14	29%	71%	-1	-4%	+11%
Conference Centers (4/3)*	186	28%	62%	145	52%	69%	-41	+24%	+7%
Presbyteries (133/139)*	1,138	14%	63%	1,033	15%	60%	-105	+1%	-3%
Synods (12/11)*	77	16%	61%	50	14%	60%	-27	-2%	-1%
Theological Institutions (5/7)*	488	26%	54%	424	20%	59%	-64	-6%	+5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,795</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>2,354</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>-441</b>	<b>+1%</b>	<b>+9%</b>

\*Numbers in parentheses show the number of organizations in the category that reported in 2005 and in 2010.

### Recommendations for the Future

The changes and improvements put in place in recent years limited many of the problems that occurred previously. This year we received few calls from organizational representatives asking questions about the terms used on the form. Further, the ability to bypass the Web-based survey and fax or email the required information was something that quite a number found helpful. The response rate increased from 69 percent last year to 79 percent this year.

Requesting this information in January seems to be more effective than doing so in December. This year, we received far fewer complaints about being a bad time of year for this process.

Prepared by:  
 Research Services  
 A Ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council  
 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
 Attachment A

March 7, 2010

Original Email Invitation and Sample Form

Date

To: General Assembly Mission Council  
 Office of the General Assembly  
 Presbyterian Publishing Corporation  
 Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program  
 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation  
 Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Hubbard Press  
Jarvie Commonweal Service  
Synods  
Presbyteries  
Conference Centers  
Theological Institutions

Subj: Important 2010 EEO/AA Workforce Analysis Information Needed

The General Assembly Mission Council requests your workforce analysis data for the 2010 EEO/AA Workforce Analysis Report (the numbers of full-time and part-time, exempt and non-exempt employees by gender and race/ethnicity for last year). We are required to compile and report the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) workforce analysis data under the General Assembly's directive and commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (197th General Assembly (1985) Minutes, Part 1, Journal, pg. 202, Oversight of Equal Employment Opportunity Implementation, 27.149).

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Please forward this information to the appropriate person in your organization if you are not the person responsible for your organization's workforce analysis data.

- Go to the survey Web site at: <http://surveys.pcusa.org/eeoaa2010.aspx>
- Enter the password XXXX assigned to your organization.
- Complete the workforce analysis form. (Definitions are provided below and on the downloadable form.)
- If you prefer, complete the downloadable form and fax it back (502-569-8736).

The deadline for your organization's information is Friday, February 4, 2011. [Later extended to February 18.]

If you need additional information or have questions, please contact Lisa Robbins, (888-728-7228, x 5710 or [Lisa.Robbins@pcusa.org](mailto:Lisa.Robbins@pcusa.org)).

If you have trouble with the survey Web site, please contact Research Services (888-728-7228, x 2040 or [research@pcusa.org](mailto:research@pcusa.org)).

Note: Sometimes an organization's firewall prevents transmission of responses to the survey site. If the survey returns you to a page after you've entered your responses, please re-enter your responses. It should work on the second attempt. We apologize for this problem.

We appreciate your assistance and cooperation.

Lisa Robbins, Human Resources Director

General Assembly Mission Council

Racial Ethnic Categories: These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only *one* category.

- American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black and/or African American (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic and/or Latino: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Two or More Races (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons who identify with more than one of the other racial categories.
- White (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Other Definitions:

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- Exempt: Employees who are *not* entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).
- Non-exempt: Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).
- Full-time: Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.
- Part-time: Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

EEO/AA End-of-Year 2010 Report

To be completed online at [www.pcusa.org/eoaaareport](http://www.pcusa.org/eoaaareport) (Definitions provided on next page.)

First, provide data about your organization’s *exempt* employees, those *not* eligible for overtime pay.

Q-1. Please report your total number of exempt *male* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Males:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino males .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____

Q-2. Please report your total number of exempt *female* employees in each category—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Females:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino females .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____

Second, provide data about your organization’s *non-exempt* employees, those eligible for overtime pay.

Q-3. Please report your total number of non-exempt *male* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-Exempt Males:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino males .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) males .....	_____	_____



10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Q-4. Please report your total number of non-exempt *female* employees in each category below—*regular full-time* and *regular part-time* non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-Exempt Females:	Full-time	Part-time
a. American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
b. Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
c. Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) females.....	_____	_____
d. Hispanic and/or Latino females .....	_____	_____
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
f. Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____
g. White (not Hispanic/Latino) females .....	_____	_____

Definitions for Use in Completing the Form

Racial Ethnic Categories: These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only *one* category.

- American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black and/or African American (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic and/or Latino: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- Two or More Races (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons who identify with more than one of the other racial categories.
- White (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Other Definitions:

- Exempt: Employees who are *not* entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).
- Non-exempt: Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).
- Full-time: Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.
- Part-time: Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

Questions? Call Lisa Robbins at (888) 728-7228, x 5710

Trouble with the survey? Call Research Services at (888) 728-7228, x 2040

Completed forms may be returned by fax. Please provide your contact information:

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax completed form to: (502) 569-8736.

Thank you for your help!

10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Attachment B

2009 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis

RESPONDING PRESBYTERIES

Abingdon	Geneva	Nevada	San Francisco
Alaska	Giddings-Lovejoy	New Brunswick	San Gabriel
Albany	Glacier	New Castle	San Jose
Baltimore	Grace	New Covenant	Santa Fe
Beaver-Butler	Grand Canyon	New Harmony	Savannah
Blackhawk	Great Rivers	New Hope	Scioto Valley
Boise	Heartland	New York City	Seattle
Boston	Holston	Newton	Shenandoah
Carlisle	Homestead	North Central Iowa	Shenango
Cascades	Hudson River	North Puget Sound	Sheppards & Lapsley
Cayuga-Syracuse	Huntingdon	Northeast Georgia	Sierra Blanca
Central Florida	Indian Nations	Northern Kansas	South Louisiana
Central Nebraska	Inland Northwest	Northern New England	Southeastern Illinois
Central Washington	James	Northern New York	Southern New England
Charleston-Atlantic	John Knox	Northern Plains	St. Andrew
Charlotte	Kiskiminetas	Northumberland	St. Augustine
Cherokee	Lackawanna	Ohio Valley	Stockton
Cincinnati	Lake Erie	Olympia	Susquehanna Valley
Coastal Carolina	Lake Huron	Pacific	Trinity
De Christo	Lake Michigan	Palisades	Tropical Florida
Denver	Lehigh	Palo Duro	Upper Ohio Valley
Des Moines	Los Ranchos	Peace River	Utah
Detroit	Mackinac	Peaks	Utica
Donegal	Miami	Philadelphia	Wabash Valley
East Iowa	Middle Tennessee	Pines	Washington
East Tennessee	Mid-Kentucky	Pittsburgh	West Jersey
Eastern Korean	Mid-South	Presbiterio de San Juan	West Virginia
Eastern Oklahoma	Midwest Hanmi	Prospect Hill	Western Kentucky
Eastern Oregon	Milwaukee	Providence	Western New York
Eastminster	Mission	Pueblo	Western North Carolina
Elizabeth	Mississippi	Redwoods	Western Reserve, the
Flint River	Missouri Union	Riverside	Winnebago
Florida	Monmouth	Salem	Whitewater Valley
Genesee Valley	Muskingum Valley	San Diego	Wyoming
	National Capital	San Fernando	Yukon

NON-RESPONDING PRESBYTERIES

Arkansas	John Calvin	Plains & Peaks	Southern Kansas
Atlantic Korean-American	Kendall	Presbiterio del Noroeste	Tampa Bay
Chicago	Long Island	Presbiterio del Suroeste	Transylvania
Cimarron	Maumee Valley	Redstone	Tres Rios
Dakota	Minnesota Valleys	Sacramento	Twin Cities Area
Eastern Virginia	Missouri River Valley	San Joaquin	Western Colorado
Foothills	Newark	Santa Barbara	Yellowstone
Greater Atlanta	North Alabama	South Alabama	
Hanmi	Northern Waters	South Dakota	

RESPONDING SYNODS

Alaska Northwest	Mid-Atlantic	Southern California and Hawaii
Lincoln Trails	Northeast	Southwest
Living Waters	Pacific	Sun
Mid-America	Rocky Mountains	

NON-RESPONDING SYNODS

Covenant	Puerto Rico	Trinity
Lakes and Prairies	South Atlantic	

RESPONDING THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary	Dubuque Theological Seminary, University of	McCormick Theological Seminary	San Francisco Theological Seminary
Columbia Theological Seminary	Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary	Pittsburgh Theological Seminary	

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### NON-RESPONDING THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Auburn Theological Seminary  
Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico

Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary  
Princeton Theological Seminary

Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian  
School of Christian Education

### RESPONDING CONFERENCE CENTERS

Ghost Ranch–Abiquiu

Ghost Ranch–Santa Fe

Stony Point Center

### NON-RESPONDING CONFERENCE CENTER

Montreat

### RESPONDING AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Board of Pensions  
Presbyterian Church  
Foundation

General Assembly Mission  
Council

Hubbard Press  
Jarvie Commonweal  
Office of the General Assembly

Presbyterian Investment and  
Loan Program  
Presbyterian Publishing  
Corporation

For the 2010 EEO AA Staff Analysis, see [gamc-2010-eeo-aa-staff-analysis-report.pdf](#) (see also pages 1023–1026).

### **C. *Domestic Mission Task Force Report—From the General Assembly Mission Council.***

The 219th General Assembly directed that effective December 31, 2013, the National Mission Partnership Funds (NMPF) would come to an end. The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) established a Domestic Mission Task Force (DMTF) for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and making recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) regarding those ministries and that work now supported by the NMPF, including the ramifications of ending that support.

The DMTF has engaged in a constant process of outreach and listening since its first meeting in March 2010. Engaging the church in the conversation about changes to the NMPF and the broader question of “what is national mission?” was at the heart of its work.

The primary assumption of the DMTF is that we are in a powerful time of change and transition for both the church and our world. Our challenge is to understand where we have been as a church in doing mission and how we can transform ourselves in new ways of being church. Funding for the mission of the national church has been declining steadily for several years. All NMPF will cease at the end of 2013. While there are many reasons for this, we assume that, although patterns of mission funding are changing, the interest in and commitment to the church’s mission, especially through churches, is strengthening and being energized in new forms of being and doing.

In its work, the DMTF assumed that the congregation is the primary place of mission, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church (*Book of Order*, G-1.0101). The church is confronted with the unequivocal demand of the prophet Amos to do what it claims to be. We are called to a new openness in ways of being mission in the world. How we think about mission today is different from how we have thought about it in the past. During much of the last century, Presbyterian mission in the United States was understood to be primarily the responsibility of the General Assembly, with synods and presbyteries playing a secondary role. This is no longer the case.

The unified giving system (from which these funds came) is a relatively new phenomenon, beginning in the 1930s. In 1973, the General Assembly of the UPCUSA formed regional synods. As it did this, it shifted responsibility for oversight of former national mission ministries from the General Assembly to the middle governing bodies. Following reunion, the NMPF system was created in 1988 to replace the circulating funds system. Today, all sixteen synods are changing their patterns of funding the areas traditionally funded by the NMPF.

We recognize that we are in a time of major transition as a denomination. Based on the listening we have done, the conversations we have had, and the learnings we have gained, the Domestic Mission Task Force is making two recommendations to the General Assembly Mission Council that you will find in this report. We believe that the denomination in general, and the GAMC in particular, can be in partnership with congregations and mid councils, to find a new way forward together in mission. The ways that we are participating in the mission of God are changing. The ways that we are funding the mission of Christ are changing. But, the Holy Spirit will continue to lead us to be in mission, if we will listen and faithfully follow our Lord. We hope that this report will help stimulate our imagination and our conversations about how God might be calling us to do this.

#### **A. *Original Charge***

In September 2009, the General Assembly Mission Council voted to approve the following recommendations of the Expanded National Mission Partnership Committee (ENMPC) report:

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

1. That the 219th General Assembly direct that effective December 31, 2013, Mission Partnership Funds, as we know them, shall come to an end. Synods currently allocated such funds may forego receiving those funds prior to the cessation of this system on December 31, 2013.

2. That the GAMC establish a task force for the purpose of identifying, evaluating and making recommendations to the 220th General Assembly regarding those ministries and that work now supported by Mission Partnership Funds (MPF), including the ramifications of ending that support and possible other avenues of support to all, some or none of those ministries and that work beyond December 31, 2013.

- a. Such committee to be comprised of 7 persons
  - i. 2 appointed by the GAMC
  - ii. 1 appointed by the current ENMPC from among those Synods currently receiving support from MPF.
  - iii. 1 appointed by the current ENMPC from among those Synods not currently receiving support from MPF
  - iv. 3 persons appointed by the moderator of the 218th General Assembly, one of whom shall be appointed as moderator of the task force.
- b. Such task force to be funded from a portion of the \$100,000 set aside to fund ENMPF and if not possible, allow the Chairperson of the ENMPF and the Chair of the GAMC to negotiate a shared funding for the process

3. That GAMC in partnership with the Middle Governing Bodies of the PCUSA, encourage, and to the extent possible, facilitate and support conversations throughout the church regarding the meaning and direction of National Mission.

### B. *Task Force Members*

The task force members are: Elder Kristine Thompson, chair, Washington, D.C.; Elder Clarence Antioquia, GAMC, Anacortes, Wash.; the Reverend Clark Cowden, GAMC, San Diego, Calif.; the Reverend Jan DeVries, synod exec, Synod of the Southwest (until June 2011); the Reverend David Crittenden, co-synod exec, Lincoln Trails, Indianapolis (until December 2010); the Reverend Joyce Emery, synod presbyter, Alaska-Northwest, Seattle; Kathy Lee, Metairie, La.; the Reverend Carl Mazza, Chesapeake City, Md.; the Reverend Raafat Zaki, synod exec, Covenant (since Aug 2011); staff—the Reverend Roger Dermody and the Reverend Philip Lotspeich.

### C. *Our Process*

The DMTF has engaged in a constant process of outreach and listening since its first meeting in March 2010. The team believes engaging the church in the conversation about changes to the NMP funding and the broader question of “what is national mission?” is at the heart of its work.

At the 219th General Assembly (2010), members of the team hosted meetings to gather input and listen to the concerns and ideas shared by leadership from presbyteries and synods. At its second meeting in August 2010, the team met in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with the intent of engaging with presbyteries that would be impacted by the loss of funds. A visit to the Menaul School reminded the team of historic Presbyterian missions in that region.

From August 2010 to August 2011, the DMTF actively engaged in conversation and listening opportunities with the Synod Forum, the General Assembly Mission Council, and participants at Big Tent.

In addition, Roger Dermody, GAMC Deputy Executive Director for Mission, visited the Synods of the Southwest, Alaska/Northwest, and had conversation with staff at Rocky Mountains.

In the Synod of the Southwest, Dermody traveled extensively throughout the synod with Synod Executive Conrad Rocha. In Arizona, he visited Native American tribal members of the Vahki Presbyterian Church in Batchule, the Sacaton Presbyterian Church in Sacaton, and the Northern congregational leaders in Ganado. In New Mexico, he met with indigenous Hispanic leadership from the Mora and Chacon Presbyterian churches, as well as the Jicarita Cluster leadership, and the regional presbyter of the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

In the Synod of Alaska/Northwest, synod presbyter, the Reverend, Joyce Emery, hosted his visit as he met with presbytery leadership from Alaska, Yukon, Olympia, and Central Washington. Conversations took place in Seattle and Spokane, looking at campus ministry, new church development, the CLP program at Whitworth University, and the wonderful model of shared leadership among the churches of the Nez Perce tribes.

In the Synod of the Rocky Mountains, Dermody had conversations with presbytery leadership in Billings, Montana. He engaged in discussions about how small, partnership-funded, rural presbyteries with small churches benefit from the presence of a general presbyter.

The fourth synod deemed to be most adversely affected by the elimination of the National Mission Partnership Funds was the Synod of Boriquen. The DMTF made several inquiries into the possibility of visiting with leadership from Puerto Rico. However, since there is an existing task force that is already in conversation with Puerto Rico, it was suggested that an

additional visit by the DMTF would be both confusing and overly burdensome. However, the task force recommends further conversation with the Synod of Boriquen.

Meeting in Dallas, Texas, in August 2011, the DMTF compiled the information and ideas gathered to date. Desiring to hear even more voices, the team created a Facebook page and began engaging a wider audience in questions about national mission. The team also conducted additional outreach to the synods to hear specific concerns and needs that may still need to be addressed. Notes from these conversations and interactions can be found in Appendix I through Appendix III.

#### D. *Assumptions*

“Traveler, your footsteps are the road, and nothing more; Traveler, there is no road—the road ahead is made by walking” (Antonio Machado).

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (Isa. 43:19).

Our primary assumption is that we are in a powerful time of change both for our world and for the church. Dynamic shifts in the way we work together have been developing within the church for a long time, and we are now in the midst of a transformation long overdue. We understood our task as not simply a matter of piecing things back together after the termination of National Mission Partnership Funding in 2013. Rather, our challenge is to understand where we have been as a church in doing mission, and how we can transform ourselves in new ways of being church. It is an energetic demand for us to look deeply into God’s call to “a new openness to God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be more effective in its mission” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0404)

We felt a sense of urgency in our deliberations, and assumed that the church is at a unique and critical crossroad in its history. Indeed we are convinced that our mission together is so important at this time that its vigor, relevance, and zeal will determine whether our church has a future.

Funding for the mission of the national church has been declining steadily for several years. All National Mission Partnership Funding will cease in 2013. While there are many reasons for this, we assume that, although patterns of mission funding are changing, the interest in and commitment to the church’s mission, especially through churches, is strengthening and being energized in new forms of being and doing.

We assumed that our mandate is not to dust off or try to revive worn constructs of doing mission, but to encourage the excitement of discovery through Spirit-inspired dreams and visions of new ways of being a connectional church in a rapidly changing world (Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17).

We assumed this is a time of waiting on God. We have discerned that the Spirit is already moving among us to send us into the world so we must not remain passive in the hope that a hurting world will somehow be attracted to us. We must be proactive. We assumed that God is, at this very moment, actively and earnestly engaged in mission to us and among us.

We assumed that the times call for radical and creative faith-in-action based on sanctified imagination beyond walls, boundaries, forms, and presuppositions with which we have become all too comfortable. We are called to be the active agents of change in the world.

Whereas the primary focus of mission was perceived to be the National Mission Agency, we assumed that the congregation is the primary place of mission. As our newly adopted Form of Government states, “The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context. The triune God gives to the congregation all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the Church. The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0101).

The church is called to undertake its mission “even at the risk of losing its life” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301). Many of our present forms and structures are being pressed to change. Our life as a church will be transformed strikingly in ways that may well be unimaginable to us now. Our leading is by God’s Spirit and not reliance on human design. To better discern the Spirit’s work among us requires that we develop and encourage conversation and dialogue across the church so that we can live into the future that God is preparing for us.

There has perhaps never been a more demanding era for justice in a world increasingly beset with the growing evil of material greed and selfishness, degradation of the value of the individual, consignment of growing numbers of persons to poverty, wasteful depletion of our environment and the natural world, and simultaneous neglect and exploitation of the young. The church is confronted with the unequivocal demand of the prophet Amos to do what it claims to be. We are being called to a new openness in ways of being mission in the world. We are committed to new relationships and loving community with and among others, inviting diversity, and proclaiming the good news by who we are and what we do. (“Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everlasting stream” [Amos 5:23–24]).

### E. *Definition of National Mission*

How we think about mission today is different from how we have thought about it in the past. In the past, we thought that

- mission was overseas;
- mission was done for us by others;
- national mission was limited to campus ministry, racial ethnic ministry, aid to field support (national funds to support pastor's salaries), new church development, and presbytery and synod staff salary support.

As we move into the bright, new future that God has for us, we now describe national mission more in terms of

- moving back into our neighborhoods and serving with the most vulnerable there;
- discovering how God is at work in our nation and how Jesus the Christ is inviting us to join in the work the Spirit is doing;
- starting new churches and new communities of faith;
- transforming congregations into missional communities who follow Jesus into the places where we live, work, and play;
- focusing on local congregations, building new partnerships and a new connectionalism with other congregations and councils, that helps us participate more fully in the *missio dei* (the mission of God);
- being a tangible, concrete presence of the Body of Christ in the midst of national tragedies, crises, and emerging community opportunities.

### F. *A Theology of National Mission*

The church participates in God's mission in the world. "In a missional ecclesiology, the church is not a building or an institution but a community of witness, called into being and equipped by God, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's work."<sup>i</sup> The local congregation of believers is the primary unit of witness. Disciples are called and trained and sent out. God provides people around us who have the gift of meeting us at the door and helping us move into a whole new context. Peter and Cornelius experienced that doorway.

In Acts 10, both Cornelius and Peter have a vision. The story is not just about what Peter can and cannot eat. The story is about a God-fearing gentile who pushes Peter and the early church out into the world. At first, Peter hesitates at the doorway, but must enter through it, into the home of the gentile Cornelius, to participate in the *missio dei* (mission of God). Jesus has come for the whole world and Peter is called to experience a whole new perspective.

The New Testament is peppered with these profound doorway conversations. The Philippian jailer; and one of the most life-changing doorways: the empty tomb where Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women find the tomb rolled away. They go in to find two men in dazzling clothes ready to tell them that Jesus is not there but risen. Jesus has gone on ahead of them.

At another level, much of Jesus' teaching dealt with the reality of the Reign/Kingdom of God. Jesus seeks to open the eyes to the reality of the "now" and the "not yet." We have glimpses of a whole new reality just across the threshold.<sup>ii</sup> William J. Abraham<sup>iii</sup> speaks of the nature of sin that mars the ability of human beings to pursue the will of God without claiming the salvific work of Jesus the Christ. He speaks of the *oculus contemplatus* that gives one the ability to see the work of God in the world and in personal lives. Divine revelation becomes a key concept. God intervenes or appears and gives a new understanding. One's entire worldview can be altered. A group of believers begin watching for divine appointments.

We as a denomination currently have Cornelius' and Peter's ready to train each other and provide the skills for the church to enter a new context of ministry, or reclaim an old context. Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian Cohort. He understood the Roman/Italian culture and the military culture. He understood the categories of meaning in two very different cultures.<sup>iv</sup>

In short, we endeavor to communicate the love of God, which has been revealed to the world through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth wherever we go. To state this clearly and succinctly is to reiterate the essential content of the historic church's confession for two millennia. "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). God, through Christ, entered the doorway to human life and became God with us, so that by the power of the death and resurrection, the Body of Christ would be born to be God's mission in the world.

With these dynamics in mind, can Presbyterians foster mutual dialogue *at the threshold* between the institutional church and the wider culture to which we are called? We believe that there are individuals who are specifically called and gifted to lead those conversations and help us in engaging specific cultures in every context with appropriate thoughtfulness. Together, we can support these efforts to move through the doorway as participants in the mission of God. What is our national mission as Presbyterians? It is participating in the reconciling work of God that is being discovered and formalized by congregations and regional bodies across the expanse of our nation, sovereign nations, and Puerto Rico.

#### G. *Review of Where We've Been and How We Got Here*

During much of the last century, Presbyterian mission in the United States was understood to be primarily the responsibility of the General Assembly, with synods and presbyteries playing a secondary role. The Board of Christian Education and Board of National Missions oversaw program in presbyteries and synods as deployed field staff.

The unified giving system (from which these funds came) is a relatively new phenomenon, beginning in the 1930s. Most giving prior to then was designated giving, and we are seeing our current reality return to that. Prior to the reorganization of 1972, it was not assumed that every presbytery would have paid, full-time staff people like executive presbyters.

In 1973, the General Assembly of the UPCUSA formed regional synods. As it did this, it shifted responsibility for oversight of former national mission ministries from General Assembly to middle governing bodies. Regional synods were created with the intention of one major metropolitan area in the bounds of each new synod, but some synods were grouped with the expectation that because of size and shape of the ministries, there would be ongoing funding for what have come to be called “historical ministries.” General Assembly continued, initially, to provide staffing for all middle governing bodies, which was coordinated through the oversight of the former Council on Administrative Services *through a circulating funds system. The General Assembly received all funds and distributed them to presbyteries and synods as needed.*

Synods and presbyteries that had received “oversight” of national mission ministries and properties began to seek some funding from General Assembly to sustain those ministries that had been “given” to middle governing bodies (MGBs), often with no commitment to sustained funding. As two denominations formed the PC(USA) in 1983 one very significant difference between the two was that the northern church (UPCUSA) had a number of synods and presbyteries with very large geography and very small numbers that made it difficult-to-impossible to support mission entirely from dollars generated within the region (Alaska, Arizona). The southern church (PCUS) had no such regions. Through a series of consultations held with synods in 1986 and 1987, Mission Partnership Funds (MPF) were allocated to replace the circulating funds system.

As MPF began, there were two similarities to the previous pattern:

1. Partnership funds for the first year (1988) would be exactly the same number of dollars as were distributed as circulating funds in 1987;
2. The causes to be supported by MPF—staff, campus ministry, aid-to-field (funding for local churches that could not support themselves), new church development, and racial ethnic ministries—were the same causes for which circulating funds had been negotiated.

There were important differences in the two systems:

- While everyone participated by sending dollars (basic mission support) to the General Assembly, synods had the option of a “revenue neutral” withdrawal from receiving partnership funds by reducing the amount of basic mission support they sent to General Assembly by the amount they would have received. There are seven non-receiving synods: Covenant, Lincoln Trails, Mid America, Mid Atlantic, Northeast, Sun, and Trinity.
- While the causes to be supported remained the same, MPF were recognized as block grants.
- The MPF allocation for each synod was determined through a consultation process involving the General Assembly Council (GAC) and all sixteen synods rather than one-on-one negotiations between a committee of the General Assembly and a particular synod.
- The total amount placed in the General Assembly budget for MPF is a percentage (10.447 percent) of the General Assembly’s total unrestricted revenue.

In August of 2008, the Mission Partnership Funds Group (synod representatives and GAC) agreed to adopt a five-year plan for elimination of the current funding method based on the same 10.447 percent, with each receiving synod receiving their current percentage of funds until the end of 2013 and appointed a writing team to write recommendations to the General Assembly Mission Council.

There have been several attempts at defining what will happen in 2014 to the mission and ministries funded by these funds. These attempts have included efforts to define the impact of eliminating them. The most recent attempt is included as an appendix to this report.

#### H. *Observations*

In response to our mandate to identify and evaluate, our task force makes the following observations:

1. Regardless of what is done with Mission Partnership Funds all sixteen synods are changing their patterns of funding the areas traditionally funded by MPF. All of the synods and most presbyteries have reduced staff and many have changed how they fund campus ministry and racial ethnic ministry or discontinued funding these ministries altogether. The ways that new church development has been funded have changed not only at the synod and presbytery level but also at the General Assembly level. The total amount of dollars received from all sources by middle governing bodies has steadily declined in the past fifteen years. The funding experience of those synods receiving MPF does not seem to be significantly different than those who do not receive MPF.

2. It is difficult to identify the consequences of the loss of Mission Partnership Funds in presbyteries and synods. The MPF are block grants to synods that have had no formal evaluation or regular reporting process since their inception. While every synod and the General Assembly are accountable to each other by the MPF agreement, a formal accountability process or system was never instituted. It seems evident the four synods who have been dependent on the money from outside their synod will feel the most loss. The Synod of the Southwest has sent all of their money to their four presbyteries. It will be the presbyteries in the Synod of the Southwest that feel the loss of MPF. The Synods of Alaska Northwest and Rocky Mountains have made plans to function without MPF before the 2013 deadline. They have made plans to live beyond the decrease in funds. The Synod of Puerto Rico and its presbyteries are the subject of a governing body commission that involves funding. The effect of the decrease in funding due to the end of MPF will be a part of the work of that commission. As funding to the whole governing body system continues a steady decline it will be almost impossible to identify which reductions in mission and ministry are the direct result of the discontinuation of Mission Partnership Funds in any synod or presbytery.

3. Historically, “national mission” has been narrowly defined as: governing body staff, campus ministry, racial ethnic ministries, and new church development and church transformation (in place of aid to field). Defining “national mission” is broader and more difficult than it has been in the past and will require a broader conversation across our denomination. We are engaged in an ongoing journey to discover what God is up to and where we are being called to participate in that.

#### I. *Recommendations to the General Assembly Mission Council*

Based on the listening we have done, the conversations we have had, and the insights we have gained, our task force makes the following two recommendations to the General Assembly Mission Council:

1. That the General Assembly Mission Council approve the formation of a Mid Council Lead Team (appointed by the Domestic Mission Task Force) to work with the GAMC to initiate at least four annual regional gatherings in 2013 and 2014 (taking advantage of times when the church is already together, like General Assembly, Big Tent, synod and presbytery gatherings) to discuss and develop the following:

- a. Listen to specific constituencies, such as, but not limited to:
  - (1) rural, remote, and urban churches;
  - (2) collegiate ministries;
  - (3) Native American congregations;
  - (4) racial ethnic/new immigrant;
  - (5) emerging leadership models for mid councils that create safe space for innovation.
- b. Discuss how to provide leadership development, resources, and accountability.

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 1.*

The General Assembly Mission Council, in conjunction with the mid councils, continues to have conversations about what NATIONAL MISSION is, how it is changing, what it might look like in the future, and the best ways to PARTNER together to carry it out.

We need to have more people in the conversation about what national mission is because the definition has changed over the years. For some, it doesn't mean what it used to. Some don't distinguish between national and global mission, simply emphasizing that congregations be involved in the mission of God wherever that may be. We are already modeling and ex-



ploring new ways to partner together in mission across the denomination. Many want to continue exploring and discovering the best ways to partner together. Communication and dialogue are critical instruments for developing partnerships.

Just as each country is different and we approach mission with one another by listening to their priorities, each area of this country is different and we should listen to their priorities

2. That these gatherings should be tied to specific outcomes that will be shared with congregations and mid councils across the country and serve as inspiration for potential ministry endeavors. These specific conversations could be centered on discussing and developing

- twenty-five ways rural, remote, and urban churches are doing mission in their context;
- twenty examples of thriving ministry to college campuses;
- fifteen diverse, recently formed worshipping communities that are on a path towards sustainability;
- twenty-five congregations that are effectively becoming more multi-ethnic in character;
- twenty places where ministry with particular racial ethnic populations are thriving; and
- ten presbyteries that are staffed or organized to be safe places.

3. We also recommend that the GAMC devote a percentage of the previous NMPF funds to facilitating these gatherings in 2013 and 2014.

4. That the General Assembly Mission Council, by 2014, would establish and begin funding a new initiative called the Developmental, Research, Experimental, Adaptive Mission (DREAM) fund (Acts 2:17, Acts 10).

*Rationale for Recommendations 2.–4.*

We are very cognizant that the United States is a mission field. It is the third largest mission field in the world. The population of our country is growing. However, the downturn in the economy in recent years has caused many churches to be nervous, anxious, and risk averse. We are in a time when we need our members, our congregations, and our presbyteries, to become much more innovative and entrepreneurial about starting new ministries than we have been. Jesus Christ is calling all of us to be missionaries. “As the Father has sent Me, so I send you” (Jn. 20:21).

As the chronological age and the average age of the congregations’ members increases, a corresponding decrease in creativity, risk-taking, and innovation naturally takes place. In a similar fashion, the longer one is a member of a congregation, the less likely that person is to challenge the “status quo” of the congregation. As we look at the landscape of our church, we see aging congregations, declining in membership and whose membership is primarily comprised of members who have been members at least five years or more and in some cases ten, or twenty years or more. This has created a church that is risk averse, seeking to maintain what it has or recoup what it has lost rather than taking a risk to find God’s preferred future for that congregation. In other words, we have more memories than we do dreams. We are suffering from a crisis of imagination. Whenever we think about ministry we could do in the future, our minds automatically go to what we have done in the past and repeating it or tweaking it to make it better. This is no longer sufficient.

We need dreamers. We need risk takers. We need pioneers and trailblazers. We need entrepreneurs. We need church planters. We need inventors. We need people who are not afraid to fail, and church cultures that will encourage people to fail in order to find new ways to succeed. When Peter was preaching on the Day of Pentecost, he quoted the prophet Joel when he said, “In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17). We want to encourage people to dream. We need this work of the Spirit in our lives today to overcome our crisis of imagination. We are living in the midst of a paradigm shift. We need to learn adaptive leadership skills to help move our congregations to a new place.

We believe that there is a sense of urgency to learn to do ministry and mission differently in a rapidly changing world. We want to encourage people to step across the thresholds of our church buildings and through the doorways of people’s homes, as Peter did with Cornelius in Acts 10. In engaging the stranger, the alien, and “the other” in our communities, we can discover how God is at work in the world, and how Christ is inviting us to join in the work the Spirit is doing. We believe the GAMC and Mid Council Lead Team can help to cultivate an environment of historical biblical grounding and missional experimentation that can propel us into the future. We believe the GAMC can help encourage people to come together in their local context as learning communities to figure out what the Holy Spirit is up to and how Jesus Christ is inviting us to participate in the *missio dei* (the mission of God) in our communities.

### J. *Suggestions*

We imagine that one of the first questions raised would be about what kind of projects would be funded by a Developmental, Research, Experimental, Adaptive Mission (DREAM) fund? On one hand, we know this cannot be determined in a top-down fashion. It has to bubble up from the grass roots. We do not live in a “one size fits all” world anymore. Every local context is different from other local contexts. The Bible calls us to be incarnational where we live. “The Word became flesh and lived among us” (Jn. 1:14). On the other hand, we do have some suggestions of possible areas of ministry that we believe could receive stimulus monies from this fund. Some of them are

- new discipleship initiatives,
- missional experiments,
- new leadership training,
- new youth and young adult ministry initiatives,
- creative use of technology and social media for outreach (see feedback received in Appendix III),
- new ways to support historic commitments,
- encourage risk taking- churches try new things,
- prioritize adaptive change—living into paradigm shift.

This is only a starting point to give an idea of what could be funded by a DREAM fund. We hope that people will get more creative and come up with other exciting and innovative ministry ideas that we could help encourage.

### K. *How Would This Work?*

Practically speaking, we envision a simple grant process that would be administered by the GAMC in consultation with the Mid Council Lead Team. Preference will be given to efforts targeting our historic commitments. Grants would originate in congregations, new church developments, worshipping fellowships, missional communities, presbyteries, etc. We would want people to commit to telling their stories and their learnings. Many of these learnings could be shared online through Facebook, SKYPE, video, and YouTube. We would also encourage face-to-face gatherings and events where people could learn from what others have started and build new networks and relationships. We are not looking for technical best practices or success stories, but stories of what people learned, what they will do differently next time, and how the rest of us can learn from what they tried, as we hope to become more and more of a learning community together.

We do not want the GAMC to be bound by the current and previous percentages of money that went into the National Mission Partnership Funds. We are not recommending a formula for how to come up with the amount of dollars that would initially go into this fund. We would recommend enough to get it started, but we also believe that there would likely be individual donors and congregations that would want to contribute to such a fund that was helping to encourage some exciting new ministries!

### L. *Conclusions*

God always seems to be pushing the church out of its doors to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In Acts 2:17, Peter reminded the people of the Prophet Joel’s words that “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams”. Yet, even Peter in Acts 10 needed a dream from God to be pushed out of the door of his comfortable home and to enter through the doorway of Cornelius’ home, to learn what God was doing in that surprising place.

The Domestic Mission Task Force is reminding the PC(USA) that our current National Mission Partnership Funding system will cease to exist at the end of 2013. The denomination has struggled to find a good way to evaluate this system for many years and has been unable to do so. The GAMC continues to fund our historical national mission such as new church development, racial ethnic ministry, and campus ministry in many ways. Mid council leadership will be funded at the local level.

We are making four recommendations to the General Assembly Mission Council:

1. That the General Assembly Mission Council approve the formation of a Mid Council Lead Team (appointed by the Domestic Mission Task Force) to work with the GAMC to initiate at least four annual regional gatherings in 2013 and 2014 (taking advantage of times when the church is already together, like General Assembly, Big Tent, synod and presbytery gatherings) to discuss and develop the following:

- a. Listen to specific constituencies, such as, but not limited to:
  - (1) rural, remote, and urban churches;

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- (2) collegiate ministries;
  - (3) Native American congregations;
  - (4) racial ethnic/new immigrant;
  - (5) emerging leadership models for mid councils that create safe space for innovation.
- b. Discuss how to provide leadership development, resources, and accountability.
2. That these gatherings should be tied to specific outcomes that will be shared with congregations and mid councils across the country and serve as inspiration for potential ministry endeavors. These specific conversations could be centered on discussing and developing
- twenty-five ways rural, remote, and urban churches are doing mission in their context;
  - twenty examples of thriving ministry to college campuses;
  - fifteen diverse, recently formed worshipping communities that are on a path towards sustainability;
  - twenty-five congregations that are effectively becoming more multi-ethnic in character;
  - twenty places where ministry with particular racial ethnic populations are thriving; and
  - ten presbyteries that are staffed or organized to be safe places.
3. We also recommend that the GAMC devote a percentage of the previous NMPF funds to facilitating these gatherings in 2013 and 2014.
4. That the General Assembly Mission Council, by 2014, would establish and begin funding a new initiative called the Developmental, Research, Experimental, Adaptive Mission (DREAM) fund (Acts 2:17, Acts 10).

We are in a time of transition as a denomination. We believe that the denomination in general and the GAMC in particular, can be in partnership with congregations and mid councils. We help by partnering to bring people together for crucial conversations and missional experiments, helping people to dream once again (Acts 2) and walk through new doorways of ministry (Acts 10).

Our theology tells us that God is up to something big in our world. The Spirit is alive and well, and the more we move back into our neighborhoods, the more we will discover what Christ is already doing. We are continually being invited to participate in the mission of God, to have new doorway conversations, and experiment with how to join the Trinity in the work of the kingdom.

We believe that the future is full of new possibilities for our denomination. These are exciting and challenging times that we live in. If we can cultivate the missional imagination of our people, if we really believe that the Spirit of God is among the people of God, if we mature in our faith and our discipleship in Jesus Christ, there is no telling what new trails God will lead us down next! “Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph. 3:20).

[Editor’s Note: The General Assembly Mission Council approved these recommendations at the February 2012 meeting.]

### Endnotes

- i. Paul Hooker, “What is Missional Ecclesiology?” August 2009, (1).
- ii. Imagine opening the door to a brand new house. Or imagine climbing to the crest of a hill where at the top you engage a brand new vista. Divine revelation breaks into our lives and changes everything. William J. Abraham, through the lens of Canonical Theism, paints a broad enough picture that embraces the tradition, the Scriptures and the work of the Holy Spirit. Abraham wants to take us to the threshold where we continue to experience the profound, life-changing consciousness of the very knowledge of God. We join a grand historical march of this awakening of consciousness. Our ancestors have left us major gifts that must be treasured, for they give witness to constant awakenings.
- iii. Abraham is the Albert Cook Outler Professor of Theology and Wesley Studies at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. He was born in 1947 in Ireland. William J. Abraham is credited with leading the effort to formulate a new systematic theology<sup>1</sup> called “canonical theism.”

Stated simply, canonical theism believes that God is a powerful being at work bringing healing of the world. This “rich vision of God, creation, and redemption developed over time in the scriptures, articulated in the Nicene Creed, celebrated in the liturgy of the church, enacted in the lives of the saints, handed over and received in the sacraments, depicted in iconography, articulated by canonical teachers, mulled over in the Fathers, and treasured, preserved, and guarded by the episcopate, is a network of beliefs.” William J. Abraham, *Crossing the Threshold of Divine Revelation*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 43.

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- iv. Milton J. Bennett, M.D., *A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*. Cultures are meaning making machines. An ethnocentric worldview holds personal experience as the center of the universe. An ethnorelative worldview sees many varieties of culture as holding valid meaning. A person may need to change her or his behavior to be in a relationship. People who can bridge cultures and integrate meaning may be our “Partnership Facilitators.”  
<http://www.library.wisc.edu/EDVRC/docs/public/pdfs/SEEDReadings/intCulSens.pdf>

### APPENDIX I

In 2009, the following report was compiled by Joy Kaufman, general presbyter of Huntingdon Presbytery and member of the writing team that reported to the General Assembly Mission Council from questionnaires submitted by all sixteen synods at the request of the writing team:

#### NMPF Synod Patterns Overview

Monday, June 15, 2009

Nine synods receive National Mission Partnership Funds (NMPF) gifts and seven do not. All 16 synods made reports to today's group, either through printed text/numeric reports or, in one instance, through a verbal report from a representative of the synod. Most of the synods use the NMPF monies variously/give the monies out to their member presbyteries, which in turn use the monies variously. None-the-less, there were some themes and trends that emerged from the reports of the 16 synods.

Some of these are:

- By having these funds lodged as a “national ministry”, we have created a long-term ministry without meaningful, practical oversight.
- There is lack of clarity about the meaning of “connection”. For instance, in campus ministry, students come from all over the country to a particular college. The local congregation or even the presbytery may or may not feel connected. But at the college as an institution, there is no feeling of connection with others in the denomination.
- Neither donors nor recipients have a deep awareness of their connection through the NMPF gifts.
- Likewise, there is lack of clarity about the meaning of “national ministry”.
- In various settings across the face of the denomination, the political process was so great that the question about definition of regional mission and national mission was never successfully addressed.
- Other than the synod/presbytery execs/stated clerks/treasurers and financial staff persons, there is little to no awareness of the NMPF – what it is and what it is supposed to be. It's viewed as “just another source of income in the synod/presbytery budget.”
- The functioning of the NMPF gifts has been to prolong our doing things the way we have done them for quite a while without evaluating them.
- A desire was expressed to talk across the levels of the church about funding in new ways that require something more than dependency upon judicatories with no evaluation. One good question to ask would be, “how does the use of such funds fit within the mission design of the presbytery/synod?”
- If funding of various ministries and missions becomes dependent upon designated giving rather than a unified system like NMPF, there will be various consequences; positive, negative and neutral. One of the consequences we foresee is that some projects will be attractive to donors, e.g., 25 small Native American congregations in the desert southwest, while other projects will be less attractive, e.g., “every presbytery should have an EP”.
- If mission funding partnerships were created synod to synod, as no two synods are alike, the partnerships developed would be, likewise, various.
- Ministry with/to immigrants is a thread of common intrigue in several of the synods. One of the emerging issues relative to immigrant ministry is how to weave immigrant leadership into national denominational conversation and national denominational leadership.
- Another cutting edge thread is how to develop ecumenical connections as we move forward in mission. Very few of our mission projects must be done only by Presbyterians absent ecumenical partners. Often ecumenical partners bring gifts to the table, as do we.
- In recent years, virtually all the 16 synods, those receiving these funds and those not, have experienced similar financial trends.
  1. All synods have maintained some of the original intentions of the NMPF gifts, e.g., Racial Ethnic ministry.
  2. All synods have experienced the shift toward more designated giving and less unified giving.
  3. All synods have experienced giving shortfalls, increasing over time, and in some cases this has been a dramatic decrease.

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- There are issues of “who is in charge and who makes decisions?” woven throughout conversation about mission funding in all the synods. Our process for mission funding consultations has been implemented and experienced in various ways, sometimes more as competitions than consultations. Consultations need to be collaborations, not just “nit-picking” sessions about one another’s budgets.
- The quality of the relationships between the synod execs and the presbytery execs can make a difference for good or ill in the NMPF process and any subsequent communication about NMPF or a successor system.
- Some synods now have a history of presbyteries making good choices and other synods have a history of presbyteries making less good choices. This has an effect on who trusts whom.
- Concern was expressed about what will connect us once this particular mission funding mechanism goes away. Intentionality about the “what next” would be very helpful to all synods and presbyteries. Relating to one another as disciples rather than as funding sources is seen as a positive possibility.
- There are correlative issues, such as whether or not it is a good thing or even a possibility, for synods to write covenants with the Presbyterian colleges within their bounds. The suspicion is that this too will vary, and appropriately so, from setting to setting.
- We need to stop fighting over the (fewer) dollars and focus on what is important for us to do in mission.

### APPENDIX II

Memorandum to: Synod Executives, Stated Clerks and Moderators

Date: September 15, 2011

From: Elder Kris Thompson (National Capital) and the members of the Domestic (National) Mission Task Force [Elder Clarence Antioquia, GAMC; Rev. Clark Cowden, GMAC; Rev. Joyce Emery, Synod of Alaska-Northwest; Elder Kathy Lee, appointed by GA Moderator; Rev. Carl Mazza, appointed by GA Moderator; Rev. Raafat Zaki, Synod of the Covenant; Rev. Roger Dermody and Rev. Philip Lotspeich, GA Staff]

Re: Checking in: Is this what we have heard?

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Our Task Force is preparing a proposal for the GAMC and the 220th General Assembly PCUSA that will mark the ending of NMPF funds and signal the beginning of a new way of thinking about national mission. Our report is due to be submitted in final form by the February 2012 meeting of the GAMC. We are grateful for the hearings, conversations, and visits that we have been able to host across the church, specifically with the nine receiving Synods. We want to be perfectly clear about the ramifications for the church on the frontlines of ministry when the NMPF funds end. Each setting is different. Please contact the Moderator Kris Thompson of our Task Force and Joyce Emery with your response so that we can be clear in our report. Please review, rewrite, or enhance what we are proposing below to you. Please respond by October 28, 2011.

When the NMPF funding ends:

#### Alaska-Northwest

The annual mission budget of the Synod will all but disappear. (Local congregations give \$50,000 to \$80,000 to the Synod mission annually.) The largest hit entity will be higher education (ecumenical and congregationally based). Plans are in process to reform these ministries and reconnect them with presbyteries and congregations, but one cannot discount the end of an era. The funds that were sent to Alaska and Yukon Presbyteries for Native village ministries and presbytery staff will end for Alaska in 2011 and ended for Yukon in the late 1990’s. The Synod has been funding the salary (\$70,000) of a pastor in Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska (Yukon) for the past two years with NMP Funds. An itineration of a Taiwanese mission partner in the Native villages during the last two months of 2011 yielded a realistic account of our ministries in the villages. It is a critical time to stay connected and support our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Synod may move to a basic non-governing entity with a PJC and basic administrative services and possibly a continued grant process for ministry areas that have endowments. The growing technology ministry will need to be spun off to be self-supporting as a 501(c)3. There will no longer be a Presbyter to Synod or a Synod executive. The presbyteries will support (with per capita and mission gifts?) basic administrative services, and various shared ministry initiatives that they have endorsed by having “called one another to table.”

You would like the larger church to: consider joining your Presbytech Ministry (as the Synod of Living Waters has done); find a new way to support the coordination of Native ministries region by region – our region has a profound witness; watch our effort to train up new leaders/pastors, commissioned lay pastors, and new church development pastors and help us stay connected to the National efforts; provide a table for us to connect to Native ministries, small church ministries, which include rural and remote locations.

#### Lakes and Prairies

In 1999 the Synod decided to designate NMPF funds for the support of a “Comprehensive Presbytery Staff Support” which was defined as \$40,000 to each presbytery with full time executive staff. Dakota Presbytery has not had staff in recent days and does not receive NMPF funds. They do receive mission support but from other funds.

The Synod has constituted two special task forces to consider implications and “exit strategies” with each of the presbytery councils. Presbyteries have explored alternative and cooperative staffing models, cooperative mission and program initiatives, and other means by which

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best use could be made of limited financial and human resources. Some conversations have gone well. Two of your presbyteries have made a decision to eliminate the position of Executive, pursuing different models for facilitating the work of the presbytery and congregations, staff may not necessarily serve full time. The Synod has also established a special review task force to consider the future of the Synod and alternatives for future purpose and structure. When the current Synod executive joined the Synod as an executive presbyter in 1984 there were over 20 people on the Synod staff. Now there are 7.

You would like the larger church to join you in prayer for the Dakota Presbytery. You do not believe that more money will necessarily aid in strengthening the witness of that Presbytery.

### Living Waters

The Synod has historically used these funds to support executive staff, new church developments, racial ethnic ministries and campus ministries at the Presbytery level. "Aid to Field" was also a part of the mission strategy at previous points in history. One third of the money has been distributed to 12 of the presbyteries to be used by Campus Ministries. The rest of the money is distributed based on a formula that awards higher funding to presbyteries with many small churches. This has been done to maintain the original use of the funds. Most of these ministries have been cut by the presbyteries as the money has decreased. The Synod has been working to develop a "Funds Development" unit for Campus Ministry.

You would like your campus and racial ethnic/multicultural new church developments to continue to receive support from the whole PCUSA.

### Pacific

The Synod directs all the NMPF funds directly to the eleven presbyteries via Synod Mission Partnership Grants. Each presbytery receives 1/11 of the total NMPF funds received. How the monies are used for program and ministries is determined by each individual presbytery according to their need. Because the small presbyteries have used these funds to support presbytery staff, presbyteries such as Eastern Oregon and Kendall do not have full-time staff support. These funds have helped the presbyteries survive. The presbyteries have been preparing for this.

### Boriquen in Puerto Rico

The Synod has used these funds to the salaries of the Synod and Presbytery administrative staff, development of new churches and enrollment fees for candidates at the Evangelical Seminary. A consultation was held each year before 2007 with the presbyteries and a percentage was assigned for distribution. The Synod retained part of the funds. The last consultation was in 2008. The Synod now retains one half of the funds and the presbyteries receive the percentage proportion that was adopted in 2007.

The Synod has used most of its funds to help maintain students enrolled in the Evangelical Seminary and support new church developments.

The Synod has reorganized office space and decreased the working hours of personnel. Almost all of communication is done via the internet. Plans have been to construct a parking lots and office space to provide rental income.

You would like to see future funds allocated exclusively for the purpose of creating mission through the local congregations. They would need to apply and be held accountable. You see your Synod providing great help across the denomination with ministry with Latins.

### Rocky Mountains

The Synod provides grants to each of the six presbyteries. Denver and Plains & Peaks do not seek or receive grants.

The Synod has traditionally used these funds to support campus ministries, supplement executive salaries, and support new church developments and racial ethnic ministries. The end of these funds means that six of the eight presbyteries will be moving to part time staff. Support for campus ministries has just ended in 2011.

Racial ethnic strategies have had to become partnerships between presbyteries.

### South Atlantic

The funds we receive go to the presbyteries to help with racial ethnic ministries and NCD work. The funds are distributed through grants. As the funds end, the presbytery's programs with Hispanic, African, Korean and Portuguese constituents will change. All of our presbyteries are aware of this change.

You covet our prayers.

### Southern California and Hawaii

You are no longer a programmatic or missional Synod. The money is now going to support administrative uses including the salaries of the 3.5 staff positions at the Synod level. Synod staff are distributing restricted and designated funds that support mission projects in your eight presbyteries. Without this funding you will be relying even more on your presbyteries' mission pledges because you do not have other sources of income for supporting this work.

Southwest

The funds have been disbursed to each of the four presbyteries to support historical commitments. In all four of the presbyteries these funds have been used, at least in part, to supplement the salaries of executive leadership. Each of the presbyteries is looking at creative ways to live with less and to cooperate in new ways.

In the Presbytery of Grand Canyon a portion of these funds have been added to the mission gifts of Arizona Presbyterians and distributed as annual grants to the Native American Congregations based upon a distribution formula agreed upon by the council of each congregation and chapel. However, before the grants are distributed, and with the consent of the individual sessions, a portion is withheld to cover the costs of per capita and pay insurance premiums allocable to each congregation. The remainder of the grant has then been distributed to the Native congregations based on adopted criteria.

In addition, a portion of the NMP funds were designated by the Synod to be used by each presbytery in support of racial ethnic ministry. In Grand Canyon, its portion was simply added to the pool from which the above-mentioned grants were made.

The commitment to the Native congregations is tied to historical promises. When the federal government issued the patent, title, to the land in Ganado on the Navajo Reservation, it did so on behalf of the Native People with the understanding that the church would support the Native worshipping communities in perpetuity. Likewise, in all other Native Communities in Grand Canyon located on the Reservations the understanding was that though the PCUSA did not own the land, it did own the buildings and would be allowed to remain on the reservation as long as there is an active worshipping community. This historic pledge and promise provides a challenge to the PCUSA that cannot and should not be ignored.

This same promise/expectation also applies to the Native congregations located in the Presbyteries of de Cristo and Santa Fe. And, like Grand Canyon, NMP Funds have been used over the years to support pastoral leadership in those worshipping communities as well.

In any event, the challenge is to broaden the PCUSA's awareness of our Native American people, our efforts to share the Good News and lead the way in developing new missional partnerships that empower and sustain Native American communities on their tribal lands.

Finally, in the Presbytery of Santa Fe, which has only one historic Native American congregation, besides providing support for pastoral leadership on the Laguna Reservation and support of funding for executive leadership of the Presbytery, NMP funds have been used to underwrite and support pastoral leadership in the historic, Hispanic, mission-field congregations principally located in northern New Mexico.

## Appendix III

## DMTF Social Media Summary

What is God up to in our neighborhoods here?

- Listening leads to discernment and relationships

How can we transform “mainline congregations” into missional communities following Jesus into the places where we work live and play in this new post Christian, post denominational time?

- Alpha in the Workplace
- Helping churches discover and live out their own missional calling
- Support what local churches are already doing
- National initiative to equip local churches to plant new churches
- Focus on congregations and how they are being led vs. focus on mission and how church participates in it
- Workshop on collaboration in community transformation

How would you define National Mission?

- the workplace
- starting local churches with diverse people
- Godofhope.net – sharing the story of Jesus through the Internet to reach the masses

Examples of new worshipping communities:

- Grace, Wicker Park, Broad Street Ministries
- Vision 360, global church planting movement

What are ways your congregation is in partnership with other congregations in mission and outreach?

- Alpha Course throughout SF Presbytery

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- Presbytery of Santa Barbara sending folks to Haiti, short term and long term
- Bend Youth Collective
- Partnership between School of Christian Vocation and Mission of Princeton Theological Seminary and Presbytery Multicultural network to conduct regional “Multicultural Institutes” for the Mid-Atlantic region

How does your congregation approach developing outreach and mission opportunities to connect members to local communities? Any barriers?

- Thinking of setting up a “confession booth” like in Blue Like Jazz
- Started a “Missional Transition Team” to be creative and experiment with things until the Session was ready to discuss new ideas; now have extra Saturday morning meeting to dream, brainstorm, learn and pray together
- Circular chart of church: mission → education → outreach → visionaries → Congregational care → worship → music → repeat ; “passion” made too personal can destroy the church

### **D. Report of Changes to the Appendices of the GAMC Manual of Operations**

The *General Assembly Mission Council Manual of Operations* states that, “The General Assembly Mission Council may change those appendices to the *Manual of Operations* that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, and adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the General Assembly Mission Council. The General Assembly Mission Council Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly.”

In accordance with the above, the General Assembly Mission Council Executive Committee reports the following changes to the Appendixes of the *Manual of Operations*, as approved by the General Assembly Mission Council between the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the 220th General Assembly (2012):

- Added a new Appendix on a “Gift Acceptance Policy.”
  - Replaced “Covenant Relationships” in Appendix 1, Section XI, with a new section on GAMC Missional Relationships.
  - Replaced all references to the “General Assembly Mission Council” with “Presbyterian Mission Agency/Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.” [Pending approval of the new name for the GAMC by the 220th General Assembly (2012).]
  - Moved “Open Meeting Policy” to Appendix 4.
- Streamlined the review process for the Executive Director into a single pattern for first- and third-year reviews, and another pattern for second- and fourth-year reviews in Appendix 8, “Comprehensive Performance Review Processes for the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council.”

The following is the General Assembly Council Manual of Operations Appendixes as they would appear with the changes:

#### *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board*

Manual of Operations

Appendix 1

Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for six-year, non-renewable terms.

### **I. Responsibilities of Board**

The responsibilities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are listed in the *Organization for Mission*, and the Board.

### **II. Board Meetings**

#### A. Meetings

1. Stated/Regular Meetings—Recommendations regarding the scheduling of meetings of the *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* shall be prepared by the *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* Executive Committee and brought to the Council for approval.



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2. Special/Called Meetings—Upon the written request of at least ten (10) voting members of the Board, the chair shall call a meeting. Written notice of the meeting shall be provided, specifying the subject matter to be considered, to all members of the Board at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance of the meeting date. All members of the *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board* shall be notified of the resulting decisions as soon as possible after the meeting.

### B. *Quorum*

The quorum for all Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Meetings and its committees shall be 40% of voting members.

### C. *Development of the Agenda*

1. The Executive Director, in conjunction with the Board Chair, shall develop the agenda for meetings of the Board. Groups who wish to be placed on the agenda may communicate their requests to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair (or designee) or the Executive Director (or designee). Any member of the Board may propose an item for consideration prior to Board action to adopt the agenda.
2. Each agenda shall include an opportunity for members of the Board to renew their covenant with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, stating:

We, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, called to this ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, covenant together to:

- Seek God's will, remaining open to fresh movement of the Holy Spirit, acting boldly and creatively for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in ministry and mission.
- Relate to one another with honesty, trust, respect, openness, and kindness, proclaiming God's graciousness by risking and daring transformation in our lives and work.
- Be faithful stewards, seeking to make wise decisions in partnership with the greater church, doing our homework, listening to all points of view, working for consensus, and faithfully supporting decisions we have made.
- Worship and pray with joy and appreciation for God's guidance in doing this work.

### D. *Closed Meetings*

Closed meetings shall be held in accordance with the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy (see Appendix 4). In closed meetings, only voting members of the Board, at-large members of Stewardship Committee, and Audit Committee, and other persons explicitly invited by the Board are to be present. The Board will determine, by majority vote, if its members wish to deliberate in a closed meeting. Minutes kept of a closed meeting may be approved only in a closed meeting. All present in a closed meeting are honor-bound to keep confidential all discussions occurring during the closed meeting. Ordinarily, when the use of a closed meeting can be anticipated, the Board chair or Executive Director will provide advance notice to the Board that a closed meeting is recommended and the reason for closing.

### E. *Recording Secretary*

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, or designee, shall be the Recording Secretary of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

### F. *Absences*

Ordinarily, one absence from regular meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board or its related committees without prior notification to the Office of the Executive Director shall be a basis for the Board chair to recommend to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly that the position be declared vacant.

### G. *Resignation*

A member of a General Assembly entity who finds it necessary to resign shall send his or her resignation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, who shall notify the entity and the nominating committee or other body that originated the person's nomination or election. When any member of an entity of the General Assembly shall resign or become unable to serve because of chronic or permanent physical or mental illness or disability, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall declare the position vacant. (*Organization for Mission*, IV. B.2.o.)

Additionally, any Board member resigning shall send a copy of the resignation to the Office of the Executive Director.

## III. **Officers of the Board**

### A. *Chair*

The duties of the chair are to:

1. Preside at meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
2. Be a member of and chair the Executive Committee.

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3. Guide the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities identified in the *Organization for Mission*.
4. Appoint the chair and members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee.
5. Appoint four voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (one of who shall also be appointed as chair) and one co-opted member with special expertise, representing a presbytery or congregation, to the Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee. Members will serve two-year terms and be eligible for a second term.
6. Appoint members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee for two-year, non-renewable terms.
7. Appoint two Board voting members to the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee, for four-year non-renewable terms.
8. Appoint two current or previous Board elected members to four-year, non-renewable terms on the Jinishian Memorial Program Governance Commission. The two members will also serve as liaisons to the Jinishian Memorial Program U.S. Advisory Committee (USAC) with voice, but not vote.
9. Request and appoint a parliamentarian from the Office of the General Assembly to advise the chair and upon request of the chair to speak to the body.
10. Make appointments as necessary, with ratification by the Executive Committee.
11. Appoint committees of counsel as necessary. The committees shall have a maximum of three (3) members, but may have fewer as determined by the Board chair. The Legal Office shall serve as the primary staff support to Board committees of counsel. (*Book of Order* D-6.0302)

### B. *Vice-Chair*

The duties of the vice-chair are to:

1. Assume the responsibilities of the chair when called upon or when the chair becomes vacant.
2. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
3. Lead the Executive Committee in all personnel matters as listed in Section IV.A.1.d.(15).
4. Serve as a corresponding member of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

### C. *Terms of Office*

#### 1. Chair

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall elect its chair at the first Board meeting of the calendar year in which there is a General Assembly from among its voting members. The chair-elect shall serve as a corresponding member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The chair-elect may continue to hold offices requiring election by the Board, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The chair may not be elected to an additional office by the Board during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the *Manual of Operations*. During Board meeting dates, the chair serves as an ex-officio member of all Board Committees (except the Board Nominating Committee) with voice and no vote.

#### 2. Vice-Chair

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall elect its vice-chair at the first Board meeting of the calendar year in which there is a General Assembly from among its voting members. The vice-chair elect shall serve as a corresponding member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The vice-chair elect may continue to hold offices requiring election by the Board, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The vice-chair may not be elected to an additional office by the Board during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the *Manual of Operations*.

## IV. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees

### A. *Mission Administration Committees*

#### 1. Executive Committee

The basic operating principle guiding the work of the Executive Committee is that of resourcing and facilitating decision-making by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

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### a. Membership

The Executive Committee shall be composed of members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, including the Board chair, Board vice-chair, chair of each of the Mission Committees, and two voting members elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. (See section VI. Election Procedures, D.2.). The Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee (voice, but without vote). The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall be chaired by the Board chair.

### b. Scheduling of Meetings

(1) *Stated/Regular Meetings*—Recommendations regarding the scheduling of regular meetings of the Board Executive Committee shall be prepared by the Executive Director in conjunction with the Chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and brought to the Executive Committee for approval.

(2) *Special/Called Meetings*—Upon the written request of at least three (3) voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee, the chair shall call a meeting. Ordinarily, written notice of the meeting shall be provided specifying the subject matter to be considered in the meeting at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance of the meeting date. All members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be notified of the resulting decisions as soon as possible following the meeting.

### c. Quorum

A quorum (40%) must be present to conduct business for the called meeting (See Section II.B.).

### d. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee [shall include, but not necessarily be limited to]:

- (1) Administer and coordinate the work of the Council by:
  - (a) Planning and making arrangements for meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board,
  - (b) Monitoring the budget for the work of the Council,
  - (c) Coordinate the work of the Mission Committees.
  - (d) Provide for ongoing planning and review of the Mission Committees.
- (2) Assisting in the resolution of conflicts that may arise among Mission Committees, other Presbyterian Mission Agency Board committees, and work groups.]Lead the Board to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church.
- (3) Facilitate effective communication within the Board and implement means of communicating the work of the Board to the church and the world-at-large.
- (4) Appoint Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members, which may include an at-large member of the Stewardship Committee, to serve at a called meeting of a Joint Budget Table for resolution of unresolved per capita budget matters. (See Appendix 10.)
- (5) Review and act upon all requests to celebrate Communion.
- (6) Ratify appointments made by the chair as authorized by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; background information shall be provided.
- (7) Act on behalf of the Board on those matters that require immediate action between meetings of the Board.
- (8) Report at each meeting of the Board on all its work, which is subject to review of the Board, giving reasons for action.
- (9) Recommend action by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board with data for informed decision-making.
- (10) Provide the Board with an annual report of its “Ethics Policy” and interpretation as necessary. (See Appendix 6.)
- (11) Nominate voting members for the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee for election by the Board at its fall meeting. (See Section VI.B.2.)
- (12) Recommend biennially to the Board the corresponding members to General Assembly.
- (13) Act as publisher of publications produced by the Presbyterian Mission Agency .[.]
- (14) Act regarding personnel matters of the Presbyterian Mission Agency as follows:

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- (a) Advise and counsel the Executive Director in his or her responsibilities in “supporting the organizational health of the Board, the Ministries, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (*Organization for Mission, V.G.I.b.*) as well as in his or her responsibility of supervising the staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency .
  - (b) Conduct an annual performance review of the Executive Director. (See appendix 8)
  - (c) Conduct an exit interview of the Executive Director when needed (See appendices 7 and 8)
  - (d) Implement procedures to follow when a Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director vacancy occurs. (See appendix 7)
  - (e) Develop, implement, and oversee the compensation policy. Implement and monitor the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA).
  - (f) Recommend for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board action:
    - Personnel policies and procedures for the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff.
    - Revisions to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.
    - Compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered.
    - Salary adjustments for the Executive Director
    - Other appropriate actions.
- (15) Meet with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly at least biennially regarding mutual concerns, issues, and input to the deliberative process. (See Appendix 9 for Guidelines.)
- (16) Coordinate the plan for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board resourcing at the General Assembly.
- (17) Develop a process for orientation of new Board members.
- (18) Provide for regular meetings with [Mid-Council] personnel.
- e. Subcommittees of the Executive Committee
- (1) Procedures Subcommittee
    - (a) Membership:

The Procedures Subcommittee shall consist of two voting members of the Executive Committee, one of whom shall be chair, and three voting members of the council not presently serving on the Executive Committee; to be appointed annually by the Board chair.
    - (b) Function:

Review and report to the Executive Committee on Presbyterian Mission Agency materials and other agency reports being forwarded to the General Assembly. Review and report to the Executive Committee on the *Manual of Operations*, [the] *Organization for Mission*, Mission Ministries, Communications and Funds Development Ministry, Shared Services Ministry, Audit, Advocacy and Advisory Committees’ manuals of operations for consistency with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board *Manual of Operations* and relevance within the current context.
    - (c) Responsibilities

Work of the subcommittee shall include but not necessarily be limited to:

      - i. Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by Presbyterian Mission Agency in the course of its regular work.
      - ii. Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by another General Assembly entity, task force or committee requiring joint action, concurrence, and/or comment by Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Such review shall ordinarily be in consultation with the appropriate offices of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.
      - iii. Recommend as needed, revisions and amendments to the *Organization for Mission* and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board *Manual of Operations*.
      - iv. Review the minutes of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns annually for consistency with established guidelines and report findings to the Advocacy Committees and the Board Executive Committee.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### (2) Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee

#### (a) Membership:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee shall be composed of four (4) voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and one co-opted member with special expertise, representing a presbytery or congregation. The council chair shall annually appoint a Board voting member of the committee as chair of the committee. Membership will be determined in the following ways:

- i. The four voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be appointed by the Board chair and ratified by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. The four members shall be arranged in classes representing two-year terms and eligible for a second term, so long as such person continues to serve as a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
- ii. The co-opted member representing a presbytery or congregation shall be appointed by the Board chair and ratified by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. This member will serve a two-year term, be eligible for a second term, and may be a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting member.
- iii. All members shall have voice and vote.

#### (b) Function:

The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee provides oversight and guidance of the process by which councils and General Assembly entities apply for the use of General Assembly Restricted Funds (See *General Assembly Minutes*, 1997, Part I, pp. 218-222.). The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee reviews the applications, and makes funding recommendations to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board through the Board Executive Committee.

#### (c) Meetings:

The Restricted Funds Oversight Subcommittee meets immediately before the Fall Board meeting. Additional conference call meetings may be needed.

#### (d) Responsibilities:

- i. Recommend policies and procedures for the process by which councils and General Assembly entities apply for the use of General Assembly Restricted Funds.
- ii. Provide oversight and guidance for the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff with respect to the application process.
- iii. Review the applications received and make funding recommendations to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, through the Board Executive Committee, taking into consideration the recommendations from any consultation among the applicants.

### 2. *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee*

#### a. Membership:

Membership of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee shall consist of five voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board arranged in classes for one two-year term, including one man, one woman, and one racial ethnic person. Each member shall have at least one year of experience on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board before he or she serves on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee. Responsibilities:

(Note: When no current member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board has the gifts or abilities required to serve on particular boards or entities that require Board representation, the Board Nominating Committee may select nominees from past Board members. Ordinarily the term is for four years, non-renewable.)

- (1) Nominate two voting Board members, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to one-year at-large terms on the Executive Committee. Those so elected shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat. Ordinarily, these at-large members shall serve no more than three years as at-large members. An annual election provides for continuity, balance, and fair representation.
- (2) Nominate three voting Board members, for election by the General Assembly, to four-year non-renewable terms on the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the end of the General Assembly.
- (3) Nominate one Board voting member for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- (4) Nominate one Board voting member for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year, non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.
  - (5) Nominate one Board voting member from the Stewardship Mission Committee for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
  - (6) Nominate one Board voting member from the Stewardship Mission Committee, and one Board voting member from the Evangelism Mission Committee, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.'s Board of Directors, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.
  - (7) Nominate one Board voting member from the Stewardship Mission Committee, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions.
  - (8) Nominate one Board voting member, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to any selection committee for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions' President. (*Organization for Mission*, Appendix D, Section 7).
  - (9) Nominate one Board voting member, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board I, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel.
  - (10) Nominate two Board voting members, with election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to four-year non-renewable terms on the Committee on Theological Education.
  - (11) Nominate one Board voting member for appointment by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year non-renewable term on the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.
  - (12) Nominate two members, at least one of whom shall be a current Board voting member, to three-year terms with eligibility to one additional term, to the Mountain Retreat Association, Inc.'s Board of Directors for approval by the General Assembly.
  - (13) Nominate one Board voting member to the Stony Point Conference Center Board of Directors, and one Board voting member to Ghost Ranch Conference Center Board of Directors to a four-year non-renewable term, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
  - (14) Nominate for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board election, one Board voting member to the Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. Board of Directors for a three-year non-renewable term
  - (15) Prepare and distribute biographical information for any nominee who is not a current member of the Board.
  - (16) Nominate for other positions as requested by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
  - (17) Work in consultation with the Committee on Representation to provide for inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church. (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103.)
  - (18) Coordinate the nomination and election process for chair and vice-chair.
  - (19) Nominate Board voting members, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to two-year terms on the Mission Committees, with eligibility for two additional terms. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the beginning of the fall meeting.
- b. Process:
- The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee shall consult with members, prior to nomination, in the following ways:
- (1) All new members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be requested to list in writing all appropriate committees in order of preference for service. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee shall consider the preference ranking and committee needs in preparing nominations, with the understanding that a person must serve one year on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board before being elected to serve on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee. Nominations shall be made without further consultation.
  - (2) All members, after completing two-year terms as committee members, shall list in writing all appropriate committee choices in order of preference for service. In preparing nominations, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee shall consider the preference ranking and the committee needs when the continuing member is assigned to a new committee.
  - (3) Election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall take place at the first Board meeting following General Assembly.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### 3. Audit Committee

#### a. Purpose:

The primary function of the Audit Committee is to assist the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities and duties as follows:

- (1) Monitor the integrity of the financial reporting process and system of Internal Control regarding finance, accounting, legal compliance and ethics that have been established.
- (2) Monitor the independence and performance of the Corporation's external auditors, internal auditing unit and management.
- (3) Provide an avenue of communication among the external auditor, internal auditing unit, management and the Board.

The Committee has the authority to conduct any investigation appropriate to fulfilling its responsibilities, and in this regard, it has direct access to the external auditors as well as anyone in the organization.

#### b. Composition and Membership

The Committee is composed of six (6) voting members:

- Three (3) are Board voting members.
- One (1) member is appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).
- Two (2) are at-large members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) for special expertise and elected by the General Assembly.

Each member of the Committee shall be independent and may not accept directly or indirectly any consulting, advisory, or other compensatory fee from either the Presbyterian Mission Agency or Office of the General Assembly (OGA). All members of the Committee shall have a working familiarity with basic finance and accounting practices and the two at-large members of the Committee shall have accounting or related financial management expertise determined by the Stewardship Mission Committee and the Audit Committee Chairs.

The Committee will meet in conjunction with the scheduled Board meetings or more frequently as circumstances may require. The Committee meets annually, usually in April, to review the audited financial statements. Also, if the Committee Chair is not present, the members of the Committee may designate a Chair by majority vote. (50% of the members shall constitute a quorum).

The Committee may ask members of management or others to attend the meetings and provide pertinent information as necessary. The Committee shall meet periodically with management, the external auditors and Internal Audit in separate executive sessions.

#### c. Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee is to assist the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities by reviewing and reporting on:

The system of internal controls over financial reporting,

The integrity of the financial statements,

Processes to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and

Ethics Policy violation reports

The Committee will provide input regarding the Internal Audit function. This input may include the qualifications, independence, performance and compensation of the Internal Audit staff.

The Committee will pre-approve all auditing services and be directly responsible for the appointment, compensation, retention, dismissal and oversight of the work of any external auditing firm engaged. The Committee will resolve any disagreements between management and the auditor regarding financial reporting.

The Committee shall be provided appropriate funding for payment of compensation to the external auditors and ordinary administrative expenses of the Committee. The Committee will carry out the following specific duties and responsibilities:

##### (1) Internal Control

- (a) Review with management, internal auditors and external auditors the adequacy and effectiveness of policies for assessing and managing risk.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- (b) Examine any findings of weaknesses and recommendations for the improvement of the internal controls. Monitor management's response to and implementation of internal control recommendations.
  - (c) Review with management, internal auditors and external auditors the adequacy of computerized systems controls, the security of such, and the contingency plan for processing financial information in the event of a system breakdown.
- (2) Financial Reporting
- Review with management, the internal auditors and the external auditors:
- (a) The interim and year-end financial statements and related footnotes considering their completeness, consistency, and reflection of appropriate accounting principles.
  - (b) The external auditors' audit of the financial statements and their report thereon.
  - (c) Any significant changes in accounting principles, significant judgment areas and significant or complex transactions (including any off-balance sheet structures) that occurred and the external auditors' judgments about the quality, not just the acceptability, of the accounting principles as applied in financial reporting.
  - (d) Management's handling of proposed audit adjustments identified by the external auditors.
  - (e) Any significant changes required in the external auditors audit plan.
  - (f) All written communications between the external auditors and management, such as any management letters or schedule of unadjusted differences.
  - (g) Any serious difficulties or disputes between management and the external auditors.
  - (h) All matters required to be communicated to the Committee under generally accepted auditing standards (SAS-61).
- (3) External Auditors
- (a) Serve as the authority to which the external auditors report.
  - (b) Appoint the external auditors to be engaged, establish the audit fees of the external auditors, and pre-approve any non-audit services provided by the external auditors.
  - (c) Review the latest internal quality-control or peer review of the external auditors' firm, any material issues raised, and the steps taken to resolve such.
  - (d) Review, at least annually, all relationships between external auditors and Presbyterian Mission Agency Board /Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and otherwise assess the independence of the external auditors and the turnover rates of the lead and concurring partners.
  - (e) Review and evaluate the performance of the external auditors and review with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board any proposed replacement of the external auditors.
- (4) Internal Auditors
- (a) Review the objectivity, effectiveness, budget and staffing of the Internal Audit Department.
  - (b) Receive information from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director regarding the appointment, replacement, reassignment or dismissal of the Associate Director of Internal Audit.
  - (c) Review the Internal Audit Plan for the current year, the risk assessment procedures used to identify projects included in the plan and any changes required in its scope.
  - (d) Review the Internal Audit Policy and compliance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' (IIA) Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.
  - (e) Review with management and the internal auditors:
    - i. Significant findings on internal audits during the year and management's responses thereto.
    - ii. Any difficulties the internal auditors have encountered in the course of their audits, including any restrictions on the scope of their work or access to required information.
    - iii. Any changes required in the scope of their internal audits.
- (5) Ethics Policy Violation Reports



## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- (a) The Audit Committee has duties under the “Ethics Policy for COGA and Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Members.” It also has duties under the “Ethics Policy for Presbyterian Mission Agency and Office of the General Assembly Employees”. These policies are attached as Appendix 6 and can be viewed at [<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/ethics-policy-elected-and-appointed-members-genera/>]
  - (b) The Audit Committee will fulfill its duties as set out in those Ethics Policies.
- (6) General
- (a) Review the Committee’s charter annually, reassess the adequacy of this charter and, considering any new laws or regulations, recommend any proposed changes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
  - (b) Ensure that the Ethics Policies are formalized in writing, adequate and up-to-date. Review with legal counsel and the Associate Director of Internal Audit the processes for communicating the importance of the Ethics Policies, monitoring compliance therewith and any changes to or waivers of the Ethics Policies.
  - (c) Request the external auditors provide information on any legal and regulatory matters that may have an internal impact on the financial statements and the related compliance policies and procedures.
  - (d) Institute and oversee special investigations as needed.
  - (e) Perform other activities related to this charter as requested by the Board.
  - (f) Confirm annually that all responsibilities outlined in this charter have been carried out.
  - (g) Evaluate the performance of the Committee and its individual members on a regular basis.

### B. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board *Mission Committees*

*This section reflects the current Mission Work Plan*

#### 1. *Evangelism*

##### a. Membership

Seven Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members and one Ecumenical Advisory Member.

##### b. Purpose

We are called to invite all people to faith, repentance, and the abundant life of God in Jesus Christ, to encourage congregations in joyfully sharing the Gospel, and through the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in membership and discipleship.

#### 2. *Vocation*

##### a. Membership

Seven Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members.

##### b. Purpose

We are called to lead by Jesus Christ's example, to identify spiritual gifts, and to equip and support people for faithful and effective servant leadership in all parts of the body of Christ.

#### 3. *Justice*

##### a. Membership

Seven Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members and one Ecumenical Advisory Member.

##### b. Purpose

We are called to address wrongs in every aspect of life and the whole of creation, intentionally working with and on behalf of poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people as did Jesus Christ, even at risk to our corporate and personal lives.

#### 4. *Stewardship*

##### a. Membership

Eight Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members and two at-large members.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### b. Purpose

We are called to support the mission and ministry of the mission committees through the application of broad-based services necessary to enable, equip, account and serve. We are the committee designated for Corporate, property, and legal matters for the PC(USA).

### 5. Discipleship

#### a. Membership

Seven Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members.

#### b. Purpose

We are called to deeper discipleship through scripture, worship, prayer, study, stewardship and service, and to rely on the Holy Spirit to mold our lives more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

## V. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is also the Executive Committee of the Corporation (GAMC, September 1997). A quorum of a majority of voting members is required to conduct business.

By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Stewardship Committee, or its successor, is also the Property, Legal, and Finance Committee of the Corporation (Corporate Minutes, September 26, 1998). International property matters requiring approval by the PCUSA Board of Directors are referred to the board via action of the Evangelism Committee, or its successor. (Corporate Minutes, March 16, 2007).

## VI. Election Procedures (Approved by GAMC September 2007)

A. *Election Procedures for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Chair and Vice-Chair* (See Section III. Officers of the Board, C. Terms of Office, C., 1. 2.)

1. Only Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members who have served at least two years on the Board before taking office are eligible for election as chair or vice-chair.
2. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will use a nominating process approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, as follows:
  - a. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will compile a list of gifts, abilities, and skills that they believe will be needed by the Board leadership during the ensuing biennial period. It will also draft two or three questions to be answered by potential candidates for Board leadership. The questions will address the anticipated key challenges facing the Board during the ensuing biennial period.
  - b. Staff to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will identify all Board members eligible for election to Board leadership and prepare for each of them a resume form that includes the person's personal information from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board biography form, a summary of their Board experience, and the questions drafted by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee. The letter will:
    - Inform the Board member of his or her eligibility for Board leadership.
    - Ask if the Board member feels called to be considered for nomination to a Board leadership position.
    - If the response is affirmative, request that he or she verify the resume form information and answer the leadership questions, and
    - Ask that the completed form be returned to Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee staff.
  - c. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will review all the submitted forms and will also go through a discernment process as to whether or not eligible Board members who have not submitted forms have leadership gifts that justify an invitation to consider a call to candidacy for Board leadership. If so, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will extend the invitation to submit a completed resume form and answers to the leadership questions.
  - d. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will evaluate the final list of Board leadership candidates who have submitted resume forms and completed the questions to identify a candidate who it wishes to nominate for Board chair and a candidate it wishes to nominate for Board vice-chair for the ensuing biennial period. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee chair will notify the selected candidates that they are the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee's nominees for the appropriate Board leadership positions.
  - e. The names of the nominees, along with their resumes and their responses to the questions, will be communicated to all Board members a minimum of three weeks prior to the winter/spring Board meeting.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- f. The Board leadership election will be conducted during the winter/spring Board meeting. The Board vice-chair election will be held following the election of the Board chair. Nominations from the floor will be accepted for both elections. The elections will be by written ballot.
  - g. The two-year term of office will begin with the close of the upcoming General Assembly meeting and end with the close of the next General Assembly meeting.
3. In the event of vacancy during the term of the chair, the vice-chair assumes the chair. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee is empowered to appoint an interim vice-chair upon nominations by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee. Election to the position shall occur at the next full meeting of the Board.
- B. *Election Procedures for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee Members*
1. Each member shall be elected for a term of two years. (Also see Section IV.A.2a)
  2. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall nominate members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board at its fall meeting. (See Section IV.A.d.12.)
  3. No person shall be eligible for reelection to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee.
  4. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee members shall elect their own chair.
  5. Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee are eligible to serve on other committees.
- C. *Election Procedures for Chairs of the Mission Committees, and Audit Committee*
1. The committees shall nominate and elect their chairs, and may elect a vice-chair, during the first Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting in the calendar year and notify the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee.
  2. The chairs shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat.
  3. Committee chairs shall be elected for one-year terms, renewable for one additional term.
  4. Board voting members completing at least two consecutive years on a committee are eligible for election as committee chair.
  5. Ordinarily, committee chairs shall make appointments and assignments of committee members to work groups, task forces, and other subcommittees as necessary, giving consideration to experience, interest, and representation.
- D. *General Assembly Nominations*
1. In keeping with the action of the 208th General Assembly (1996), (Recommendation G, Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201), the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall:
    - a. make use of the General Assembly Nominating Committee whenever possible;
    - b. report annually to the General Assembly Nominating Committee records of attendance and participation of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members;
    - c. work through the General Assembly process in selecting persons to serve on boards, committees, task forces, work groups, and initiative teams to . . . “ensure fair and open access from all areas of our denomination and to ensure a valid and enriching diversity within all working groups” . . . (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201, para. 15.113). This procedure applies to all working groups with a life span of more than two years.

### **VII. General Assembly Advisory and Advocacy Committees**

The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved the creation of one advisory committee and two advocacy committees. They are:

Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns

Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns

An advisory committee is related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing advice, recommendations, resources, information, or counsel to its parent body.

An advocacy committee is related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing resources and support for a stated cause, constituency, policy, or defined interest through recommendations, advice, counsel, and efforts that endorse, define, or encourage. The committee reports regularly to its parent body and constituency.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

The above named committees shall have members as detailed below; elected for four-year terms with a maximum of eight years. For those who continue from the similar committees, continuous service is counted.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall nominate the members, for election by the General Assembly, and shall monitor the rotation of committee members among the synods.

The chairs of the advisory committee and advocacy committees shall be elected in the same manner as the chairs of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees, i.e., elected by the members of the respective committees.

The funding for the meetings of these committees comes from the per capita budget and is the responsibility of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

Whenever the work of the committee takes the members beyond the audience of the PC(USA), nationally or internationally, there shall be intensive pre-trip briefing which shall include current church policy, political situations and possible conflicting ideologies and shall include training on dealing with people of differing cultures, faith and backgrounds. When statements to the media are necessary they shall ordinarily be made by the chair of the committee, based on the approved policies of the General Assembly.

### A. *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

This advisory committee shall consist of three Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members and nine at-large members selected for special expertise and geographical diversity.

#### 1. Accountability

- a. The committee shall be accountable to carry out the processes and procedures, and for the identification of financial implications, generally required by all entities for presentation of material to the General Assembly. However, it is understood that the nature of the committee's work occasionally may create difficulties for all concerned in these areas.
- b. The committee shall be accountable for the content of its work to the General Assembly in accordance with the *Manual of the General Assembly*, pg. 77, *Forming Social Policy*, 2.a.: "The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy will be responsible for the process of developing and recommending social witness policy to the General Assembly. If any other entity is involved in processes of developing and recommending social witness policy, then appropriate consultation and linkage with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy shall be undertaken."
- c. Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be accountable to the Office of the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency through the Director, Compassion, Peace and Justice, in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy
- d. During the employee review process of the Coordinator, input will be requested from the Committee.

#### 2. Search Procedures

- a. When the coordinator position becomes vacant, a search committee of seven members shall be appointed by the Executive Director, with membership as follows:
  - (1) In consultation with the chair of ACSWP, three shall be appointed from the Committee, one of whom shall be the chair of the Search Committee.
  - (2) In consultation with the chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, three shall be appointed from the elected members of the Board.
  - (3) The Director of Compassion, Peace and Justice shall provide staff services to the Search Committee and shall have voice but not vote.
  - (4) The chair of the Search Committee shall communicate the Search Committee's recommendation to the Director of Compassion, Peace and Justice.
- b. The Director of Compassion, Peace and Justice shall appoint and have supervision of the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.
- c. The search and appointment shall be guided by, and in accordance with, the *Presbyterian Mission Agency Employee Handbook*.

#### 3. Budget

The budget shall be displayed in the Office of the Director of the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency with the Deputy Executive Director for Mission signing off on matters requiring the signature of the Deputy Executive Director.

#### 4. Staff Relationships

The Social Witness Policy Office and the Committee relate most closely to the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area in order to be a regular part of information channels, staff meetings, teams and discussions. Relationships with other ministries shall be developed through staff participation in 'staff week' meetings, staff teams and consultative processes.

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### 5. Access

Access to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Leadership Team for planning and consultation shall be on invitation of the Executive Director or at the request of the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. At least annually, there will be a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and representatives of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee for strategic reflection and anticipation regarding social witness policy concerns.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

### 6. Liaisons

A staff person shall be named from the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry as liaison to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

### 7. Relation to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

Access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, social involvement reports, Advice and Counsel Memoranda, a yearly narrative report, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and Counsel Memoranda are to be developed cooperatively with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns as appropriate.

### 8. Assigned Functions

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions study papers, social involvement reports, or Advice and Counsel Memoranda on the church's social witness for study and recommendation to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative; seek concurrence of the council relative to financial implications on plans for studies.
- b. Advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of social witness policy or strategy, including interim statements concerning pressing social issues, the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly. Facilitate two-way communication with all parties throughout policy development and advisory processes.
- c. Prepare special studies at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or its Ministries on matters of social witness.
- d. Work cooperatively with the Ministries and all councils in coordinating the interdependent process of social policy formation, implementation, and monitoring.
- e. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its representative committees on overtures, commissioner resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that recommend policy direction or action on social witness.
- f. Maintain an up-to-date and accurate Social Policy Compilation of General Assembly social witness policy and provide information to the church as requested.
- g. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret the social witness policies of the General Assembly.
- h. Identify facets of the church's social witness that enable or obstruct effective action. Analyze, in cooperation with the General Assembly Ministries, the effectiveness of social witness in councils, institutions, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. After consulting entities that have primary ministry responsibility and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, report to the General Assembly on the advisory committee's findings, together with recommendations for improving social witness.
- i. Report directly to the General Assembly because of the need to maintain and advance a prophetic witness of the church.

#### B. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)*

This advocacy committee shall consist of the following persons:

- 2 African American (\*)
- 2 Asian American (\*)
- 2 Hispanic (\*)
- 2 Middle Eastern (\*)
- 2 Native American (\*)

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

1 at-large member elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic segments, geographic diversity and ethnic balance.

1 Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Member nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the advocacy committee.

• (\*) Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses (African American, Asian American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Native American ) shall select one member from each caucus to be elected through the General Assembly Nominating process to serve a four year-term with eligibility for one additional term.

### 1. Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the Office of the General Assembly Mission Council Executive Director through the Executive Administrator.

### 2. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator.

### 3. Access

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, a yearly narrative report, Advice and counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and counsel Memoranda shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

### 4. Assigned Functions

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the Board may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

### C. *Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)*

This advocacy committee shall consist of:

- 2 clergy women
- 1 woman church lay employee
- 1 Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace
- 7 members at-large, chosen to balance the committee geographically, racially and ethnically, and with consideration to age and expertise.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

1 Presbyterian Mission Agency Board nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the advocacy committee.

At least four members of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall be racial ethnic women. At least two members of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns will be men, but no more than three members may be men.

### 1. Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Director through the Executive Administrator.

### 2. Budget

Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff member is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator.

### 3. Access

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Access shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, a yearly narrative report, Advice and counsel Memoranda. Advice and counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the General Assembly Mission Council.

### 4. Assigned Functions

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church and the world; and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society.

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on women's concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of women's concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women's concerns.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women's concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women's concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of women's policies and programs relative to women's concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women's concerns.

## VIII. Committee on Theological Education

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has direct access to the General Assembly and their work is coordinated through the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

As constituted by the 198th General Assembly (1986) and reaffirmed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) the Committee on Theological Education has the following purposes: to further the cause of theological education in the church; to provide a vehicle through which the individual theological seminaries can coordinate their activities and report to the church; to provide for official communication from the church to the seminaries; to preserve the freedom of the seminaries for the benefit of the church; and to assure visible representation of theological education [ ] [at] the national level of the church's organization.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

### 1. Committee Membership

This committee of the General Assembly will consist of:

- One representative appointed by each of the ten PC(USA) seminaries;
- Eleven at-large members for special expertise and geographical diversity, who are elected through the General Assembly Nominating Committee process to serve four-year terms, with eligibility for one additional term;
- Two Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to four-year non-renewable terms;
- Corresponding members representing seminaries that have renewable covenant relationships with the PC(USA);
- A corresponding member representing the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation; and up to three corresponding members representing non-Presbyterian seminaries as determined by annual vote of the Committee on Theological Education.

### 2. Staff Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for planning and coordinating work of the committee shall be appointed by the Director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry in consultation with the Committee on Theological Education. The staff shall be lodged within the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry and be directly accountable to the Director of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

### 3. Budget

Funding for the work of the Committee on Theological Education, including related staffing costs and allocations to the seminaries on behalf of the denomination, shall be accounted for in the budget of the Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry.

### 4. Access

The Committee on Theological Education shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Access shall be in the form of resolutions, a yearly narrative report, comments on issues before the Assembly, and other appropriate correspondence. The yearly narrative report shall be forwarded to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee for possible comment. Institutional representatives serving on the Committee on Theological Education will represent COTE on a rotating basis with corresponding member status at meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

### 5. Assigned Functions

- a. To develop and maintain a comprehensive overview of theological education from the perspective of the whole church.
- b. To identify, develop, and propose strategies for a systemic approach to theological education within the denomination.
- c. To serve as an advocate before the whole church for theological education and to interpret the mission of the denomination's seminaries to the whole church.
- d. To provide a way for the church's needs to be addressed to the denomination's seminaries.
- e. To review the effectiveness and stewardship of the seminaries on behalf of the church.
- f. To encourage and enhance cooperation among the theological seminaries of the denomination.
- g. To relate the governing bodies and agencies of the PC(USA), particularly those which have responsibilities for theology and worship, for education, for candidacy, and for leadership development for pastors and church members.
- h. To maintain appropriate relationships with those responsible for theological education in other branches of the church catholic.
- i. To receive and act upon requests and recommendations from the church.
- j. To receive and review reports from the theological seminaries appropriate to the work of the committee;
- k. To identify the issues, needs, and opportunities of the seminaries, individually and corporately, and, where appropriate, address these as requests and recommendations to the church;
- l. To authorize use of Theological Education Fund monies, prepare an appropriate formula for disbursements to the theological seminaries of the PC(USA), and to advocate for financial support of the seminaries.
- m. To maintain relations with educational and ecumenical associations which share common concerns with the committee.
- n. To serve as an agency of the denomination for relating to theological seminaries other than those of the PC(USA).



## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- o. To recommend to the General Assembly those theological seminaries which shall qualify as members of the Committee on Theological Education.

### IX. Other Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Related Committees

The following committees have reporting relationships established by the General Assembly or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. If the chairperson of one of these committees wishes to address a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committee, he or she may request time from the chair of the mission committee prior to the meeting. Ordinarily, such requests will be granted subject to available time on the docket, and the relevance of the request.

#### A. *Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI)*

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is responsible for implementing General Assembly policy related to mission responsibility through investment. MRTI assists the church at all levels to utilize its investments as key instruments to promote its mission goals in society. MRTI provides leadership for effective engagement of the private sector in partnership with ecumenical colleagues in the United States, and in collaboration with indigenous churches, ecumenical bodies and local groups in other nations. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Justice Mission Committee.

#### B. *Mission Development Resources Committee (MDRC)*

The Mission Development Resources Committee makes decisions on Church Loans, Walton Awards for New Church Development and Mission Program Grants (New Church Development, Congregational Transformation and Specialized Ministries). Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board's Evangelism Mission Committee.

#### C. *Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee (PDA)*

The purpose of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee is to give policy advice, review the work, assist in setting strategic program direction and planning, and recommend an annual budget. This "is a ministry of relief and response to national and international disasters, aid to refugees and displaced persons, refugee resettlement and efforts toward development." This ministry is "carried out through ecumenical partnerships, related church agencies, middle governing bodies, and congregations." Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board's Justice Mission Committee.

#### D. *Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee (PHP)*

The purpose of the Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee is to guide the church's response to hunger and its underlying causes. The committee carries out the following tasks: 1) recommending Presbyterian Hunger Program operating guidelines, 2) making and reporting funding (grant) decisions within the approved guidelines; and 3) suggesting the development of programs and strategies for implementing the "Common Affirmation on Global Hunger," and other General Assembly policies related to hunger and poverty. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board's Justice Mission Committee.

#### E. *Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP)*

The National Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People provides the opportunity for the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and non-members to help establish partnerships with economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people in the United States and around the world, which helps them to develop toward their own potential, self-determination, and human dignity. (People who are not Presbyterian may be nominated, elected, and serve). The National Committee shares this ministry with [] [Mid Council] committees, as the focal point of the Church's efforts to promote the self-development concept and cause.

#### F. *Jinshian Memorial Program Governance Commission*

The Jinshian Memorial Program (JMP) is an endowed ecumenical ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and part of the World Mission ministry area, that supports ongoing programs benefitting Armenians in need in Armenia, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and Jerusalem. JMP has a U.S. Advisory Committee (USAC) composed of three individuals of Armenian descent, and two who are members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff. The Jinshian Memorial Program Governance Commission (JMPGC) acts on behalf of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in all matters that authorize and facilitate the implementation of JMP. The JMPGC is composed of the five voting members of the USAC, plus two current or previous Presbyterian Mission Agency Board elected members. The two elected Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members also serve as liaisons with the USAC with voice, but not vote.

### X. Temporary Special Committees, Task Forces or Work Groups

If Mission Committees, Stewardship Committee, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee or two or more of these committees determine a need for a temporary special committee, task force or work group that will involve Presbyterian Mission Agency Board membership and/or non-Presbyterian Mission Agency Board membership, a proposal shall be submitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board through the Executive Committee for approval. All proposals for temporary special committees, task forces and work groups shall include the following information:

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

1. Temporary special committee, task force or work group name.
2. Statement of purpose and tasks to be accomplished.
3. Explanation as to why these tasks cannot be accomplished by current GAMC committees.
4. Expertise, skills and experience needed by the members.
5. Duration of the committee, task force or work group shall not exceed two years.
6. Size of the committee, task force or work group. Ordinarily not to exceed seven members.
7. Annual budget with the source of funding.
8. Proposed names of the committee, task force or work force members with sensitivity to diversity.

The General Assembly Mission Council is connected to a variety of organizations and networks that further its ministry with congregations. Among those are groups that have established formal linkages with the General Assembly Mission Council through Covenants of Agreement and are designated as Covenant Groups. The General Assembly Mission Council has a responsibility to review the work of each Covenant Group regularly and renew its covenant, when appropriate, as stated in the specific Covenant Agreement.

[Detailed information is available on the GAMC Website at <http://gmc.pcusa.org/GAMC/covenants>.]

### XI. Missional Relationships

There are four categories of formal Presbyterian Mission Agency missional relationships:

- Institutional relationships
- Professional associations
- Missional Partnerships
  - GAMC organization wide
- Office partnerships

#### A. Institutional Relationships

Institutional Relationships are those between the General Assembly and another organization. In these cases, the Presbyterian Mission Agency is responsible for cultivating the relationship and requesting General Assembly approval, but the relationship isn't limited in scope to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. There are relatively few of these relationships. A covenant between PC(USA) and the other organization will place the relationship in the context of the church's missional directives, describe appropriate expectations for staff services and support, as well as note any special responsibilities granted as part of the relationship.

Approval: The General Assembly, upon recommendation by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

#### B. Professional Associations

Professional Associations are related organizations of church professionals within a given area of expertise. Professional associations also serve the missional purposes of the church, and in that context the Presbyterian Mission Agency role is one of recognizing and networking leaders. A relationship agreement between the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the other organization will place the relationship in the context of Presbyterian Mission Agency missional directives and describe appropriate expectations for Presbyterian Mission Agency staff services and support.

Approval: Executive Leadership Team, upon recommendation from the respective Deputy Executive Director's leadership team, for a four year term

Notification: GAMC

#### C. Presbyterian Mission Agency organization wide Missional Partnerships

Presbyterian Mission Agency organization wide Missional Partnerships are groups whose relationship with the Presbyterian Mission Agency is not limited to a single ministry area, but extends across the work of the Agency. Because covenanted groups carry out specialized ministries on behalf of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, their covenant is not established with an office, but rather with the Agency as a whole. These organizations are linked by common cause and a specific relationship to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. There are relatively few of these organizations, as most of missional partnerships are with particular offices. A covenant between the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the other organization will place the relationship in the context of Presbyterian Mission Agency missional directives, describe appropriate expectations for Presbyterian Mission Agency staff services and support, as well as note any special responsibilities granted as part of the relationship.

Approval: Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, upon recommendation of the Executive Leadership Team, for a four year term.

Notification: The General Assembly.

## D. Presbyterian Mission Agency Office Partnerships

Presbyterian Mission Agency Office Partnerships are relationships between a Presbyterian Mission Agency office or ministry area and another organization. These relationships are bound together by common cause and a specific relationship with another organization. An office partnership is typically limited in scope to a given office or ministry area. An office relationship document will place the relationship in the context of GAMC missional directives and describe appropriate expectations for Presbyterian Mission Agency staff services and support.

Approval: The Executive Leadership Team (ELT), upon recommendation from the Ministry Directors Team (MDT), for a term of four years.

Notification: GAMC

## Appendix 2

### Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff Organization

#### I. Mission Administration

##### A. *Office of the Executive Director*

The primary purpose of the office is to provide overall leadership and support for the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) working with and through the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the General Assembly Ministries. The office is divided into mission administration areas, one of which is shared with the Office of the General Assembly:

1. Executive Administrator's Office which includes, Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and Human Resources.
2. Internal Audit
3. Legal & Risk Management

##### **Shared with the Office of the General Assembly**

4. Mid Council Relations

##### B. *Deputy Executive Directors*

The General Assembly Ministries are led by three Deputy Executive Directors reporting to the Executive Director.

1. Deputy Executive Director for Mission
  - a. Evangelism and Church Growth
  - b. Compassion, Peace and Justice
  - c. Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women
  - d. Theology, Worship and Education
  - e. Vocation
  - f. World Mission
  - g. Research Services
2. Deputy Executive Director for Communications & Funds Development
  - a. Creative Services
  - b. Relationship and Development Operations
  - c. Executive Office on Policy Communications
  - d. Funds Development
  - e. Mission Communications
  - f. Mission Resources
  - g. Presbyterian News Service
  - h. Stewardship

3. Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services
  - a. Finance and Accounting
  - b. Information Technology
  - c. Presbyterian Center Services
  - d. Presbyterian Distribution Services

## II. General Assembly Ministries

### A. *Mission Ministries:*

#### 1. Evangelism and Church Growth

The Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry equips, empowers, and inspires individuals, congregations and governing bodies to share their personal faith in Christ and to become connected to a community of faith. This work is done in partnership with synods and presbyteries. Work area offices carry out this ministry by coaching and training leaders to plant new churches, to transform existing congregations, and to effectively share and live out the Gospel in our increasingly multicultural world.

#### 2. Compassion, Peace and Justice

The Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry seeks to support, assist and involve congregations and mid councils in ministries of compassion, justice, and peacemaking. This ministry responds to disasters, provides support for sustainable community development, and works to alleviate hunger and poverty nationally and around the world. It also addresses injustice in all arenas of life and advocates for just and peaceful solutions to situations of violence, conflict and oppression. This work is done in collaboration with mid councils, partner churches, ecumenical partners and community-based organizations. Work areas and offices carry out this ministry in a variety of ways, providing resources, supporting networks, sponsoring events that equip congregations to witness to God's healing and reconciling activity in the world.

#### 3. Racial Ethnic and Women Ministries/Presbyterian Women

The Racial Ethnic and Women Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry seek to develop leaders, to work for racial and gender justice and equality, and to cultivate Presbyterian communities of faith that truly reflect the increasing multicultural makeup of our society. Work areas and offices carry out this ministry through networks, events, publications, communication, advocacy, and financial support.

#### 4. Theology, Worship, and Education

The Theology, Worship, and Education Ministry assists the whole church in its common calling to explore the riches of the gospel, worship the one Triune God, and strengthen the ministries of the church. In partnership with congregations, presbyteries, and seminaries, Theology, Worship, and Education develops educational materials, worship resources, leader development programs, spiritual enrichment processes, and theological studies that support the church's faith and life. This Ministry also bears responsibility for Faith and Order ecumenical work on behalf of the entire Presbyterian Mission Agency.

#### 5. Vocation

The Office of Vocation is a shared ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly. Its mission is to provide ecclesiastical and programming support related to vocation and leadership for Presbyterian individuals, congregations, mid councils, and other partners. Its ministry includes support for presbyteries and congregations in the nurture of Christian Vocation; the preparation, credentialing, and support of church professionals; and the PCUSA call system.

#### 6. World Mission

The World Mission Ministry carries on the Presbyterian calling and tradition of sending missionaries, sharing and living out the gospel, and supporting partner Christian ministries around the globe. Work areas and offices in this ministry include supporting dozens of partner churches in many countries, working with international ecumenical bodies, and sending hundreds of full time, part time, and volunteer mission personnel to over 60 countries around the world. World Mission supports mission involvement throughout the PC(USA) by providing mission education, networking opportunities, opportunities to volunteer nationally, and leadership development for young adults serving nationally and internationally.

### B. *General Assembly Support Ministries*

#### 1. Communications and Funds Development

Communication and Funds Development Ministry communicates the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the role and activities regarding mission in the PC(USA). Communication and Funds Development encourages, implements, and guides stewardship and giving to fund the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the mission and ministry of connectional entities and agencies of the PC(USA).

## 2. Shared Services

Shared Services Ministry faithfully receives, records, and reconciles contributions offered to the church from congregations and presbyteries. Shared Services assists the ministry areas in budgeting, disbursing, documenting, and financial reporting. Shared Services prints, packages, mails, and distributes denominational materials to congregations, mid councils, and to mission fields across the nation and the world. Shared Services also provides support for, information technology, property management, and Presbyterian Center operations.

**Appendix 3****Public Statements by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board****I. Statements on Public Issues by Entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

- A. It is understood that duly constituted entities, boards, and councils may address statements or resolutions to the church or public officials, based on specified General Assembly actions, concerning matters clearly related to their assigned responsibilities. Such statements or resolutions may also be released to church and public news media.
- B. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board has been assigned a particular responsibility by the General Assembly to act on behalf of the General Assembly according to previously enacted General Assembly policies [between meetings of the General Assembly], reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions.' []. Since the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall, in effect, be acting on behalf of the General Assembly, clear procedure defining the occasions and process for preparing and approving interim statements addressed to the church or the public order on issues and events in the society are essential. While the procedure outlined below focuses on such interim statements, the interim actions of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall, of course, encompass a wider scope.

*Procedures Governing Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Interim Statements on Public Issues:*

1. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board policy on interim statements governs those occasions when the Board speaks to members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to public officials, or to other audiences on behalf of the General Assembly []. When the intent is to facilitate the church's understanding of a General Assembly policy or to encourage general support of that policy, an interim statement shall be prepared.
2. An interim statement is a formal statement of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board [issued] between meetings of the General Assembly on an event or issue in the public order that merits immediate response by the church. An interim statement should not be confused with statements issued by the Stated Clerk in fulfillment of the responsibility to interpret and communicate General Assembly actions, nor with personal statements that may from time to time be made by church officials.
3. Interim statements should be reserved for significant occasions rather than viewed as a routine responsibility. The following questions shall be used to evaluate the need for such statements:
  - a. Is this event or issue of sufficient gravity or moment to merit an interim statement by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board?
  - b. Is such a statement by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board deemed appropriate, timely, and helpful?
  - c. Are sufficient time and expertise available to prepare a credible and responsible interim statement on the matter?
4. Proposals for interim statements may be initiated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board itself or by any General Assembly entity, synod, or presbytery. Any proposals arising between meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be communicated to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director.
5. When the proposal is for an interim statement at a forthcoming regular meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, the following procedures shall apply:
  - a. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director shall refer the proposal to the appropriate person(s), depending on the subject, who shall prepare a recommendation concerning the need for an interim statement. If further action is appropriate, those persons in consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair, the Executive Director, and the Stated Clerk shall prepare a draft.
  - b. The draft of any proposed interim statement shall be circulated to members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in advance if possible; otherwise, at the beginning of the meetings.
  - c. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall review the proposed interim statement and recommend a method for considering it in the meeting.
  - d. Ordinarily, no final vote on an interim statement shall be taken until at least twenty-four hours following the circulation of a draft.
6. When the proposal for an interim statement arises during a meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, the following procedures shall apply:

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- a. The matter shall be referred immediately to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee which, in consultation with the persons named above in item “5.(a)” in attendance, shall report its recommendation to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board as to whether an interim statement is merited. The recommendation shall be based on consideration of the questions in section “3.” above.
  - b. If the proposal to issue an interim statement is approved, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair shall immediately appoint a small task group to prepare a draft, drawing upon particular competencies among the members and expertise of those present. They shall work in consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair, the Executive Director, and the Stated Clerk.
  - c. Consideration shall proceed as in items “5.c” and “5.d” above.
7. When the proposal is for an interim statement between meetings because of urgent need, the following procedures shall apply:
- a. The chair and vice chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Moderator of the General Assembly, in consultation with the appropriate persons depending on the subject, the Executive Director and the Stated Clerk may jointly agree that an interim statement is merited and authorize the preparation of a draft.
  - b. On completion of a draft, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair shall call a meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee, by telephone conference if necessary, to consider the proposed statement.
  - c. When the matter is of sufficient urgency in the judgment of those named in “[ ] [5].a” above, notification and the circulation of a draft here described can be compressed into one. In such case, the proposed statement shall be carefully read at the beginning of the special/called meeting, an explanation of the background circumstances shall be made, and the statement shall be read again before it is placed for debate.
  - d. All members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall ordinarily be notified of the proposed interim statement, and every attempt shall be made to circulate the draft in advance.
8. In all instances, a majority of those voting, provided a quorum is present, shall be sufficient to approve an interim statement.

### II. Other Statements by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

On other occasions, when the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is invited to endorse the statement of another recognized Presbyterian group or ecumenical partner, or when the council identifies an occasion when it wishes to speak on its own behalf, it may do so upon recommendation of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. In no case shall such a statement be made in contradiction of General Assembly action.

### Appendix 4

#### Open Meeting Policy

Approved by the 209th General Assembly (1997) – Amended by 218th General Assembly (2008)

1. The work of the church is strengthened when it is done in a spirit of openness and trust. Church members have a basic right to know about the work done and the decisions made by entities within the church. Church leaders have a basic responsibility to honor that right by conducting their business with a spirit of openness and vulnerability to public scrutiny. Therefore, open meetings shall be the norm for all such entities.
2. It is the policy of the General Assembly; the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the entities and work groups related to them, that their meetings shall be open to all interested persons. A separate policy exists for governing non-business gatherings. Documents being considered at such meetings shall be available to interested persons at the meeting.
3. In certain circumstances, when the confidentiality of the subject matter is impeding the open work of the group, its meetings may be closed. These requirements apply:
  - a. Subjects dealt with must be limited to property negotiation, personnel, civil and criminal litigation, including cases under the Rules of Discipline, or security.
  - b. Closed meetings may be authorized only after serious consideration and by a majority vote of the members present. Such closure must be limited in time and scope to matters in 3(a) above.
  - c. In closed meetings, only voting members and other persons invited by the group to serve it are to be present.
  - d. The reason(s) for closing must be announced before closure and also must be recorded in the minutes.
  - e. The decisions reached shall be recorded in the minutes, and shall be made public as soon as possible following the end of the closed meeting.
4. Since staff groups have neither authority nor responsibility for establishing policy; their meetings are not subject to these provisions. This does not preclude them from opening their meetings.

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5. The provisions of this policy shall apply to visitors and to representatives of both church and public media, including print, electronic and photographic journalists.
6. All the provisions of this policy are to be applied equitably to all persons and groups.
7. The Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is responsible for resolving questions relating to the application and interpretation of the open meeting policy.

A separate policy exists to govern non-business gatherings. Refer to Appendix 4A, Media and Visitor Policy for Non-business Gatherings.

Note: The 218th General Assembly (2008) directed the entities subject to the PC(USA) Open Meeting Policy to post the dates, times, and locations of their open meetings on the PC(USA) calendar Web page within a reasonable time of making such plans.

### **Appendix 4A**

#### Media and Visitor Policy for Non-Business Gatherings

Approved by the 212th General Assembly (2000)

Representatives of the media and visitors are welcome at non-business gatherings of groups structurally related to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Many non-business gatherings are intended to provide participants with the opportunity to openly examine personal and corporate issues of faith and life. Media representatives and visitors are asked to honor this atmosphere of openness and acceptance. If there is a business session within a non-business gathering, the open meeting policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall apply during that session.

The following policy pertains to non-business gatherings of groups structurally related to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

1. Media representatives will register as such, including the name of the publication or media outlet for which they are acting as a media representative. Media representatives and visitors should wear name tags identifying themselves as such during all portions of the gathering.
2. Media representatives will not be required to pay registration fees. They will be responsible for their own accommodations, meals, and transportation. Visitors will register and be required to pay appropriate fees.
3. Media representatives are observers and may not speak or actively participate in any portion of the gathering unless invited.
4. All plenary sessions are open.
5. All non-plenary sessions are also open. Media representatives and visitors are asked to identify themselves as such at the beginning of non-plenary sessions. In small groups whose purpose is the sharing of personal issues of faith and life, the discussion may be closed to media representatives and visitors at the choice of the small group participants.
6. The provisions of this policy shall apply to visitors and representatives of both church and public media, including print, electronic, and photographic journalists.
7. All the provisions of this policy are to be applied equitably to all persons and groups.
8. The Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is responsible for resolving questions relating to the application and interpretation of this policy.

### **Appendix 5**

#### **Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Awards Policy**

(Approved by the General Assembly Mission Council, September 1999, Revised September, 2007)

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, at various times and places, may present awards to honor persons or entities/organizations for outstanding achievements in relationship to the goals of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Listed below are guidelines to be followed for determining award recipients:

- A. Appropriate staff will (re)formulate written policies and procedures in the selection process for each award to be submitted for approval by the appropriate Mission Committee. Each award is to have a one-sheet explanation including criteria and process for determining the selection with periodic review and/or approval of changes (possibly included in covenants).
- B. Each selection committee will submit proposed recipients for each award to the appropriate Mission Committee along with the names of those serving on the selection committee and the written rationale for the proposed selection(s). This should be done prior to informing the proposed recipient(s) of their selection. The appropriate Mission Committee reviews the proposed recipient(s) in light of the ongoing commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be reformed and always reforming

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according to the Word of God and the Call of the Spirit, as well as to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitutional standards and policies. This should be done before the selection goes forward.

- C. All nominees should be submitted to the appropriate Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (or its successors) for its review. If the nominees cannot be named at a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting, the nominees will be sent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee for its action.
- D. The selection committees will report the results of their consideration of “Awards as issues to ponder” to the appropriate Mission Committee (see Appendix 5A and this response will be included in the minutes of the appropriate Mission Committee.
- E. In the event the selection committee’s nominee is not accepted by the appropriate Mission Committee, the selection committee may appeal that decision to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Appeals are limited to questions pertaining to compliance with award criteria.

### Appendix 5A

From the Report of the Awards Task Group to the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Mission Council, September 22, 1999:

#### **Awards as issues to ponder:**

... The work Group proposes that the following five items need to be pondered thoughtfully by the groups awarding and administering awards “within the scope of the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.” [See recommendation D.]

1. **Why give awards?** The answer seems to be simply, “to honor the person.” While this is part of an answer, the questions also asks for honesty regarding the motivation of the group giving the award. Is there a strong element of advocacy for a cause? The work group is convinced that we must remember that it is the Church of Jesus Christ which is involved in such activities.
2. **Develop an appropriate basis for each award.**
  - a. Scripture, particularly the Gospels, warn us about the dangers of seeking honor (Matthew 13:57 and parallels). “Honor” is most frequently used relating to reverence toward the Triune God.
  - b. In the Book of Confessions, the emphasis on honor to God is continued. Appropriate to our present concern are passages such as C-5.026, 5.258 (regarding government in the light of Romans 13), and C-7.237, 239, and .241, where honor for others is discussed.
  - c. The Directory for Worship offers what we found to be perhaps the most helpful comments regarding this situation in W-4.4-7001:

“Service given to the community beyond the particular mission of the church may be appropriately recognized as an expression of Christian discipleship with prayer and thanksgiving at a suitable time in an occasion of worship. Significant accomplishments in the lives of Christians or honors and other forms of recognition received by them may also occasions for such celebration with the community of faith.” [Note how this compares with W-4.1001, .2004, .3003, and .5002].
3. **How much staff time, money, and energy go into awards?** Our investigation suggested that the “costs” of awards tend to be hidden. Some awards are supported by dedicated funds for cash awards. Our concern is not with these, but primarily with the “costs” in staff time and energy. Most of the actual costs are considered “Office Expense”, and appear to be relatively minor.
4. **When and where should awards be given?** The giving of awards at a special ceremony was not part of the 211th General Assembly. There continue to be numerous breakfasts where awards are conferred. However, reflection on W-4.7001 suggests that the question of the appropriate venue for giving awards can be a fruitful enterprise. For example, when the Restorative Justice Award was given at a presbytery meeting, the person was honored as the value and importance of this aspect of mission were highlighted. The effect of this change of venue suggests the wisdom of careful reflection on the appropriate venue in the light of the purpose of the award as a recognition of commitment to mission.
5. **Can awards serve as models and/or inspiration?** We believe that the answer to this question is, “Yes,” when there has been careful review and preparation for the way in which each award is conferred, as well as where that is most appropriately done.

### Appendix 6

#### ETHICS POLICIES

##### **(Replaces Conflict of Interest Policy)**

The Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Mission Council is set out immediately below. The Ethics Policy for General Assembly Mission Council Employees is set out at <http://www.pcusa.org/GAMC/ethics.htm>

Ethics Policy for Elected<sup>1</sup> and Appointed Members of the  
General Assembly Mission Council and  
the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly  
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



**Introduction**

This Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Mission Council (“GAMC”) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (“COGA”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“Ethics Policy”) addresses business ethics and does not include the other ethical values and policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“PCUSA”).<sup>2</sup> The Ethics Policy applies to all elected and appointed members of the GAMC and COGA and members of their committees, task forces and workgroups in matters relating to the performance of their duties and responsibilities for the GAMC/COGA. Hereinafter the term “elected member” will be used to collectively refer to those individuals listed in Footnote 1 below. The term “GAMC/COGA” collectively refers to those two ecclesial bodies, their elected members, their respective staff members, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, and all subparts thereof.

All funds and property received and administered by the GAMC/COGA are entrusted to the organization by God through the faithful financial support of PCUSA members and friends. The highest degree of stewardship and fiduciary responsibility is expected of all elected members, including the receiving, reporting, and use of funds, property, and time. Elected members are responsible for complying with laws, regulations<sup>3</sup>, and GAMC/COGA and PCUSA policies and procedures.

*As an elected member, what does this Ethics Policy require of me?*

*The required standards of this Ethics Policy are set out in 1-6 immediately below. The forms and processes are set out in the five attachments.*

**Standards of Ethical Conduct**

1. **Duty of Loyalty and Care.** The duty of loyalty and care as well as the obligation of good stewardship requires all elected members to act first in the best interests of the GAMC/COGA rather than in the elected member's own interests or the interests of another entity or person. All elected members shall exercise reasonable efforts to inform themselves of the mission and ministry of the GAMC/COGA. All elected members shall act as a reasonable elected member would act under the same or similar circumstances. These responsibilities are set forth below.
2. **Conflicts of Interest.** All elected members shall avoid conflicts of interest, potential conflicts of interest, and situations that give even the appearance of a conflict of interest.<sup>4</sup>
  - a. **Definition.** “Conflict of interest” means any situation in which the elected member may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making or business dealings by any motive or desire for personal advantage other than the success and well-being of the GAMC/COGA. Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, whether direct or indirect. This standard applies to both actual and contemplated transactions. When in doubt, the elected member is to assume there might be a conflict and should raise the question pursuant to this Ethics Policy.
  - b. **Employment Ineligibility.** No GAMC elected member shall be eligible to become an employee of GAMC or otherwise render compensable services to the GAMC for the duration of their term. For purposes of this paragraph, resignation does not result in the premature end of term. For example, an elected person who resigns with one year left in his/her term continues to be prohibited from becoming an employee until the expiration of that remaining year. No COGA elected member shall be eligible to become an employee of OGA or otherwise render compensable services to OGA for the duration of their term. This prohibition does not apply to a member serving as an ex officio member of the GAMC or COGA. For purposes of this paragraph, resignation does not result in the premature end of term. Exceptions, however, may be made under the following two circumstances if the GAMC Executive Committee or COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) votes by 2/3 to allow the exception:
    - To facilitate development of specified projects through limited contracts of less than 18 months in duration. The elected member may be compensated under the contract.
    - To fill an officer or employee position on an interim or acting basis for two years or less. The elected member may be compensated for such service. The elected member must resign his/her elected position.
  - c. **Disclosure Deadlines.** All present and potential conflicts of interest issues must be disclosed in writing annually (See Attachment 1) and thereafter as they arise. If the conflict is known in advance of any meeting, business transaction, contract, or other activity at which issues may be discussed or on which the issues may have a bearing on the elected member’s approach, whether directly or indirectly, it shall be disclosed ahead of time and the elected member shall abstain from any participation in the discussion or decision. If the conflict is not known in advance, it shall be disclosed when the actual or potential conflict becomes apparent. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the chair/ moderator of the body and to the General Counsel. (See Attachment 2). See Attachment 5 for procedures to follow at meetings of the elected body or its committees, task forces and workgroups to document disclosure and action by disinterested members.
  - d. **Potential Conflicts of Interest.** All elected members are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing, matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of a conflict in business dealings with the GAMC/COGA. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial interests, leadership roles, or board membership with vendors and other organizations doing business with the GAMC/COGA. GAMC/COGA business dealings with an elected member’s friends and family<sup>5</sup> are particularly sensitive and are to be disclosed and carefully evaluated because of the potential for inferences of tangible or intangible personal advantage and the appearance of impropriety. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the chair/moderator of the body and to the General Counsel. (See Attachment 2).

- e. **Gifts and Relationship Building.** To avoid appearances of impropriety, any gifts, gratuities, special favors, and hospitality to an elected member shall not be accepted by any elected member from any person or organization that sells, delivers, or receives any goods, materials, or services to or from the GAMC/OGA. This prohibition includes those persons or organizations that desire to enter into such relationships with GAMC/OGA. **There are four exceptions to this rule:**
- (1) **Gifts, meals, outings, and relationship-building activities provided by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches, middle governing bodies, partner churches or related organizations** in connection with GAMC/OGA business. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
  - (2) **Gifts that primarily benefit the GAMC/OGA** and not an individual elected member, such as gifts of complimentary rooms given to the GAMC/OGA by hotels, conventions, and conferences in relation to official GAMC/OGA business. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
  - (3) **Occasional small gifts (less than \$50.00 in value,** such as flowers or foodstuffs) to an individual elected member. Where gifts are shared with other elected members or GAMC/OGA staff (e.g., foodstuffs set out for all to partake), then the gift is not deemed to be to an individual elected member. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.
  - (4) **Luncheons, dinners, outings, and relationship-building activities in connection with GAMC/OGA business may be received.** If an activity permitted under this section #4 results in a value of over \$100 to the elected member, the elected member shall promptly report this in writing to the chair of the body and to the General Counsel. Elected members shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount. The written report will include a description of the activity, the dollar value, the name of the person/organization providing it, and the business that person/organization does with GAMC/OGA. The General Counsel shall maintain a log that includes all of the written reports submitted under this section #4. This log will be available at all times to the GAMC Chair, the GAMC Executive Director, the COGA Moderator, the Stated Clerk and the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- f. **Process and Resolution.** All conflict of interest disclosures, reports, or questions are to be made promptly and in writing to the chair of the body and to the General Counsel. The General Counsel will consult with the chair of the body and the GAMC Executive Director or the Stated Clerk, as appropriate. After consultation, the General Counsel will make a recommendation to the GAMC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee, as appropriate. Those bodies provide the final decision on any elected member conflict of interest matters.
3. **Confidentiality of GAMC/COGA Information.** Elected members shall not disclose information about the GAMC/COGA that is not known outside of the GAMC/COGA or is not known by public means. Of course, it is expected that elected members will share certain GAMC/COGA information with other parts of the PCUSA, related entities and the public when asked to do so by the GAMC/COGA. If questions arise, the elected member should inquire of the chair of the body. If the chair/moderator of the body needs assistance, the General Counsel should be consulted by the chair/moderator.
  4. **Transactions, Reporting, and Document Retention.** Each elected member has a duty to prepare, process, maintain, and report complete, accurate, and timely records pertaining to their role, including, but not limited to, expense reports. This also includes safeguarding all physical, financial, informational, and other GAMC/COGA assets and records. Elected members shall comply with the Records Retention Schedule of the Office of the General Assembly's Department of History and related schedules as part of the normal course of business and use the schedules in a consistent and accountable manner for both records retention and destruction purposes. See [www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html](http://www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html). See also the Electronic Records Policy for GAMC and OGA (anticipated release in 2007). Any document relevant to actual or anticipated internal investigations, legal proceedings or governmental investigations (civil or criminal) must not be destroyed and must be preserved in a manner that would ease accessibility and retrievability of the document. In addition, elected members shall not direct or participate in establishment or maintenance of undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets, nor shall the elected member direct the making of any artificial or false entries in the financial or other records of the GAMC/COGA.
  5. **Duty to Disclose/Whistleblower Policy.** Elected members have a duty to report violations of this Ethics Policy, whether the violation is by themselves or by another. This includes, but is not limited to, financial, accounting, or auditing irregularities. See Attachment 2 for Self-reports. See Attachment 3 for Whistleblower Reports concerning others. See Attachment 4 for Procedures for processing a Whistleblower Report. Likewise, concerns about the appearance or the possibility of violations should be reported. Care must always be taken to be factual and objective. Violations shall be reported promptly in writing to the General Counsel, and may be reported anonymously. **Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877** (operable May 2, 2007). An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation. (If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of his staff members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor.)
    - (a) **No Retaliation.** There shall be no retaliation within GAMC/COGA for good faith complaints, reports, participation in an investigation or for providing truthful information relating to an alleged violation of this Ethics Policy. In addition, there will be no retaliation where an elected member makes a good faith report of the commission or possible commission of any criminal offense to a law enforcement officer. Elected members are protected even if the allegations are mistaken or unsubstantiated, as long as the elected member reasonably believes the reported conduct constitutes a violation of the Ethics Policy. One who makes a claim or report under this Whistleblower Policy in bad faith, or knows or has reason to know that such claim or report is false or materially inaccurate may be subject to disciplinary sanctions by the governing body with jurisdiction over the elected member.

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- (b) **Confidentiality of Investigation.** Reports under this Whistleblower Policy will be treated confidentially with disclosures made on a need-to-know basis only to those directly involved in the investigation of the reported concern. To the extent possible within limitations of the law, policy and the need to conduct a competent investigation, confidentiality will be maintained.
- 6. **Violations.** Violation or noncompliance with this policy may result in discipline by the council with jurisdiction over the elected member.
- 7. **Amendments.** The Ethics Policy may be amended from time to time. In consultation with the General Counsel, the GAMC Executive Director and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate) are authorized to make reasonable and necessary changes to this Ethics Policy. Substantive changes must be reported back to the elected body approving this Ethics Policy. Editorial changes need not be reported back.
- 8. **Designees.** Where this Ethics Policy assigns a duty to a particular officer or staff position, that officer or staff position may use a designee to complete the duties.
- 9. **No Waiver by GAMC/COGA.** Nothing in this Ethics Policy shall be construed to waive any claim, assertion or defense of the GAMC/COGA to exemption or exclusion from applicability of a statute and/or regulation or lack of jurisdiction of a civil court or governmental agency.
- 10. **Trainings.** Trainings to familiarize the elected members with this Ethics Policy and its related forms and procedures will be conducted for GAMC/COGA elected members by the Legal Services Office as frequently as deemed necessary by the GAMC Chair and COGA Moderator, as appropriate.

Endnotes for Appendix 6

- 1. The term “elected members” collectively means elected and appointed members and members of their committees, task forces and workgroups.
- 2. For other policies, see the Standards of Ethical Conduct approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- 3. Federal and state constitutional religious free exercise provisions, as well as laws and ordinances, exempt religious organizations from some laws. An elected member should consult with the General Counsel if such questions arise.
- 4. Personal investments with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., or employee benefits provided by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are not considered a conflict of interest.
- 5. “Family” includes the elected member’s spouse, parents, siblings, spouses of siblings, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, the spouses of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, any other blood relative, and individuals who live in the elected member’s home.

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**Annual Ethics Policy Representation by Elected and Appointed Members**  
**(Annual Report)**

*This form is to be completed annually and signed by all “elected members” of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board /Committee On the Office of the General Assembly as defined in the Ethics Policy. Upon completion, send it to the General Counsel.*

- I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and COGA (*Ethics Policy*) dated , 2007.
- I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the Ethics Policy and any revisions made to it.
- I understand:
  - ▶ I am subject to the Ethics Policy and am required to comply with it.
  - ▶ I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me, is reported to me, or that I observe.
  - ▶ I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any whistleblower reports I receive under the Ethics Policy, as well as any other violations of the Ethics Policy I observe.

Initial all of the following statements that apply:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am not aware of any violations of the Ethics Policy that involve me or that I have observed in regards to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ No employee or elected member has submitted a whistleblower report or a self-report to me that I have not reported already to the General Counsel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or that I have observed in regards to others. By submitting the information immediately below, I am reporting the alleged violation.

Name of employee, elected member, or organization with the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_.

Facts of the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please print)

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**Report of Ethics Policy question, violation, or possible violation**  
**in regards to the reporting elected or appointed member**  
**(Question/Self-report)**

This form is to be completed, signed, and sent to the General Counsel and the chair of GAMC or COGA moderator, as appropriate by "elected members" as that term is defined in the Ethics Policy. It is important to report questions promptly. Generally, the chair/moderator of the body, Executive Director of the GAMC and the Stated Clerk, as appropriate, and the General Counsel will consult with the elected member to resolve the conflict of interest, if any.

I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or I have a question about the Ethics Policy as it involves me.

1. Elected Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Facts about the elected member's possible violation or the question presented:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Date the elected member became aware of the possible violation or question: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to**  
**another elected member, an employee, or organization**

This form is to be completed, signed (unless submitted anonymously), and sent to the General Counsel. The term "elected member" is defined in the Ethics Policy. **Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877.** An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation.

I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves another elected member, an employee, or an organization.

1. Name of person(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Name of organization(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Facts about the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Date the elected member became aware of the possible violation: \_\_\_\_\_

***(DO NOT SIGN IF BEING SUBMITTED ANONYMOUSLY)***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACHMENT 4**

**Procedures for processing a Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to another elected member, an employee, or an organization**

- A. All reports under the Whistleblower Policy (See the Ethics Policy) shall be submitted in writing promptly to the General Counsel. **Anonymous whistleblower reports may be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877.** An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation. If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of his staff members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor. The General Counsel will decide if the reported activity, if confirmed, would be an Ethics Policy violation, a possible violation of a policy or procedure not covered by this Ethics Policy, or a matter to be processed through another avenue, typically supervisor review with a report to the General Counsel. If the General Counsel decides the report will not be processed under this Ethics Policy, the General Counsel will respond to the accuser unless the report was filed anonymously. The General Counsel shall keep a log of all reports received under the Whistleblower Policy. Whether or not an investigation was done, the log will include the resolution of all reports. The log will be available at all times to the Chair of GAMC, the Moderator of COGA, and the Chair of the Audit Committee. If the person reporting is simply confused about an issue and how it applies, then the General Counsel will ensure clarification is provided by the chair of the body or the General Counsel. If the chair of the body provides a written response to the elected member, a copy of the response will be provided to the General Counsel.
- B. All other reports shall be initially reviewed by a three-person committee (Investigative Committee) comprised of the General Counsel, the Internal Auditor and a third person appointed by the GAMC Chair or COGA Moderator (as appropriate). The Investigative Committee will first determine whether or not an investigation is warranted. If it is not, the Investigative Committee shall so report. If an investigation is warranted, the Investigative Committee shall proceed as set forth below.
- C. The following processes shall apply to an investigation conducted by the Investigative Committee:
  - 1. If the report alleges a violation by a GAMC elected member, then the GAMC Chair and the GAMC Executive Director shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by a COGA elected member, then the COGA Moderator and the Stated Clerk shall be notified an investigation has commenced.
  - 2. If the report alleges a violation by the GAMC Chair, then the vice-chair and the GAMC Executive Director shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by the COGA Moderator, then the vice-chair and the Stated Clerk shall be notified an investigation has commenced.
  - 3. The Investigative Committee shall be allowed to retain the services of experts it may need to conduct a reasonably thorough investigation.
  - 4. The Investigate Committee may recommend administrative leave for any involved employees while the investigation is in process.
  - 5. The Investigative Committee will promptly conduct its work. The typical investigation will include the following steps:
    - a. Interview all parties involved with relevant knowledge, including but not limited to the accuser and the accused (if possible). Secure and review any relevant documents or other communications (if available and appropriate).
    - b. Determine if there is a potential for risk to persons or property. If there is a potential risk, take reasonable measures as appropriate to protect those persons and property.

Complete a written report of the findings and recommendations, (including discipline of the elected member). The Investigative Committee will provide a copy of its report (including all relevant documents) to the Audit Committee. At the same time the report is submitted to the Audit Committee, copies will be provided to the accused and the accuser. The chair/moderator of the body and the GAMC Executive Director or Stated Clerk (as appropriate) will also receive a copy. Generally, the accused and the accuser will have seven business days to submit written comments to the Audit Committee in response to the Investigative Committee’s written report. The Chair of the Audit Committee may extend this period if such an extension is reasonably necessary.
  - 6. All elected members and employees are required to fully cooperate with these investigations, and shall not be retaliated against by supervisors or anyone for cooperating and participating in the investigation.
  - 7. The Audit Committee shall consider all the submissions promptly and reach a conclusion. While the Audit Committee does not have the authority to discipline elected members of GAMC/COGA, its decision shall include any recommendations in that regard. GAMC or COGA, as appropriate, shall give great weight to the decision of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall make a full report of the matter to the GAMC Executive Committee and the Executive Director or the COGA Coordinating

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Committee and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate). Thereafter, the GAMC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) will affirm, modify, or reverse the decision of the Audit Committee. In reaching its decision, the GAMC Executive Committee or the COGA Coordinating Committee (as appropriate) may also hear from any of the following as it deems fit: the accused, the accuser, the Investigative Committee, and others it deems relevant.

8. GAMC/COGA will ensure that whistleblower reports submitted under this Ethics Policy are dealt with impartially and confidentially. To that end, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis so as to fulfill the process. Any elected member who violates the confidentiality of this process shall be subject to disciplinary action by the body with jurisdiction over the elected member.
9. GAMC/COGA prohibit retaliation, including but not limited to making any threatening communication by verbal, written, or electronic means, against anyone who reports in good faith or provides any information concerning violations of the Ethics Policy or applicable state or federal laws or who provides truthful information relating to the commission or possible commission of any criminal offense to a law enforcement officer. GAMC/COGA will not discipline any elected member where the elected member in good faith (or any person acting pursuant to the request of the elected member) reports, discloses, testifies, or otherwise informs GAMC/COGA, pursuant to this Ethics Policy, of a violation by an elected member, employee, or organization.

Any elected member found engaging in retaliation will be subject to discipline by the body with jurisdiction over the elected member.

### **ATTACHMENT 5 Meeting Procedure**

Actions taken by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and COGA are recorded in minutes. [ ]. If an employee, officer or elected member has a conflict of interest with regard to a proposed transaction under consideration at the meeting, that person shall leave the meeting and henceforth refrain from discussing or voting on the matter. The person with the conflict of interest may, however, respond to questions posed by an elected member. The minutes must reflect:

1. the date of the meeting;
2. the names of employees, officers and/or elected members with conflicts of interest regarding the proposed transaction;
3. the names of those who left the meeting;
4. the names of those members who voted on the matter;
5. description of data obtained and relied upon by the GAMC or COGA and how the data was obtained;
6. if the transaction is approved between Presbyterian Mission Agency Board /COGA and the person with a conflict of interest, the basis for the approval (include any difference in comparability data and value of transaction to Presbyterian Mission Agency Board /COGA and how that affected the approval); and
7. terms of the transaction as approved.

### **Appendix 7 Procedures to Follow When a Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director Vacancy Occurs**

#### **I. Executive Director, Presbyterian Mission Agency**

When an Executive Director announces the intention to retire, resign, not be available for another term, or there is an unexpected vacancy, the following process shall be followed:

##### *A. Resignation Procedures*

1. The chair of the council confers with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee regarding next steps.
2. The decision is announced on a schedule agreed to by the Executive Director and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee, and other such persons as may be deemed necessary, shall conduct an exit interview with the Executive Director.

##### *B. Unexpected Vacancy*

The chair of the council contacts the Executive Committee and together they will take all steps deemed necessary in regard to temporary leadership of the [Presbyterian Mission Agency]. These actions shall be binding until the next meeting of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

##### *C. Interim Procedures*

1. The chair of the Board will meet with the staff of the Office of the Executive Director and the Executive Leadership Team to explain procedures, hear concerns, answer questions, and seek their suggestions.

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2. The Executive Committee in consultation with appropriate persons, determines the need for an Interim Executive Director, begins the selection process if it is determined that an Interim Executive Director is needed, and recommends an Interim Executive Director to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee for appointment. An Interim Executive Director cannot be called to be the next Executive Director unless a full inclusive search was conducted for the interim.

### D. Search Procedures

1. A search committee composed of seven members of the Board shall be elected by the council. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee shall nominate the membership of the committee, including a chair, representative of the diversity of the council.
2. In order for the General Assembly Committee on Representation to carry out its assigned functions, G-3.0103, a representative of the committee may participate in meetings of special committees elected by the General Assembly or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to select nominees for Executive Director during discussions of the position description, advertising, and interview procedures. Discussions of the qualifications of individual candidates and interviews of candidates shall be closed to members of the Committee on Representation unless invited as provided in section 3.(a & c) of the Open Meeting Policy (refer to Appendix 11).
3. When the candidate for Executive Director is being nominated to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for election, the Board shall be provided with the following:
  - a. a brief biographical sketch;
  - b. a personal statement of faith;
  - c. reason(s) candidate is deemed to be suitable for the position;
  - d. the candidate's goals for the term of office.
4. The search, nomination, election, and confirmation proceeds as per the *Organization for Mission*: "the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency shall be elected by the Board, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly." The search, nomination, election, and confirmation shall be guided by the *Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action*. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly. (*Organization for Mission*, Section V.G.)

## II. Deputy Executive Directors

- A. Deputy Executive Directors are selected and hired by the Executive Director, using a search committee that includes elected members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and subject to a confirmation vote by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Deputy Executive Directors do not have a term.
- B. When the Deputy Executive Director is being submitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for confirmation, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be provided with the following:
  - a brief biographical sketch;
  - a personal statement of faith;
  - reason(s) the individual is deemed to be suitable for the position;
- C. If a vacancy in a Deputy Executive Director position occurs and the Executive Director desires to fill the position on an interim basis, the position will be filled subject to a confirmation vote by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. An interim Deputy Executive Director cannot be hired to be the next Deputy Executive Director unless a full, inclusive search was conducted for the interim.

### **Appendix 8 Comprehensive Performance Review Processes for the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency**

#### I. Introduction

The purpose of all performance reviews described in these processes is to discuss, share, and assess goals, performance, successes, and challenges related to the work of the Executive Director ("ED"). The Executive Committee will conduct the annual reviews of the ED described in these Processes during any four-year term of each ED. The Executive Committee may conduct these performance reviews or may appoint a subcommittee of its members. In either instance, the review shall be led in that process by the vice-chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. For purposes of these Processes, "EC" means either the Executive Committee or a subcommittee of the EC members, unless specified otherwise. Suggested deadlines for the Processes described below are attached in the Guidelines at Attachment A.

#### II. First and Third-Year Performance Reviews

- A. Purpose of the Reviews
  1. The purpose of a first-year performance review is to provide support for the newly elected or newly re-appointed ED, to correct any perceived missteps, to identify potential problems, to celebrate accomplishments, to listen to and identify potential issues, and to set goals for the second year of the term.

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2. The purpose of the third-year performance review is to discuss and share successes and challenges, goals and performance related to the work of the ED. A particular goal of the third-year review is to evaluate the ED's eligibility and willingness to serve for an additional four-year term.
- B. These performance reviews shall be conducted as follows:
1. The ED will provide to the EC a self-evaluation at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date set for the EC to meet with the ED to discuss his/her annual evaluation.
  2. In preparing the annual evaluation, the Executive Committee (EC) acting as the Personnel Committee will solicit comments and input from GAMC elected members, in addition to selected GAMC staff, Mid council executives and clerks, and chief administrative officers of other GA agencies and corporations. All input that is received prior to the announced deadline will be considered.
  3. A confidential written summary of the evaluation with goals and objectives shall be prepared by the vice-chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, who will meet with the ED to discuss it. Both the vice-chair and the ED will sign the summary and it will be placed in the ED's personnel file.
  4. A summary of the evaluation shall be presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in closed session during the Board's next regular meeting.

### III. Second-Year and Fourth-Year Performance Reviews

- A. Purpose of the Reviews
1. The purpose of the second-year performance review is to build on the previous year's experience, to provide constructive support, to strengthen partnerships and to plan for the next two (2) years. This mid-term review provides an opportunity for selected individuals to comment on performance strengths and weaknesses, progress made in meeting goals, and any desirable mid-course corrections.
  2. The purpose of the fourth-year review is to evaluate the performance of the entire four-year term and to prepare for the next term.
- B. The performance review shall be conducted as follows:
1. The EC shall develop review instruments which shall contain questions and areas of inquiry targeted to each specific group identified in paragraph 2, below. The instruments shall be available to the ED and the EC three (3) months prior to the review date and before they are sent to those who are selected to respond to them. The EC may select a subcommittee chaired by the vice-chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to create the review instruments even if the full EC will conduct the annual review of the ED.
  2. Participants in the review process shall include all Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and a random selection of persons in the following categories:
    - a. Presbyterian Mission Agency staff (both exempt and nonexempt);
    - b. Mid Council executives and clerks; and
    - c. The chief administrative officers of the other General Assembly agencies and corporation.
  3. Comments in response to the review instruments shall be shared in summary with the ED during the annual review meeting; however, the names of the persons making comments shall be held in confidence by the EC.
  4. The ED shall submit to the EC a written self-evaluation at least forty-five (45) days prior to the EC's final review meeting with the ED, noting the following:
    - a. For the second-year review the self-evaluation shall include goals and objectives for the remaining two (2) years of the term.
    - b. For the fourth-year review the evaluation shall include goals and objectives for the next four-year term, if appropriate and warranted.
  5. The results of the second-year review shall be shared by the EC in a face-to-face interview with the ED at or before the summer EC retreat. A summary of the review shall be presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in closed session at the Board's next regular meeting.
  6. The results of the fourth-year review shall be shared by the EC in a face-to-face interview with the ED at or before the spring Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting. A summary of the review shall be presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in closed session at the spring Board meeting. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board will vote whether or not to elect the ED to an additional four-year term and, if it votes in favor election, the Board will send the action forward to the General Assembly by or before the forty-five (45) day General Assembly Standing Rule deadline.



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7. A confidential written summary of the review with goals and objectives shall be prepared by the vice-chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Both the vice-chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the ED will sign the summary and it will be placed in the ED’s personnel file.

**IV. Exit Interview**

When an Executive Director leaves the position, the EC will conduct an exit interview. (Appendix 7)

**Attachment A**

The Executive Director’s Annual Review Process begins the year following the General Assembly and continues yearly through the four-year term. For example, following the 219th General Assembly (2010), the first annual review would take place in July 2011 at the Executive Committee Retreat; second year (or mid-term) review – July 2012; third year review – July 2013; and fourth year (or end-of-term) review – in time for the Spring meeting of the GAMC (May 2014).

**GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS**

<b>Year 1 of Executive Director’s Term</b>	
45 days before summer Executive Committee Retreat	ED sends self-evaluation to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
End of summer Executive Committee Retreat 1 year after appointment or re-appointment of ED	Review completed & discussed with ED
Fall GAMC Meeting	Summary of ED’s evaluation presented to GAMC
<b>Year 2 of Executive Director’s Term (mid-term)</b>	
3 months before the summer Executive Committee Retreat	Review instruments made available to ED and to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
45 days before summer Executive Committee Retreat	ED sends self-evaluation to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
End of summer Executive Committee Retreat	Review completed & discussed with ED
Fall Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Meeting	Summary of ED’s evaluation presented to Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
<b>Year 3 of Executive Director’s Term</b>	
45 days before summer Executive Committee Retreat	ED sends self-evaluation to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
End of summer Executive Committee Retreat	Review completed & discussed with ED
Fall Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Meeting	Summary of ED’s evaluation presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
<b>Year 4 of Executive Director’s Term (end-of-term)</b>	
3 months before spring Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting	Review instruments made available to ED and to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
45 days before spring Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting	ED sends self-evaluation to EC or subcommittee of EC for review
Spring Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting	Review completed & discussed with ED. Summary of ED’s evaluation presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board takes action regarding the election of the ED and, if elected, sends action forward to GA by 45-day General Assembly Standing Rule deadline
Summer GA meeting	GA votes on concurring with the GAMC action

**Appendix 9**

**Guidelines for Joint Meetings of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee**

**Scheduling and Format**

1. The joint meeting shall be comprised of the members of the full Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
2. The responsibility to schedule the date and prepare the agenda will be determined together by the COGA moderator, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair, the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Stated Clerk. They also shall determine which staff will be present.
3. The moderator of COGA and the chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board will co-moderate the meeting. The moderator of COGA will ensure that minutes are taken and distributed in a timely manner. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be responsible for logistical details.
4. The meeting shall be held annually.
5. The need for additional meetings shall be determined and called as agreed upon by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chair and the COGA moderator.

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6. The joint meetings primarily should be a time of dialogue about mutual concerns and of input to the deliberative process.
7. Each meeting should begin with a time of “getting to know you” and community building; at the least, each meeting should include some time in a less formal setting, such as where people are NOT seated at tables.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Emerging issues in the church and General Assembly
2. Significant work for the coming twelve months
3. Reflection and evaluation of the last General Assembly and early planning or brainstorming for the next General Assembly
4. Discussion of future themes for General Assembly
5. Progress reports and input on the work of any joint work groups

### Approval

Once the guidelines have been approved by both the executive committees (at separate meetings), they shall be in effect until modified or rescinded. These guidelines shall be reported to the full GAMC and [] [C]OGA and shall be placed in their respective manuals.

### APPROVED COGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 4 JAN. 1995 ♦ PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 6 JANUARY 1995

Revised: September 2011

## Appendix 10

### General Assembly Per Capita Apportionment

#### Description of Per Capita

In order to give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity’, per capita is the responsible way of sharing the costs that equitably belong to the whole Presbyterian Church community expressing the essential unity of the church. The payment of per capita apportionment can be seen as a sign of healthy relationships within the church, giving tangible witness to the unity and wholeness promised to us in Jesus Christ.

The General Assembly per capita apportionment can be documented historically in the Presbyterian Church since the mid-1800s when a plan of mileage was adopted by the General Assembly in order to defray the expenses of commissioners attending meetings of the General Assembly. Over the ensuing years, per capita has been defined in various documents and reports as being used to fund ecclesiastical and administrative functions. The costs of these functions are appropriately shared by the whole church.

The chronology of per capita development in the twentieth century shows that General Assemblies took action to expand the spectrum of functions that the General Assembly per capita finances. Beginning in the early 1920s, the General Assembly voted to enlarge the office of the General Assembly to include various program departments that served the whole church. In the process, the General Assembly agreed to finance related administrative expenses through the General Assembly per capita apportionment. The planning, coordination, and review of mission were included in the former United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1973, and this has been assembly policy for the reunited church since 1983.

#### Definition

Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian Church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission as well as the cost of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.

#### Per Capita Budget Funding

##### Office of the General Assembly

- General Assembly meetings
- Office of the General Assembly
- Ecumenical participation
- Department of History
- Fair share of mission support expenses

##### Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

- Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings
- Administration, planning, coordination of the Presbyterian Mission Agency
- Work of the Advocacy and Advisory Committees
- Communications
- Fair share of mission support expenses

**Procedures for Per Capita Budget**

1. General Assembly Per Capita Budget
  - a. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board have joint responsibility for submitting to the General Assembly a budget to be supported by per capita. They also will submit an analysis of income supporting the budget and will recommend a per capita rate. The analysis will include anticipated receipts from per capita, an itemized estimate of all revenues anticipated from other sources, and the type and amount of funds on hand.
  - b. A Joint Budget Table will be convened on the call of either COGA or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to make recommendations on unresolved matters.
2. Provision for a Joint Budget Table
  - a. The Joint Budget Table, consisting of equal representation from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), will consider unresolved matters related to the per capita budgets and will recommend resolution to their respective bodies.
  - b. When COGA and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the budget and the per capita rate as recommended by the Joint Budget Table, COGA and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board will submit jointly the budget and apportionment rate to the General Assembly. If agreement is not reached on particular issues, the report to the General Assembly will articulate the respective position of the two bodies.
  - c. When necessary, the Joint Budget Table may recommend revisions to the total approved per capita budget. Revisions must be approved by both bodies.
  - d. Any revisions increasing the total budget funded by the per capita will be recommended by the Joint Budget Table to COGA and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for approval. This increase cannot exceed three (3) percent of the total budget.

**Appendix 11****Policy and Procedures for Submitting Changes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations****I. Purpose of this Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide for consistency among the manuals of the committees accountable to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and consistency of all manual of operations with the current *Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Manual of Operations*, the *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, and any other pertinent documents.

**II. Policy and Procedures**

- A. Individual Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members may submit proposed changes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Manual of Operations in writing to the Executive Committee's Procedures Subcommittee chair a minimum of one (1) month prior to a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting.
- B. The Committee of the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) shall submit its substantial\* proposed changes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board *Manual of Operations* through its own customary process.
- C. The Procedures Subcommittee shall respond to submissions a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting, and may recommend alterations to be made to the proposed changes to ensure consistency with existing Presbyterian Mission Agency Board documents.
- D. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), or the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), which are accountable to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, shall submit substantial\* proposed changes to its manual of operations to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, through the Procedures Subcommittee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee, following customary procedures, for adoption or rejection.

**III. Approval Process**

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board may change those appendices to the *Manual of Operations* that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, [] [followed by] adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendices to the next General Assembly.

Changes to the Manual of Operations, Sections I through VI, and appendix 4 require the approval of the General Assembly. Changes to Appendices 6, 9 and 10 require the approval of both the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and COGA.

\* "Substantial" changes are defined as non-editorial changes that alter the organization or functioning of the named entity.

## Appendix 12

## Presbyterian Mission Agency Program Review

[Text for this appendix is still being determined and will not be presented to this General Assembly.]

## Appendix 13

## Gift Acceptance Policy

## Presbyterian Mission Agency

## Approved by Executive Leadership Team 1/9/2012

- I. Mission of Organization** – The Presbyterian Mission Agency is the body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which is responsible to lead and coordinate the total mission program of the General Assembly. The Presbyterian Mission Agency cultivates, attracts, receives and disburses funds from donors to serve Christ’s mission. Presbyterian Mission Agency core values are collaboration, accountability, responsiveness, and excellence. The Presbyterian Mission Agency operates through the General Assembly’s principal corporation, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (“**PC(USA)**”).
- II. Purpose of Policy** – The purpose of this gift acceptance policy (“**Policy**”) is to define and communicate with donors the types of gifts that the GAMC is able to accept and administer and to be transparent with donors regarding the uses of their gifts.
- III. Donor’s use of legal counsel** – PC(USA) does not provide personal legal, financial or other professional advice to donors or prospective donors (collectively referred to as “**Donors**”). Donors are strongly encouraged to seek the assistance of their own professional advisors in matters related to their gifts and the resulting tax and estate planning consequences.
- IV. PC(USA) use of legal counsel** – PC(USA) seeks the advice of outside legal counsel as its Office of Legal Services deems appropriate on matters relating to acceptance of gifts.
- V. Gift Restrictions** -- Your gift will be used for the purpose presented by the Presbyterian Mission Agency unless the project becomes over-subscribed, impracticable, impossible, illegal or inappropriate to the mission of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. In those cases, your donation will be used to support a similar ministry or held to support the same ministry in a future year. This is done so that your donation will support ministry where it is needed most and your gift will have the biggest impact.
- VI. Types and forms of gifts that the organization will accept** – The GAMC is thankful for the many ways that donors give to support the work of Jesus Christ in this broken world.

**Acceptable gifts include:**

- **Cash** (Cash, Checks, Wire Transfers, and Credit Cards)
- **Marketable Securities:** Marketable securities will be sold as soon as possible after acceptance. The PC(USA) can receive securities, including mutual fund shares (1) in certificate form, (2) via direct transfer from brokerage accounts, or (3) from direct purchase stock plans.

In some circumstances, and only with pre-approval, the PC(USA) may also accept non-traditional assets. These assets can only be accepted if there is an expectation that they can be converted into cash within a reasonable amount of time. Gifts with inappropriate restrictions—those which are not in the best interest of the PC(USA)—shall not be accepted.

Gifts of non-traditional assets may be facilitated through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation. Acceptable non-traditional assets might include:

- **Tangible Property** (only if there is no storage or insurance cost and the property is easily liquidated)
- **Real Estate** (a review will be made of marketability, environmental risks and any limitations or encumbrances on the title. The costs associated with the conveyance and delivery of the gift, including, but not limited to recording fees, inspection fees, current survey, title insurance and/or an attorney’s title opinion, will be paid by the Donor or taken from the net proceeds of the sale.)
- **Patents or Royalties** All gifts must fall within ethical guidelines of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and meet all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations.

**VII. Reporting Requirements** – Internally, individual program areas and partner agencies will receive a monthly report of receipts in order to recognize and thank Donor activity. Additional internal reports for goal-setting and management purposes will also be produced.

Externally, each Donor will receive an Internal Revenue Service compliant receipt acknowledging their gift. PC(USA) will comply with applicable federal, state, and local law with regard to reporting gifts.

In addition to periodic programmatic reports and the Annual Report, Donors can request detailed information on programmatic emphases supported by their gift.

**VIII. Adherence to ethical standards** – Presbyterian Mission Agency adheres to the Code of Ethics (<http://www.afpnet.org/files/ContentDocuments/CodeofEthics.pdf>) and Donor Bill of Rights

(<http://www.afpnet.org/files/ContentDocuments/Donor%5FBill%5Fof%5FRights.pdf>) established by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

- IX. Gift Acceptance Committee** – The Executive Leadership Team (“ELT”) of the Presbyterian Mission Agency shall serve as the Gift Acceptance Committee (“Committee”) for purposes related to this Policy. As such the Committee has the authority to handle inquiries, negotiate with donors, assemble documentation, and execute agreements on behalf of PC(USA). Such activities must follow approved procedures, and legal counsel must advise on exceptions to established practice. If these prerequisites are fulfilled, no further review or approval of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is required. The Committee may delegate any and all aspects of the Donor inquiry and agreement process to Presbyterian Mission Agency staff. The Committee shall review any and all proposed gifts which constitute an exception to the standards outlined in this Policy as well as all proposed gifts of non-traditional assets. The Committee shall also make recommendations to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on gift acceptance issues when appropriate.
- X. Annual review – This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Procedures Sub-committee, upon collecting feedback from Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff. Changes will be submitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for approval, through the Board’s Executive Committee.

## GLOSSARY

**Advisory Committee**—A committee related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing advice, recommendations, information, or counsel to its parent body.

**Advisory Member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board**—Advisory members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board have voice, but not vote during the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board plenary. They are assigned to a mission committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and have both voice and vote in committee.

**Advocacy Committee**—A committee related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing and support for a stated cause, constituency, policy, or defined interest through recommendations, advice, counsel, and efforts that endorse, define, or encourage. The committee reports regularly to its parent body and constituency.

**Agency**—An organization, office, operation, or institution that performs or provides a service for the church or one or more of its governing bodies.

**At-large Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Stewardship Committee and Audit Committee**—Each of these committees have at-large members of the committee who are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee from the church-at-large for the purpose of providing appropriate expertise to the committee. They are elected to the committee by the General Assembly for a two-year term, with eligibility for two additional terms. While not members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, they are granted the privilege of the floor during the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board plenary on matters related to their particular expertise.

**Committee**—A group of persons, elected or appointed, with a specified responsibility.

**Committee of Counsel**—A committee proscribed by the Book of Order (see D-6.0302) which shall be designated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, an entity of the General Assembly, or a council when it becomes either a complainant or a respondent to a remedial action in front of a Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A Committee of Counsel shall consist of no more than three persons and shall represent that complainant or respondent in the case until final decision is reached in the highest council to which the case is appealed.

**Corresponding Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board**—Corresponding members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board attend the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings at the expense of the agency they represent. They have voice but not vote in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board plenary sessions and in committee. While not assigned to a committee, they may attend any committee meeting that is conducting business of interest to them.

**Deliverance**—The ecclesial action adopted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly to create a corporation. A Deliverance is subordinate only to the PCUSA Constitution. Articles of incorporation and bylaws are the civil law documents related to a Deliverance.

**Entity**—An organized body within the structure of the church that is constituted for a specific purpose, function, or responsibility and that possesses an organizational structure and approved procedures for operation. These include a governing body, council, board, Ministries Division, committee, or commission.

**General Assembly**—The highest and most inclusive council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), representing the unity of the synod, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations. It is composed of equal numbers of elders and ministers elected from each presbytery in prescribed proportions, has elected officers, and convenes in a stated meeting at least biennially. Its structure and responsibilities are set forth in the *Constitution* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**Council**—A systematic, ordered, and representative gathering of presbyters in one of four levels in the structure and organization of the church that is graduated in authority and inclusiveness and that has specific rights, controls, and powers over either one or many churches. The four councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are the session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

**Joint Budget Table**—The Joint Budget Table is a decision-making body comprising an equal number from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and COGA. This body is responsible for deliberating unresolved matters related to the per capita budgets and recommending resolution to their respective bodies. Meetings may be called by either COGA or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

## 10 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

**Liaison**—A person charged with the responsibility for maintaining communication, connection, relations, and linkage between two or more committees, other defined groups, institutions, or offices to promote understanding and ensure cooperation and concerted action.

**Ministries**—Ordering of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board staff responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of particular mission ministries resulting from the goals and objectives of the current Mission Work Plan.

**Mission Committee**—Ordering of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board elected members for the development and implementation of the goals, objectives, and action plans of the current Mission Work Plan.

**Monitoring**—One of several processes used by the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in order to observe trends and issues and to gather data for the assessment, analysis, and evaluation of policies and issues prior to advising or advocating.

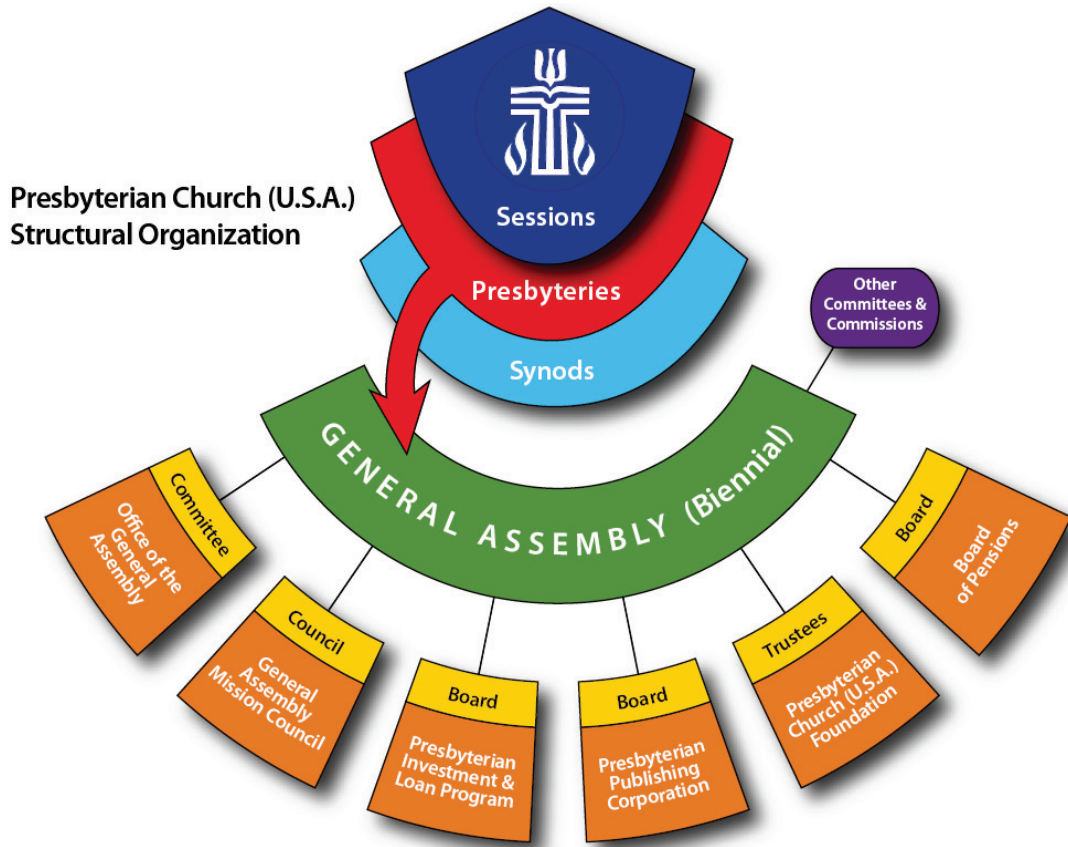
**Observer**—A delegate to a committee, other defined group, or office who observes for and reports to its parent body, but who does not participate officially in the activities or actions being observed.

**Subcommittee**—A group of people organized to accomplish specific ongoing work which reports regularly to a particular committee and is accountable to that committee.

**Task Force**—Another name for a Work Group.

**Work Group**—A group of persons elected or appointed to do a specific task in a designated time period.

Figure 1



# GAMC Special Offerings Advisory Task Force

## Charts

Figure 1

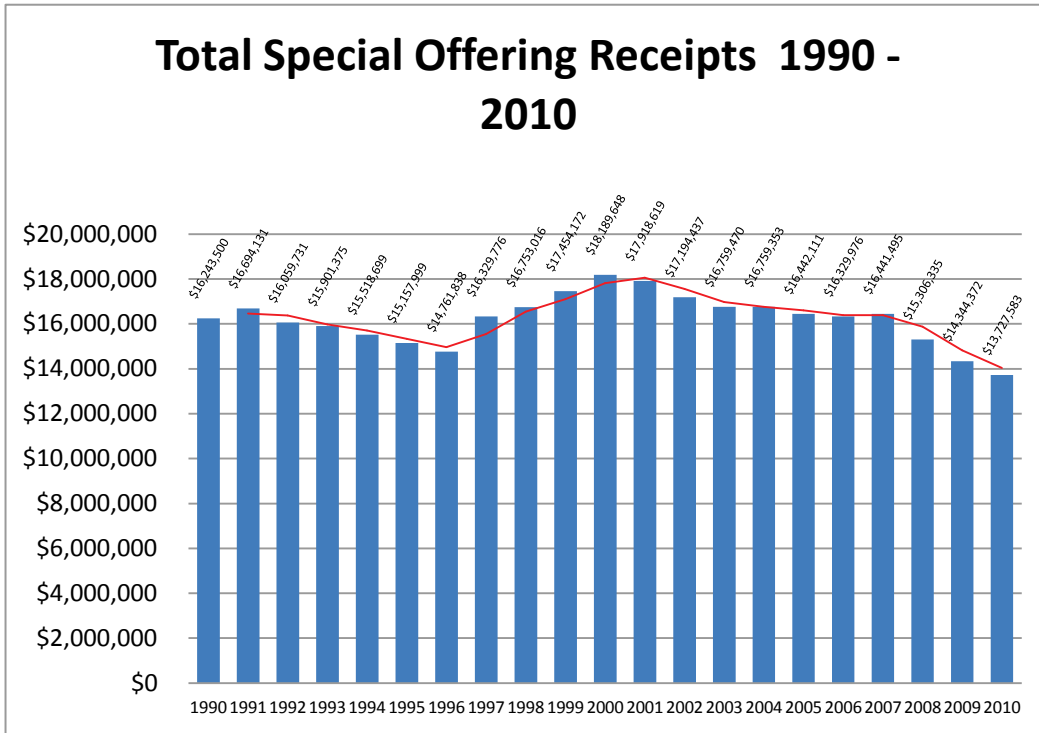
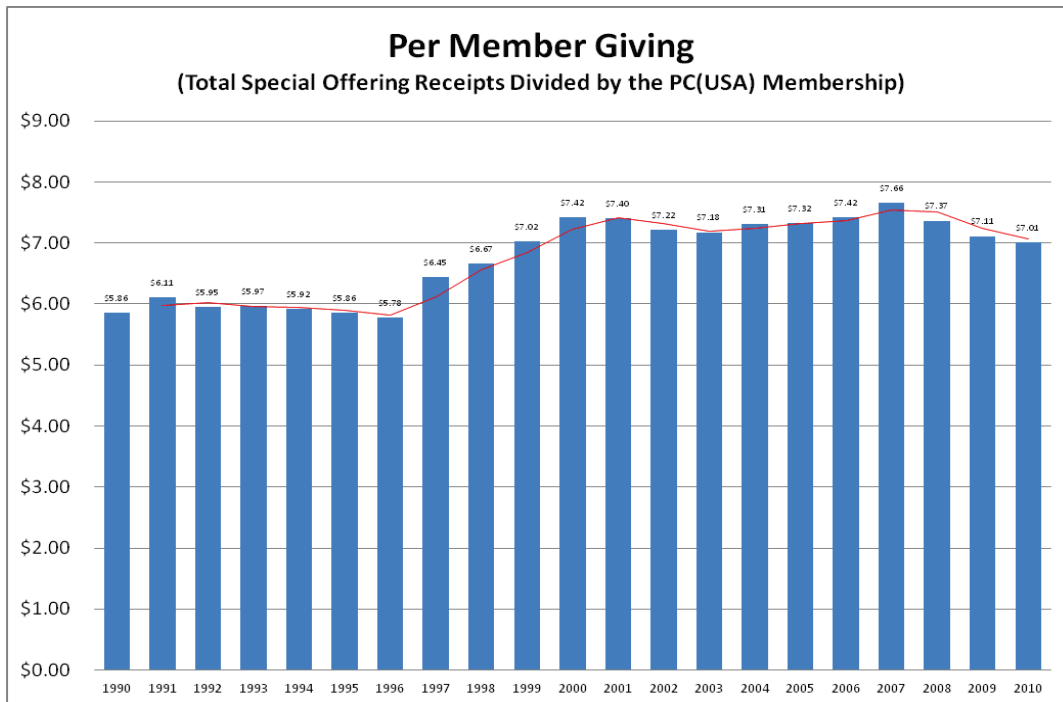


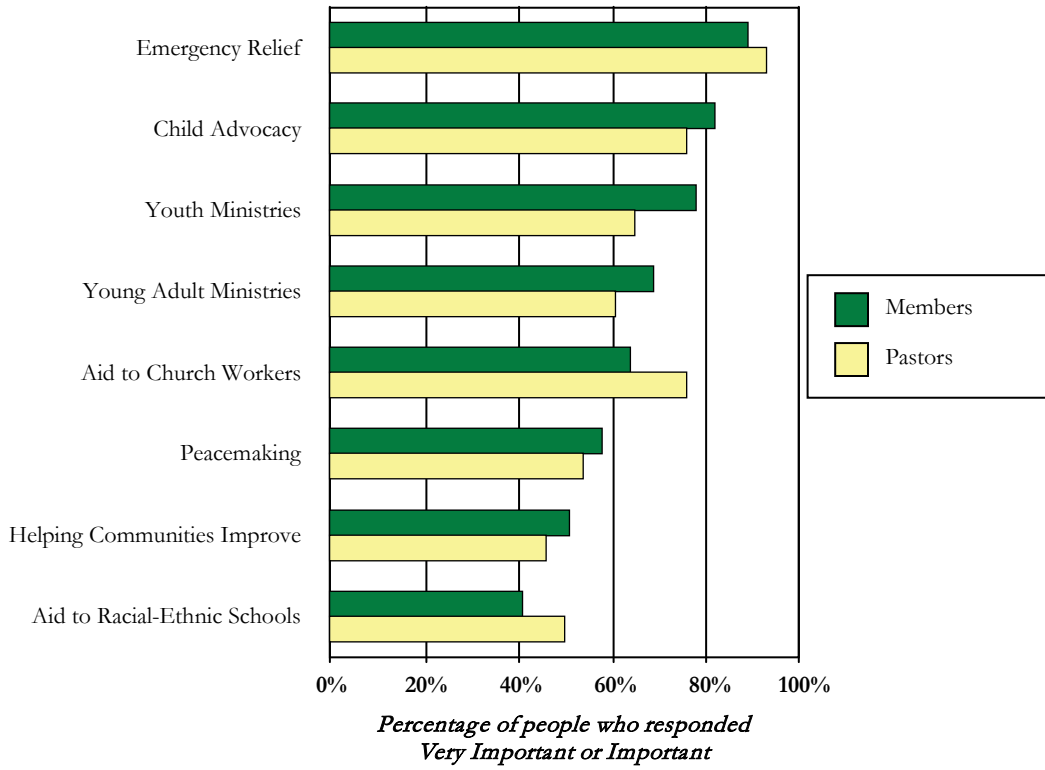
Figure 2





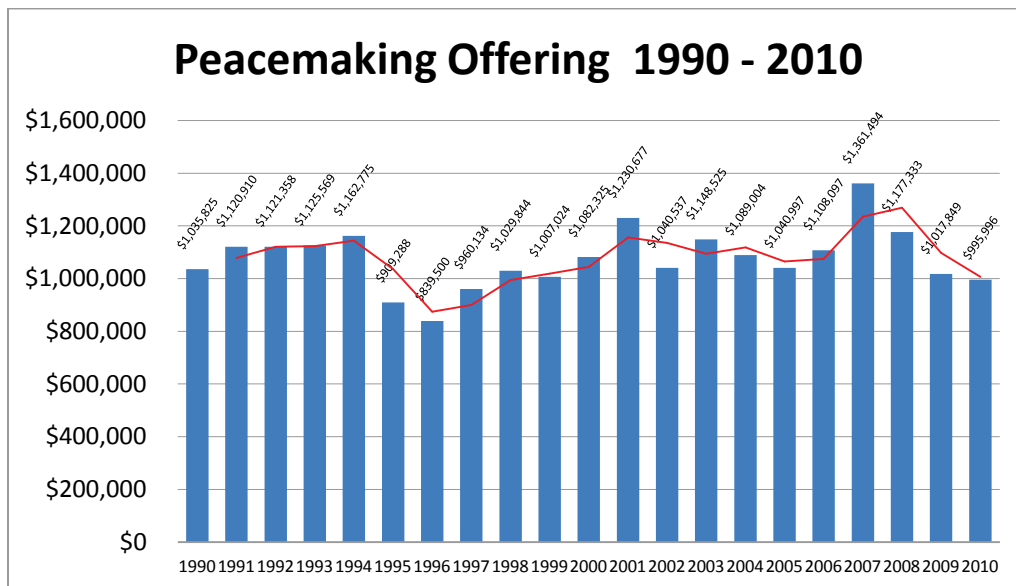
**Figure 3**

Importance of PC(USA) Activities

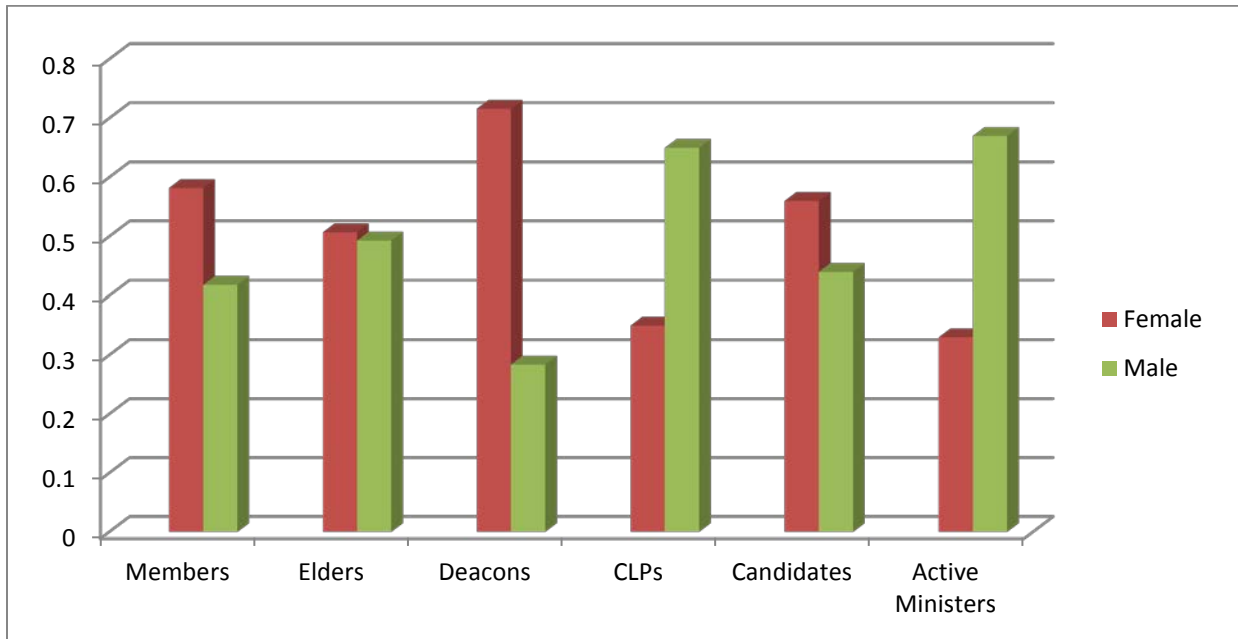


(Source: The Presbyterian Panel: Churchwide Special Offerings, May 2011, Q1.)

**Figure 4**

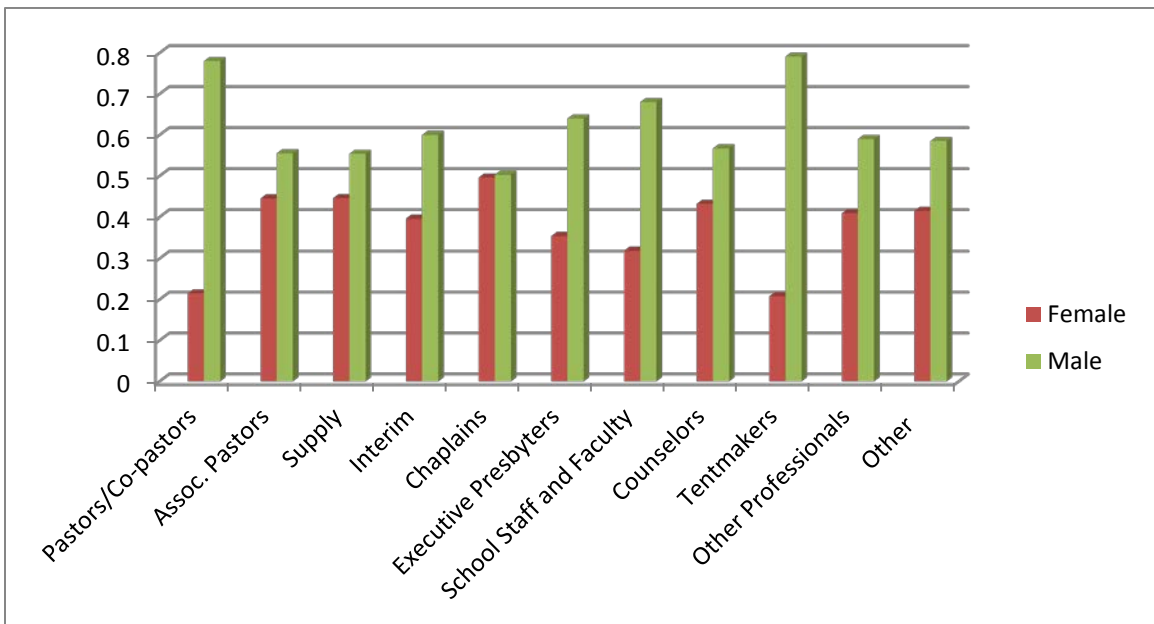


**Figure 1**



*Figure 1 Gender of PC(USA) Members, Elders, Deacons, CLPs, Candidates, Active Ministers, and Christian Educators (Source: 2010 Comparative Statistics. No data is available on Christian Educators.)*

**Figure 2**



*Figure 2 Percentage of Women and Men Serving in Varied Ministries as Teaching Elders (Source: 2010 Comparative Statistics. Examples of people serving in validated ministries as “Other Professionals” are teaching elders or chief administrators serving as staff in other denominational bodies or not in PC(USA) entities and “Other” includes teaching elders who are college, university, or seminary students or otherwise without a validated call.)*

Figure 3

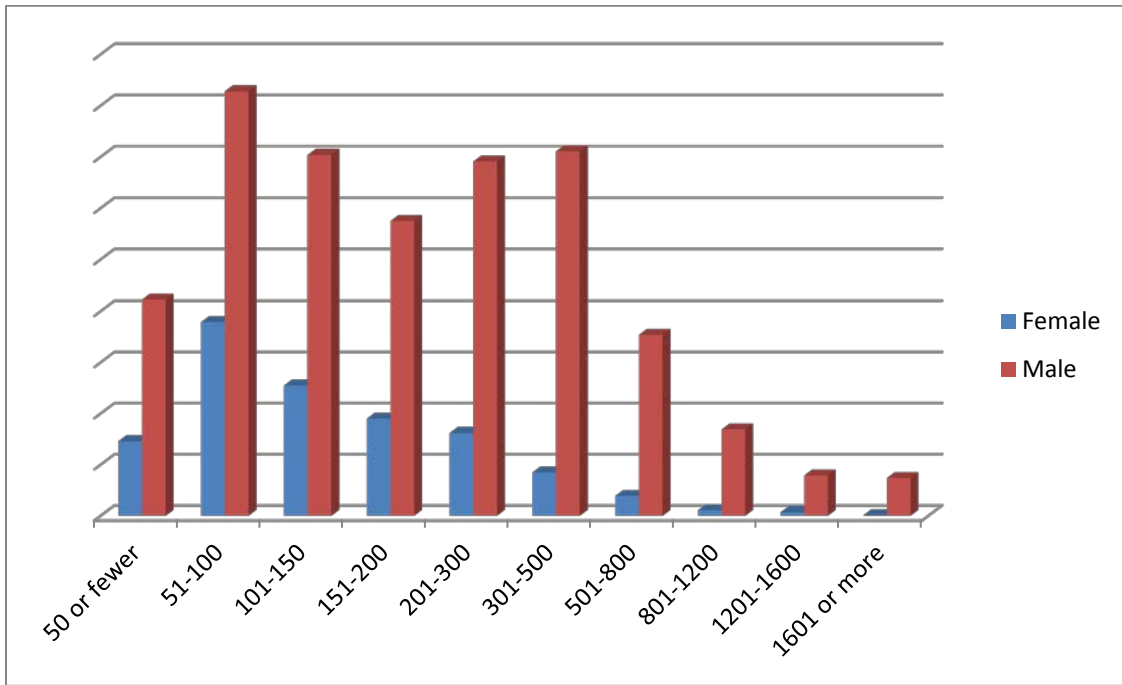


Figure 3 Comparison of Women and Men Serving as Installed Solo Pastor, Head of Staff, or Co-Pastor According to Membership Size of Congregation (Source: 2010 Comparative Statistics)

## Appendix A

### Comparative Analysis and Findings of a survey conducted for the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Group of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Winter 2012

#### Introduction

Beginning in the fall of 2011, Research Services worked with the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Group of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to conduct two surveys among church constituencies to learn more about leadership and education programs and workshops offered in the denomination for Hispanics/Latinos/as. This Leadership Group was created by action of the 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly upon a recommendation from the Committee on Theological Education.

A preliminary survey was conducted in the fall of 2011 among a small number of Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian leaders to provide information that would guide the development of the current survey, administered in January 2012 among four PC(USA) constituencies:

1. Hispanic/Latino/a leaders, including teaching elders and commissioned lay pastors, identified by the Leadership Group (hereafter referred to as “Hispanic leaders”).
2. Mid-council executives.
3. Presidents and academic deans at PC(USA)-affiliated seminaries (hereafter referred to as “seminary leaders”).
4. Chairs of the boards and chief executives of the six PC(USA) agencies, as well as selected senior staff in the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly (hereafter referred to as “agency leaders”).

More details on the sampling and methodology are found in the “Research Overview” section on p. 12. The narrative portion of this report is not a complete summary of results, but instead presents selected findings from the survey and other analyses that might be of particular interest or importance. An appendix follows with tables showing the percentage responses to each question on the survey.

#### Summary

**Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic/Latino Constituencies.** This strategy, approved in 2003 by the General Assembly, is not widely familiar to respondents, even among Hispanic leaders. Sizable minorities in every constituency indicate a complete lack of awareness of the strategy, and most of the rest report that they are “not too familiar” with it. Furthermore, more of those who have some degree of familiarity with the strategy describe its implementation as “fair” or “poor” than “excellent” or “good.”

Several factors are identified by majorities or near-majorities as helping or hindering implementation of the strategy in their ministry context. Helping factors include: commitment of financial resources; strong leadership; cultural and linguistic proficiency; and support of key groups. Hindering factors include: lack of financial resources; lack of leadership; cultural and linguistic barriers; and lack of support from mid-council staff.

**Education and Leadership Programs/Workshops.** Majorities of Hispanic and seminary leaders but many fewer mid-council executives and agency leaders have attended one or more education or leadership programs or workshops intentionally designed for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians. Most of these individuals had attended at least two such programs, with the most recent one typically taking place in the past three years. Where that most recent program took place varied by constituency and sponsor, but in general more were located in the South, the West, and Puerto Rico, and fewer in the Northeast and Midwest. The focus of the program was often Christian education, leadership development, evangelism, or cultural awareness and diversity, and most programs included among their attendees pastors, other teaching elders, commissioned lay pastors, ruling elders, seminary students, and mid-council leaders. Large majorities report that the most recent program or workshop they attended was bilingual, at least in part, and the content was helpful for their ministry.

**Future Workshops and Programs.** Majorities believe that future programs and workshops for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians should be bilingual, though there is less consensus on what entity would be the most appropriate sponsor. Opinions of respondents are largely split among presbyteries, synods, and national entities, however, indicating that even if there isn’t agreement on which specific council would be best, at least there is a broad sense that church councils are the most appropriate sponsors. Of 14 possible topics for future programs and workshops, large majorities of Hispanic leaders view every one as helpful. Other constituencies are more divided. Combined, responses suggest that the most helpful to the broadest set of respondents would be programs on leadership development; cultural awareness and diversity; community service, social work or action; and evangelism.

*Note: Fewer than ten seminary leaders and agency leaders responded to most questions. Consequently, the results for these two constituencies should be viewed cautiously.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> With so few cases, the effect of any one response on the overall outcome is large. For example, when there are eight respondents, each one represents 12.5% of the total. So a small error—such as a respondent accidentally checking “fair”

## Results

### Strategy for Hispanic/Latino/a Ministry

In 2003, the 215<sup>th</sup> General Assembly approved a “Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic/Latino Constituencies.” Asked their familiarity with this strategy, a third of Hispanic leaders (32%), two in ten mid-council executives (20%) and agency leaders (18%), and 8% of seminary leaders responded “very familiar” or “familiar.” Similar or greater numbers responded “not at all familiar” (28%, 38%, 18%, and 42%, respectively). The most frequent response in all four constituencies is “not too familiar” (40%, 42%, 64%, and 50%). Only those expressing some degree of familiarity were asked subsequent questions about the strategy.

Across the board, relatively few respondents rate the implementation of the strategy as “excellent” or “good,” whether in their local context or more broadly. In only one of the four constituencies, seminary leaders, and then only for two of four contexts, “in your presbytery/local area” and “in your synod/region of the country,” do as many respondents rate the strategy’s implementation as “excellent” or “good” (14% for each context) as rate it “fair” or “poor” (14% for each context).<sup>2</sup> In all of the other ratings—14 in total—the percentage responding “fair” or “poor” is considerably greater than the percentage responding “excellent” or “good.” (See Table 1.) There are also sizable percentages—sometimes a majority—responding “not sure/not applicable.”

	Hispanic Leaders		Seminary Leaders		Mid-Council executives		Agency Leaders	
	n = 107		n = 7		n = 58		n = 9	
<i>How would you describe the implementation of the strategy:</i>	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor
In your presbytery or local area?	17%	58%	14%	14%	21%	59%	29%	43%
In your synod or region of the country?	15%	51%	14%	14%	14%	65%	—	72%
Nationally?	17%	46%	—	28%	7%	50%	14%	43%
In your congregation?	22%	48%	14%	43%	8%	17%	14%	71%

†Only those familiar with the strategy were asked this question

\*Results for a fifth response choice for each item, “not sure/not applicable,” are omitted; see Appendix A

— = no cases

Seven factors from a list of 11 are cited by a majority of respondents in one or more constituencies as helping to making the implementation of the strategy for Hispanic/Latino ministry more successful. However, as Table 2 shows, there is considerable variability from one constituency to another in the percentage choosing each of these seven factors. Only two are chosen by a majority in three constituencies: presence of Hispanics/Latinos/as in key decision-making groups and strong leadership. (See Table 2.)

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
Factor*	n = 107	n = 7	n = 58	n = 9
Presence of Hispanics/Latinos/as in key decision-making groups	56%	57%	50%	83%
Commitment of financial resources	53%	57%	32%	33%
Strong leadership	53%	57%	48%	83%
Presence of Hispanics/Latinos/as in the geographical area	52%	43%	54%	67%
Support of mid-council and national staff	43%	71%	41%	67%
Cultural and linguistic proficiency	37%	—	46%	67%
Good training	37%	57%	25%	17%

†Only those familiar with the strategy were asked this question

\*Order of factors reflects responses of Hispanic leaders

— = no cases

when they meant to check “good”—results in a 12.5% greater total for “fair” and a 12.5% lesser total for “good”: a difference of 25%. Similarly, who responds and who doesn’t has outsized effects. If only one of eight respondents checks “fair,” the total response for that option is 12.5%. However, if two more people who held that same opinion had completed the survey (for a total of ten), the total response for “fair” would have been 30%.

<sup>2</sup> These results provide a good illustration of the problems associated with having only a handful of respondents in a particular constituency. While 14% may seem like a sizable share of responses, it represents only one case.

The other four factors—the ones that only half or fewer in all constituencies chose as helping to making the implementation successful—are: availability of educational resources; practical steps by which to implement the strategy; abundance of interest in its implementation; and good promotion of strategy.

Four factors (from a list of nine) are cited by a majority in at least one constituency as hindering the successful implementation of the strategy. Only one of these is so designated by majorities in three constituencies: lack of financial resources. (See Table 3.)

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
	n = 107	n = 7	n = 58	n = 9
Lack of financial resources	63%	71%	60%	17%
Lack of leadership	58%	29%	66%	50%
Cultural and linguistic barriers	41%	29%	53%	17%
Lack of interest in its implementation	55%	43%	60%	33%

<sup>†</sup>Only those familiar with the strategy were asked this question

The first three of the four hindering factors listed in Table 3 are the mirror image of three identified by many as helping the implementation, indicating that funds, leadership, and cultural/linguistic circumstances are perceived as key axes for successful implementation. Nevertheless, there are curious differences in some constituencies as to the helping and hindering effects of these three dimensions. For example, while most mid-council executives (60%) view “lack of financial resources” as a hindrance, only about half as many (32%) view “commitment of financial resources” as helping implementation. And while two-thirds of agency leaders (67%) indicate that “cultural and linguistic proficiency” is helpful, only 17% indicate that “cultural and linguistic barriers” are a hindrance.

Almost all respondents believe that the implementation of the strategy in their ministry context is either “very important” or “important,” “given recent demographic changes in the United States.” Among Hispanic leaders, 94% so respond; among seminary leaders, 100%; among mid-council executives, 88%; and among agency leaders, 100%.

### Leadership and Education Programs and Workshops

A series of questions asked respondents about their participation in “leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc. [that] have been intentionally designed for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians in the PC(USA).” Respondents were asked, in turn, about participation in leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, or workshops that had been sponsored by each of six types of entities: national entities of the PC(USA); synods; presbyteries; PC(USA) seminaries; other PC(USA) entities; and non-PC(USA) entities. When respondents indicated that they had attended at least one conference, course, program, or workshop in a particular category, they were asked additional questions about the most recent (or only) time they had attended.

For convenience, the phrase “program/workshop” will be used in this section to refer to “conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc. intentionally designed for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians in the PC(USA).”

**Number of participating respondents.** A greater share of Hispanic leaders than of any other constituency report attending at least one leadership or education program/workshop sponsored by each type of entity. Among this constituency, 48% report attending one or more programs/workshops sponsored by a national PC(USA) entity, followed by 40% who have attended a presbytery-sponsored and 38% a synod-sponsored event. The lowest share of participation among Hispanic leaders in any of the six categories is 25%, for programs sponsored by some other PC(USA) entity. (See Table 4.)

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
Sponsor	<i>Percent reporting participation in one or more programs sponsored by each type of entity</i>			
	n = 149	n = 12	n = 94	n = 11
National entity	48%	8%	14%	22%
Synod	38%	17%	13%	—
Presbytery	40%	27%	21%	—
PC(USA) seminary	31%	27%	4%	—
Other PC(USA) entity	25%	10%	6%	11%
Non-PC(USA) entity	29%	40%	9%	—
Total participating in a program from at least one sponsor	74%	67%	34%	18%

— = no cases

Seminary leaders have the second-highest share of participation in five of the six categories. The exception is for national entity-sponsored programs/workshops, reported by only 8% of seminary leaders but 14% of mid-council executives and 22% of agency leaders. No more than 21% of mid-council executives report attending a program/workshop in any one category (the 21% is for presbytery-sponsored ones), followed by those sponsored by a national entity (14%) and a synod (13%). Agency leaders report participation in only two categories: programs/workshops sponsored by a national entity (22%) and by some other PC(USA) entity (11%). This last outcome is hardly surprising: the survey asked about programs/workshops intentionally designed for Hispanics/Latinos/as, and none of the agency leaders describe themselves thusly (see demographic characteristics, p. 11).

Overall, three-fourths of Hispanic leaders (74%) have attended at least one leadership or education program, as have two-thirds of seminary leaders (67%). In contrast, only a third of mid-council executives (34%) and 18% of agency leaders have done so.

**Number of programs attended.** Among those who report having participated in at least one program/workshop sponsored by each type of entity, most report attending more than one. The median frequency is typically two or three, but ranges as high as five (among Hispanic leaders for programs/workshops sponsored by a national entity, and among agency leaders for programs/workshops sponsored by some other PC(USA) entity) and six (among mid-council executives for programs/workshops sponsored by some other PC(USA) entity). (See Table 5.)

Overall, Hispanic leaders have been to more programs/workshops (a median of seven). The next highest median is 5.5, among agency leaders (but that represents only two individuals). Seminary leaders have attended a median of 3.5 programs and mid-council executives, 2.5.

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
	<i>Median number of programs attended for those who attended at least one</i>			
Sponsor	n = 118	n = 10	n = 32	n = 2
National entity	5.0	1.0	2.0	3.0
Synod	3.5	2.0	2.0	—
Presbytery	3.0	3.0	3.0	—
PC(USA) seminary	2.5	4.5	1.5	—
Other PC(USA) entity	3.0	6.0	3.0	5.0
Non-PC(USA) entity	3.0	2.0	2.0	—
Total	7.0	3.5	2.5	5.5

— = no cases

**Recency of program/workshop.** The large majority of respondents who report having attended one or more programs/workshops sponsored by a particular type of entity indicate that they had attended such a program within the past three years (see Table 6).

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
	<i>Percent reporting that most recent program they attended was within the past three years (total number reporting participation in parentheses)</i>			
Sponsor				
National entity	85% (66)	100% (1)	69% (13)	50% (2)
Synod	77% (53)	100% (2)	25% (12)	— (0)
Presbytery	78% (53)	66% (3)	57% (19)	— (0)
PC(USA) seminary	49% (40)	100% (3)	25% (4)	— (0)
Other PC(USA) entity	81% (33)	100% (1)	60% (5)	100% (1)
Non-PC(USA) entity	82% (38)	100% (4)	50% (8)	— (0)

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type

— = no cases

**Locations of Programs/Workshops.** The most recent programs/workshops in which Hispanic leaders and mid-council executives had participated were scattered in various parts of the United States and even in other countries. (Only the responses of these two constituencies are discussed in this and the next four subsections, because almost no respondents in the other two categories had attended any program/workshop.) The region with the largest single share of programs/workshops tends to be the South, though it varies somewhat by sponsor. In particular, relatively more of the respondents who attended seminary-sponsored programs/workshops did so in the Northeast than in any other single region. Very few programs/workshops of any type were in the Midwest. Relatively few respondents attended programs/workshops outside the United States, with the exception of those sponsored by a national entity. A few Hispanic leaders

attended programs/workshops in Puerto Rico that were sponsored by each of the six types of entities, including 31% who attended one there sponsored by a synod and 27% who attended one there sponsored by a presbytery. However, no mid-council executive reported attending any program in Puerto Rico. (See Table 7, p. 5.)

<b>Table 7. Location of Most Recent Program/Workshop Attended, by Program Sponsor</b>						
	National Entity	Synod	Presbytery	PC(USA) Seminary	Other PC(USA)	Non-PC(USA)
1. Hispanic Leaders						
	n = 66	n = 53	n = 53	n = 40	n = 33	n = 38
Location	<i>Percent reporting that the most recent program they attended was in each location</i>					
Northeast	3%	10%	6%	32%	8%	3%
Midwest	—	—	6%	12%	4%	10%
South	36%	44%	48%	29%	46%	40%
West	4%	15%	12%	15%	19%	26%
Puerto Rico	12%	31%	27%	12%	12%	10%
Other country	44%	—	2%	—	12%	10%
2. Mid-Council Executives						
	n = 13	n = 12	n = 19	n = 4	n = 5	n = 8
Location	<i>Percent reporting that the most recent program they attended was in each location</i>					
Northeast	—	8%	5%	50%	20%	12%
Midwest	8%	8%	21%	—	20%	12%
South	46%	67%	42%	25%	20%	25%
West	8%	17%	32%	—	20%	12%
Puerto Rico	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other country	23%	—	—	25%	20%	38%
Don't remember	15%	—	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type  
 — = no cases

**Program/Workshop Topics.** When asked to describe the “nature or focus” of the most recent program/workshop they had attended, only five of 14 possible options were chosen by as many as 40% of Hispanic leaders or mid-council executives in any of the six sponsorship categories. “Leadership development” was chosen by a majority of Hispanic leaders for programs/workshops sponsored by five of six entity categories (the only exception, at 47%, is for non-PC(USA) sponsored programs) and by a majority of mid-council executives for all six sponsors. The next largest response share is for “Christian education.” While not chosen by a majority, it was chosen by 40% or more in five of the six categories among Hispanic leaders (non-PC(USA)-sponsored programs the exception, at 26%) and two of the six among mid-council executives. (See Table 8, p. 6.)

These results should not be surprising, since the questions asked about participation in “leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.” By definition, we would expect respondents to indicate that most programs they attended focused on education or leadership.

**Characteristics of Program/Workshop Attendees.** Hispanic leaders and mid-council executives report that participants in the most recent program they attended in each sponsorship category represented a variety of church roles. In all instances, a majority report pastors in attendance. Among the 12 response groupings (six sponsor categories for each of Hispanic leaders and mid-council executives), majorities report the participation of ruling elders in eight; of other teaching elders other than pastors in seven; of commissioned lay pastors in six; of presbytery or synod leaders in six; and of seminary students or candidates for ministry in two. (See Table 9, p. 6.)



<b>Table 8. Options Most Frequently Chosen to Describe the Nature or Focus of Programs/Workshops, by Program Sponsor</b>						
	National Entity	Synod	Presbytery	Seminary	Other PC(USA)	Non-PC(USA)
	1. Hispanic Leaders					
	n = 66	n = 53	n = 53	n = 40	n = 33	n = 38
Items listed in alphabetical order	<i>Percent reporting that most recent program/workshop they attended had each focus</i>					
Christian education	41%	46%	43%	40%	46%	26%
Cultural awareness and diversity	38%	15%	28%	35%	54%	32%
Evangelism	32%	33%	38%	19%	38%	26%
Leadership development	73%	52%	53%	54%	58%	47%
Spirituality	29%	27%	30%	19%	27%	24%
	2. Mid-Council Executives					
	n = 13	n = 12	n = 19	n = 4	n = 5	n = 8
Items listed in alphabetical order	<i>Percent reporting that most recent program/workshop they attended had each focus</i>					
Christian education	23%	42%	32%	25%	40%	25%
Cultural awareness and diversity	31%	33%	26%	25%	40%	62%
Evangelism	31%	42%	42%	50%	40%	50%
Leadership development	62%	75%	68%	75%	60%	62%
Spirituality	31%	25%	16%	25%	40%	38%

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type

<b>Table 9. Church Roles Represented by Participants at the Most Recent Program/Workshop Attended, by Program Sponsor</b>						
	National Entity	Synod	Presbytery	Seminary	Other PC(USA)	Non-PC(USA)
	1. Hispanic Leaders					
	n = 66	n = 53	n = 53	n = 40	n = 33	n = 38
Roles listed in order they appeared on the survey	<i>Percent reporting that most recent program/workshop they attended included one or more persons representing each role</i>					
Pastors	88%	79%	83%	73%	88%	76%
Other teaching elders	58%	62%	58%	57%	62%	53%
Commissioned lay pastors	73%	69%	62%	49%	58%	47%
Ruling elders	64%	69%	81%	43%	62%	55%
Seminary students/candidates for ministry	56%	27%	40%	60%	42%	45%
Presbytery or synod leaders	62%	50%	51%	22%	42%	18%
	2. Mid-Council Executives					
	n = 13	n = 12	n = 19	n = 4	n = 5	n = 8
Roles listed in order they appeared on the survey	<i>Percent reporting that most recent program/workshop they attended included one or more persons representing each role</i>					
Pastors	92%	92%	84%	75%	60%	75%
Other teaching elders	62%	50%	26%	50%	40%	25%
Commissioned lay pastors	38%	58%	42%	100%	20%	38%
Ruling elders	46%	83%	74%	25%	60%	62%
Seminary students/candidates for ministry	31%	50%	26%	50%	20%	25%
Presbytery or synod leaders	92%	83%	68%	100%	40%	25%

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type

**Language of Program/Workshop.** Most programs/workshops that Hispanic leaders had attended were either partially or entirely bilingual. The bilingual share ranges from 35% among synod-sponsored programs to 61% among seminary-sponsored programs. The same pattern holds among mid-council executives, with a range from 40% for other PC(USA) entity-sponsored programs to 91% for synod-sponsored programs. (See Table 10.)

<b>Table 10. Language Used in the Program/Workshop, by Program Sponsor</b>						
	National Entity	Synod	Presbytery	PC(USA) Seminary	Other PC(USA)	Non-PC(USA)
1. Hispanic Leaders						
	n = 66	n = 53	n = 53	n = 40	n = 33	n = 38
<i>Percent reporting each language arrangement at the most recent program they attended</i>						
Entirely bilingual	17%	12%	32%	25%	23%	16%
Partially bilingual	44%	23%	23%	36%	31%	34%
No bilingual	35%	62%	45%	39%	42%	47%
Not sure	4%	2%	—	—	4%	3%
2. Mid-Council Executives						
	n = 13	n = 12	n = 19	n = 4	n = 5	n = 8
<i>Percent reporting each language arrangement at the most recent program they attended</i>						
Entirely bilingual	8%	33%	32%	—	40%	—
Partially bilingual	77%	58%	42%	75%	—	62%
No bilingual	15%	8%	26%	25%	60%	38%
Not sure	—	—	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type

— = no cases

**Helpfulness of Program/Workshops for Ministry.** Among Hispanic leaders and mid-council executives, majorities respond “very helpful” or “helpful” when asked to rate the helpfulness for their ministry of the most recent program/workshop they had attended that was sponsored by each entity. The combined “very helpful” and “helpful” responses range from 61% (among mid-council executives regarding the most recent national entity-sponsored program they had attended) to 89% (among Hispanic leaders regarding the most recent seminary-sponsored program they had attended). No more than 8% in either constituency responded “not helpful” concerning the most recent program they had attended in each of the six sponsorship categories, and for two of the six categories among Hispanic leaders and five of the six among mid-council executives, no one responded “not helpful.” (See Table 11.)

<b>Table 11. Helpfulness of the Most Recent Program Attended, by Program Sponsors</b>						
	National Entity	Synod	Presbytery	PC(USA) Seminary	Other PC(USA)	Non-PC(USA)
1. Hispanic Leaders						
	n = 66	n = 53	n = 53	n = 40	n = 33	n = 38
<i>Percent reporting each degree of helpfulness</i>						
Very helpful	39%	31%	38%	50%	41%	47%
Helpful	38%	50%	47%	39%	41%	40%
A little helpful	20%	12%	13%	8%	4%	13%
Not helpful	3%	2%	2%	—	7%	—
Not sure/not applicable	—	4%	—	3%	7%	—
2. Mid-Council Executives						
	n = 13	n = 12	n = 19	n = 4	n = 5	n = 8
<i>Percent reporting each degree of helpfulness</i>						
Very helpful	23%	33%	33%	—	80%	50%
Helpful	38%	50%	44%	75%	—	38%
A little helpful	31%	17%	17%	—	20%	12%
Not helpful	8%	—	—	—	—	—
Not sure/not applicable	—	—	6%	25%	—	—

\*Percentages are of those who had ever participated in a program of each sponsorship type

— = no cases

## Future Workshops and Programs

Concerning possible future programs/workshops, the survey asked about “the most appropriate [entity] to sponsor leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., for your ministry context.” In general, the most respondents in each group chose the presbytery, synod, or national entities of the PC(USA):

- Hispanic leaders: presbytery, 44%; synod, 11%; national PC(USA) entity, 14% (total: 69%)
- Seminary leaders: 56%; 0%; 11% (67%.)
- Mid-council executives: 30%; 31%; 18% (79%)
- Agency leaders: 38%; 0%; 38% (76%)

In addition, 22% of seminary and 10% of Hispanic leaders chose a PC(USA) seminary as the most appropriate sponsor, and 12% of Hispanic leaders and 6% of mid-council executives chose the congregation.

Large majorities in each constituency report that “the best language arrangement” at future programs/workshops would be bilingual: Hispanic leaders, 65%; seminary leaders, 100%; mid-council executives, 79%; and agency leaders, 88%.

Respondents were asked to rate how helpful a conference, course, program, or workshop for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians on each of 14 topics would be for their ministry context. Large majorities of Hispanic leaders rated every one of the topics as “very helpful” or “helpful,” ranging from 91% for leadership development to 70% for preaching. Other constituencies provide more varied responses. A majority of seminary leaders rate only four as “very helpful” or “helpful”: cultural awareness and diversity (75%); Christian education (63%); leadership development (55%); and discipleship (55%). Among mid-council executives, only one is rated “very helpful” or “helpful” by a majority: leadership development (52%). Among agency leaders, four are so rated: leadership development (83%); cultural awareness and diversity (72%); community services, social work, or action (67%); and evangelism (57%). (See Table 12.)

	Hispanic Leaders	Seminary Leaders	Mid-Council Executives	Agency Leaders
Topic*	<i>Percent responding “very helpful” or “helpful”</i>			
	n = 149	n = 12	n = 94	n = 11
Leadership development	91%	55%	52%	83%
Evangelism	87%	50%	48%	57%
Spirituality	87%	37%	28%	50%
Discipleship	86%	55%	39%	50%
Community service, social work, or action	84%	44%	39%	67%
Stewardship	84%	33%	32%	43%
Christian education	81%	63%	32%	17%
Cultural awareness and diversity	81%	75%	46%	72%
Worship	79%	37%	44%	33%
Music	78%	25%	38%	33%
Women’s ministry	78%	12%	31%	34%
Youth ministry	78%	33%	37%	50%
Recognition of gifts	77%	37%	25%	17%
Preaching	70%	25%	36%	—

\*Order of topics reflects responses of Hispanic leaders

— = no cases

Combined, these results reveal that any of the 14 topics would be helpful for Hispanic leaders in their ministry context. Topics that are viewed as helpful for ministry more broadly include leadership development (rated “very helpful” or “helpful” by a majority in every constituency), cultural awareness and diversity (so rated by a majority in three constituencies), evangelism (so rated by a majority in two constituencies and by half of another), and discipleship (also so rated by a majority in two constituencies and by half of another).

## Demographics of Respondents

Not surprisingly, a large majority of Hispanic leaders identify themselves as “Hispanic/Latino/a”: 89%. So do a third of seminary leaders (33%), and 6% of mid-council executives. No agency leaders describe themselves as Hispanic/Latino/a.

Most Hispanic leaders are teaching elders (81%), including 60% who are pastors. An overlapping 47% also serve in some capacity with a mid-council or a national entity of the PC(USA). Respondents in the other three constituencies reflect their selection criteria: 100% of seminary leaders are either seminary faculty, staff, or board members; 98% of mid-council executives are executives, clerks, or other staff of a mid-council or national entity of the church; and 62% of agency leaders are executives, clerks, or other staff of a mid-council or national entity of the church. (One would have expected the remaining 38% of agency leaders to have checked “elected board member of national PC(USA) agency,” but curiously, none did.)

Four in ten Hispanic leaders live in the South (41%), followed by two in ten in Puerto Rico (21%), 16% in the Northeast, and 14% in the West. Only 6% live in the West. The remaining 2% live outside the United States. Seminary leaders live in three regions: South, 44%; Northeast, 44%; and West, 11%. Mid-council executives are somewhat evenly split across the four U.S. regions: South, 34%; Midwest, 25%; Northeast, 21%; and West, 20%. Most agency leaders live in the South (62%), followed by 25% in the Northeast and 12% in the West.

### Research Overview

The questions were constructed by Research Services with input from the Leadership Group provided by its staff liaison, Rob Fohr, a staff member of the Committee on Theological Education. Once final content was agreed upon, staff in Research Services programmed the questions for Web completion. On January 12, 2012, Research Services sent to all persons in each of the four constituencies an email invitation to complete the survey. The email came from Reverend Tony Aja, convener of the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Group, and provided a link to the survey.

Email reminders from Tony Aja were sent to all non-respondents on January 17, 20, and 23. Returns were accepted through noon on January 25, 2012.

The invitation, reminders, and survey were all translated into Spanish. Separate links to the English and the Spanish versions of the survey were provided in the initial invitation and the reminders. The invitation and the reminders themselves consisted of English text followed by a Spanish translation, with a sentence in Spanish at the beginning of the English text indicating that a Spanish version followed.

The percentages in each constituency who responded in Spanish are: Hispanic leaders, 55%; seminary leaders, 25%; mid-council executives, 1%; and agency leaders, 0%.

In all four constituencies, the population was surveyed; that is, there was no sampling. Every individual identified in each constituency was invited to participate. Details about the constituencies and response rates are shown in Table 13.

Constituency	Number Surveyed	Number Ineligible or Not Reached*	Effective Number Surveyed	Number Who Responded	Response Rate	Responded in Spanish
Hispanic/Latino/a Leaders	574	168	406	149	36%	55%
Seminary Leaders	23	—	23	12	52%	25%
Mid-Council Executives	175	3	172	94	54%	1%
Agency Leaders	29	—	29	11	37%	—

\*Most due to bad email addresses

— = no cases



**Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Group  
Winter 2012 Survey  
Appendix: Survey Questions and Responses**

	<b>Hispanic/ Latino/a Leaders</b>	<b>Seminary Leaders</b>	<b>Mid- council Executives</b>	<b>Agency Chairs and Senior Staff</b>
Number of survey invitations sent .....	574	23	175	29
Number of undeliverable surveys and ineligible respondents.....	168	—	3	—
Number of surveys completed .....	149	12	94	11
Response rate.....	36%	52%	54%	37%

**Strategy for Ministry**

Q-1. How familiar are you with the “Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic/Latino Constituencies” that was approved by the 2003 General Assembly?

Very familiar.....	11%	—	3%	9%
Familiar.....	21%	8%	17%	9%
Not too familiar.....	40%	50%	42%	64%
Not at all familiar → <i>Skip to Q-5</i> .....	28%	42%	38%	18%

Q-2. How would you describe the implementation of the “Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic/Latino Constituencies”:

a. In your presbytery/local area?

	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9 +
Excellent.....	8%	—	9%	—
Good.....	9%	14%	12%	29%
Fair.....	18%	—	12%	—
Poor.....	40%	14%	47%	43%
Not sure/Not applicable.....	26%	71%	19%	29%

b. In your synod/region of the country?

	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9 +
Excellent.....	5%	—	—	—
Good.....	10%	14%	14%	—
Fair.....	24%	—	35%	29%
Poor.....	27%	14%	30%	43%
Not sure/Not applicable.....	34%	71%	21%	29%

Q-2. How would you describe the implementation of the “Strategy for Ministry with Hispanic/Latino Constituencies”:  
[cont.]

c. Nationally?	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
	+			+
Excellent .....	3%	—	—	—
Good .....	14%	—	7%	14%
Fair .....	33%	14%	32%	43%
Poor .....	13%	14%	18%	—
Not sure/Not applicable .....	38%	71%	44%	43%
d. In your congregation?	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
	+			+
Excellent .....	5%	—	2%	14%
Good .....	17%	14%	6%	—
Fair .....	33%	—	6%	14%
Poor .....	15%	43%	11%	57%
Not sure/Not applicable .....	30%	43%	76%	14%

Q-3. Think about the implementation of the strategy in your ministry context.

a. Which of these factors have you observed as <b>helping</b> to make the implementation more successful? (Mark <b>all</b> that apply.)	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
	♦	♦	♦	+ ♦
Commitment of financial resources .....	53%	57%	32%	33%
Strong leadership .....	53%	57%	48%	83%
Presence of Hispanics/Latinos/as in key decision making groups.....	56%	57%	50%	83%
Cultural and linguistic proficiency .....	37%	—	46%	67%
Availability of educational resources .....	41%	43%	23%	50%
Practical steps by which to implement the strategy .....	29%	43%	23%	17%
Support of mid-council (presbytery & synod) and national (GA) staff.....	43%	71%	41%	67%
Good training .....	37%	57%	25%	17%
Presence of Hispanics/Latinos/as in the geographical area .....	52%	43%	54%	67%
Abundance of interest in its implementation.....	27%	14%	21%	17%
Good promotion of strategy .....	35%	29%	18%	33%
Other (please specify): .....	8%	14%	2%	—
None/Don't Know .....	16%	14%	30%	17%

Q-3. Think about the implementation of the strategy in your ministry context.  
[cont.]

b. Which of these factors have you observed as *hindering* the successful implementation of the strategy? (Mark *all* that apply.)

	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
	◆	◆	◆	+ , ◆
Lack of financial resources .....	63%	71%	60%	17%
Lack of leadership .....	58%	29%	66%	50%
Lack of Hispanics/Latinos/as in key decision making groups.....	47%	43%	49%	33%
Cultural and linguistic barriers.....	41%	29%	53%	17%
Lack of educational resources.....	33%	43%	27%	17%
Lack of practical steps by which to implement the strategy.....	45%	29%	34%	17%
Lack of support from mid-council (presbytery & synod) and national (GA) staff.....	44%	29%	29%	33%
Lack of training.....	35%	29%	36%	17%
Lack of Hispanics in the geographical area.....	16%	—	26%	17%
Lack of interest in its implementation.....	55%	43%	60%	33%
Poor promotion of strategy.....	47%	43%	46%	50%
Other (please specify):.....	9%	14%	4%	—
None/Don't know.....	9%	14%	6%	17%

Q-4. Given recent demographic changes in the United States, how important is the implementation of a Hispanic/Latino/a strategy in your ministry context?

	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
	+			+
Very important.....	66%	71%	50%	33%
Important .....	28%	29%	38%	67%
Not too important.....	1%	—	11%	—
Not at all important.....	—	—	2%	—
Not sure.....	5%	—	—	—

**Ethnicity**

Q-5. Do you self-identify as Hispanic/Latino/a?

	n=107	n=7	n=58	n=9
				+
Yes.....	89%	33%	6%	—
No.....	11%	67%	94%	100%

**Leadership and Education Ministries**

A variety of leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., have been intentionally designed for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians in the PC(USA). Please try to recall as many of these as courses/workshops *that you attended*, going back to 1970. We are only asking about leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were *designed exclusively for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians*. Do *not* respond regarding events (such as the Racial Ethnic Convocation) that included Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians along with Presbyterians from one or more other racial-ethnic groups.

**National Entity-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q-6. Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by a national entity of the PC(USA)? *National entities include: The General Assembly, General Assembly Mission Council, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Foundation.*

	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
Yes.....	48%	8%	14%	22%
No→ Skip to Q-14 .....	43%	92%	85%	67%
Not sure→ Skip to Q-14.....	9%	—	1%	11%

Q-6a. How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a PC(USA) national entity-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)

	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
1 .....	9%	100%	31%	50%
2 .....	20%	—	31%	—
3 .....	11%	—	23%	—
4-5 .....	20%	—	8%	50%
6-9.....	22%	—	8%	—
10 or more.....	18%	—	—	—

Q-7. What is the most recent (or only) national-entity sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:

[not tabulated]

Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..

Q-8. When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?

	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
During the past year.....	41%	—	31%	—
2-3 years ago.....	44%	100%	38%	50%
4-5 years ago.....	8%	—	15%	—
6-9 years ago.....	4%	—	15%	50%
10 or more years ago.....	3%	—	—	—

Q-9. Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?

	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
Northeast.....	3%	—	—	—
Midwest .....	—	—	8%	—
South .....	36%	—	46%	50%
West.....	4%	—	8%	—
Puerto Rico .....	12%	100%	—	—
Non-USA .....	44%	—	23%	50%
Do not remember .....	—	—	15%	—



Q-10.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	88% ♦	100% ♦	92% ♦	100% ♦
	Other ministers (teaching elders) .....	58%	100%	62%	100%
	Commissioned lay pastors .....	73%	100%	38%	50%
	Elders (ruling elders).....	64%	—	46%	100%
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	56%	100%	31%	50%
	Presbytery or synod leaders .....	62%	—	92%	50%
	Other (please specify):.....	15%	—	8%	50%
Q-11.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
	Yes, entirely.....	17%	—	8%	100%
	Yes, partially.....	44%	—	77%	—
	No .....	35%	100%	15%	—
	Not sure.....	4%	—	—	—
Q-12.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
	Christian education .....	41% ♦	— ♦	23% ♦	50% ♦
	Cultural awareness and diversity .....	38%	—	31%	50%
	Evangelism .....	32%	—	31%	50%
	Stewardship.....	21%	—	—	50%
	Preaching .....	15%	100%	8%	—
	Leadership development .....	73%	100%	62%	100%
	Spirituality .....	29%	—	31%	—
	Women's ministry.....	15%	—	8%	—
	Youth ministry .....	11%	—	—	—
	Discipleship .....	18%	—	8%	—
	Recognition of gifts .....	8%	—	31%	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	11%	—	—	—
	Worship .....	30%	—	23%	—
	Music .....	18%	—	23%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	21%	—	23%	—
Q-13.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=66	n=1	n=13	n=2
	Very helpful.....	39%	—	23%	50%
	Helpful.....	38%	—	38%	50%
	A little helpful.....	20%	100%	31%	—
	Not helpful.....	3%	—	8%	—
	Not sure/not applicable .....	—	—	—	—

**Synod-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q-14.	Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by a synod?				
	Yes.....	38%	17%	13%	—
	No→ <i>Skip to Q-22</i> .....	53%	83%	85%	89%
	Not sure→ <i>Skip to Q-22</i> .....	9%	—	2%	11%

Q-14a.	How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a PC(USA) synod-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)				
		n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
		+	+		
	1.....	26%	—	33%	—
	2.....	11%	100%	33%	—
	3.....	13%	—	17%	—
	4-5.....	23%	—	8%	—
	6-9.....	2%	—	—	—
	10 or more.....	26%	—	8%	—

Q-15. What is the most recent (or only) synod-sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:

[not tabulated]

Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..

Q-16.	When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?				
		n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
			+		
	During the past year.....	46%	—	—	—
	2-3 years ago.....	31%	100%	25%	—
	4-5 years ago.....	8%	—	33%	—
	6-9 years ago.....	12%	—	25%	—
	10 or more years ago.....	2%	—	17%	—

Q-17.	Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?				
		n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
			+		
	Northeast.....	10%	100%	8%	—
	Midwest.....	—	—	8%	—
	South.....	44%	—	67%	—
	West.....	15%	—	17%	—
	Puerto Rico.....	31%	—	—	—
	Non-USA.....	—	—	—	—
	Do not remember.....	—	—	—	—

Q-18.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
		◆	+ , ◆	◆	◆
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	79%	100%	92%	—
	Other ministers (teaching elders).....	62%	100%	50%	—
	Commissioned lay pastors.....	69%	100%	58%	—
	Elders (ruling elders).....	69%	—	83%	—
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	27%	100%	50%	—
	Presbytery or synod leaders.....	50%	—	83%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	21%	—	17%	—
	Not sure.....	—	—	—	—
Q-19.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
			+		
	Yes, entirely.....	12%	—	33%	—
	Yes, partially.....	23%	—	58%	—
	No.....	62%	100%	8%	—
	Not sure.....	2%	—	—	—
Q-20.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
		◆	+ , ◆	◆	◆
	Christian education.....	46%	—	42%	—
	Cultural awareness and diversity.....	15%	100%	33%	—
	Evangelism.....	33%	100%	42%	—
	Stewardship.....	12%	—	17%	—
	Preaching.....	17%	100%	8%	—
	Leadership development.....	52%	—	75%	—
	Spirituality.....	27%	—	25%	—
	Women's ministry.....	25%	—	8%	—
	Youth ministry.....	15%	—	17%	—
	Discipleship.....	12%	—	33%	—
	Recognition of gifts.....	8%	—	—	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	10%	—	—	—
	Worship.....	27%	—	33%	—
	Music.....	10%	—	33%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	17%	—	17%	—
Q-21.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=53	n=2	n=12	n=0
			+		
	Very helpful.....	31%	—	33%	—
	Helpful.....	50%	—	50%	—
	A little helpful.....	12%	100%	17%	—
	Not helpful.....	2%	—	—	—
	Not sure/not applicable.....	4%	—	—	—

**Presbytery-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q-22.	Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by a presbytery?				
	Yes.....	40%	27%	21%	—
	No→ <i>Skip to Q-30</i> .....	48%	73%	78%	89%
	Not sure→ <i>Skip to Q-30</i> .....	12%	—	1%	11%
Q-22a.	How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a PC(USA) presbytery-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)				
		n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	1.....	22%	33%	32%	—
	2.....	22%	—	16%	—
	3.....	18%	33%	16%	—
	4-5.....	20%	33%	10%	—
	6-9.....	8%	—	16%	—
	10 or more.....	12%	—	10%	—
Q-23.	What is the most recent (or only) presbytery-sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:				
	[not tabulated]				
	Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..				
Q-24.	When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?				
		n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	During the past year.....	49%	33%	47%	—
	2-3 years ago.....	29%	33%	10%	—
	4-5 years ago.....	8%	—	5%	—
	6-9 years ago.....	12%	—	26%	—
	10 or more years ago.....	2%	33%	10%	—
Q-25.	Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?				
		n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	Northeast.....	6%	67%	5%	—
	Midwest.....	6%	—	21%	—
	South.....	48%	33%	42%	—
	West.....	12%	—	32%	—
	Puerto Rico.....	27%	—	—	—
	Non-USA.....	2%	—	—	—
	Do not remember.....	—	—	—	—

Q-26.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	83% ♦	100% ♦	84% ♦	— ♦
	Other ministers (teaching elders).....	58%	67%	26%	—
	Commissioned lay pastors.....	62%	67%	42%	—
	Elders (ruling elders).....	81%	100%	74%	—
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	40%	67%	26%	—
	Presbytery or synod leaders.....	51%	100%	68%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	24%	33%	16%	—
	Not sure.....	—	33%	—	—
Q-27.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	Yes, entirely.....	32%	—	32%	—
	Yes, partially.....	23%	67%	42%	—
	No.....	45%	33%	26%	—
	Not sure.....	—	—	—	—
Q-28.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	Christian education.....	43% ♦	67% ♦	32% ♦	— ♦
	Cultural awareness and diversity.....	28%	67%	26%	—
	Evangelism.....	38%	33%	42%	—
	Stewardship.....	21%	—	16%	—
	Preaching.....	17%	33%	21%	—
	Leadership development.....	53%	67%	68%	—
	Spirituality.....	30%	33%	16%	—
	Women's ministry.....	17%	33%	5%	—
	Youth ministry.....	15%	33%	5%	—
	Discipleship.....	23%	—	32%	—
	Recognition of gifts.....	6%	67%	5%	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	19%	—	32%	—
	Worship.....	28%	33%	26%	—
	Music.....	13%	—	10%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	19%	33%	32%	—
Q-29.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=53	n=3	n=19	n=0
	Very helpful.....	38%	—	33%	—
	Helpful.....	47%	100%	44%	—
	A little helpful.....	13%	—	17%	—
	Not helpful.....	2%	—	—	—
	Not sure/not applicable.....	—	—	6%	—

**PC(USA) Seminary-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q-30.	Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by a PC(USA) Seminary?				
		+			+
	Yes.....	31%	27%	4%	—
	No→ <i>Skip to Q-38</i> .....	63%	73%	94%	89%
	Not sure→ <i>Skip to Q-38</i> .....	6%	—	1%	11%

Q-30a.	How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a PC(USA) seminary-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)				
		n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		+	+		
	1.....	41%	—	50%	—
	2.....	9%	—	25%	—
	3.....	12%	50%	—	—
	4-5.....	21%	—	25%	—
	6-9.....	3%	50%	—	—
	10 or more.....	15%	—	—	—

Q-31. What is the most recent (or only) PC(USA) seminary-sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:

[not tabulated]

Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..

Q-32.	When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?				
		n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		+	+		
	During the past year.....	23%	100%	—	—
	2-3 years ago.....	26%	—	25%	—
	4-5 years ago.....	20%	—	25%	—
	6-9 years ago.....	26%	—	25%	—
	10 or more years ago.....	6%	—	25%	—

Q-33.	Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?				
		n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		+	+		
	Northeast.....	32%	100%	50%	—
	Midwest.....	12%	—	—	—
	South.....	29%	—	25%	—
	West.....	15%	—	—	—
	Puerto Rico.....	12%	—	—	—
	Non-USA.....	—	—	25%	—
	Do not remember.....	—	—	—	—

Q-34.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		◆	+ , ◆	◆	◆
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	73%	100%	75%	—
	Other ministers (teaching elders).....	57%	100%	50%	—
	Commissioned lay pastors.....	49%	50%	100%	—
	Elders (ruling elders).....	43%	100%	25%	—
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	60%	100%	50%	—
	Presbytery or synod leaders.....	22%	50%	100%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	19%	50%	25%	—
	Not sure.....	3%	—	—	—
Q-35.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		+	+		
	Yes, entirely.....	25%	50%	—	—
	Yes, partially.....	36%	—	75%	—
	No.....	39%	50%	25%	—
	Not sure.....	—	—	—	—
Q-36.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		◆	+ , ◆	◆	◆
	Christian education.....	40%	—	25%	—
	Cultural awareness and diversity.....	35%	50%	25%	—
	Evangelism.....	19%	—	50%	—
	Stewardship.....	14%	—	—	—
	Preaching.....	22%	50%	—	—
	Leadership development.....	54%	50%	75%	—
	Spirituality.....	19%	50%	25%	—
	Women's ministry.....	11%	—	—	—
	Youth ministry.....	5%	—	—	—
	Discipleship.....	8%	—	—	—
	Recognition of gifts.....	5%	—	—	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	19%	—	25%	—
	Worship.....	5%	—	25%	—
	Music.....	—	—	—	—
	Other (please specify):.....	19%	—	25%	—
Q-37.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=40	n=3	n=4	n=0
		+	+		
	Very helpful.....	50%	—	—	—
	Helpful.....	39%	100%	75%	—
	A little helpful.....	8%	—	—	—
	Not helpful.....	—	—	—	—
	Not sure/not applicable.....	3%	—	25%	—

**Other PC(USA) Entity-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q-38.	Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by another PC(USA) entity?				
		+	+	+	
	Yes.....	25%	10%	6%	11%
	No→ Skip to Q-46.....	58%	90%	92%	78%
	Not sure→ Skip to Q-46.....	16%	—	2%	11%

Q-38a.	How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a other PC(USA) entity-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)				
		n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+		+	
	1.....	19%	—	25%	—
	2.....	27%	—	25%	—
	3.....	8%	—	—	—
	4-5.....	19%	—	25%	100%
	6-9.....	8%	100%	25%	—
	10 or more.....	19%	—	—	—

Q-39. What is the most recent (or only) other PC(USA) entity-sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:

[not tabulated]

Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..

Q-40.	When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?				
		n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+			
	During the past year.....	27%	100%	60%	—
	2-3 years ago.....	54%	—	—	100%
	4-5 years ago.....	15%	—	—	—
	6-9 years ago.....	4%	—	40%	—
	10 or more years ago.....	—	—	—	—

Q-41.	Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?				
		n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+			
	Northeast.....	8%	100%	20%	—
	Midwest.....	4%	—	20%	—
	South.....	46%	—	20%	100%
	West.....	19%	—	20%	—
	Puerto Rico.....	12%	—	—	—
	Non-USA.....	12%	—	20%	—
	Do not remember.....	—	—	—	—



Q-42.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+ , ♦	♦	♦	♦
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	88%	100%	60%	100%
	Other ministers (teaching elders).....	62%	100%	40%	100%
	Commissioned lay pastors.....	58%	100%	20%	100%
	Elders (ruling elders).....	62%	—	60%	100%
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	42%	—	20%	100%
	Presbytery or synod leaders.....	42%	—	40%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	19%	—	60%	100%
	Not sure.....	4%	—	—	—
Q-43.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+	—	40%	100%
	Yes, entirely.....	23%	—	—	—
	Yes, partially.....	31%	—	—	—
	No.....	42%	100%	60%	—
	Not sure.....	4%	—	—	—
Q-44.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+ , ♦	♦	♦	♦
	Christian education.....	46%	—	40%	100%
	Cultural awareness and diversity.....	54%	—	40%	—
	Evangelism.....	38%	—	40%	100%
	Stewardship.....	23%	—	—	100%
	Preaching.....	19%	100%	—	100%
	Leadership development.....	58%	100%	60%	100%
	Spirituality.....	27%	100%	40%	—
	Women's ministry.....	31%	—	—	—
	Youth ministry.....	23%	—	—	—
	Discipleship.....	23%	—	—	—
	Recognition of gifts.....	12%	—	—	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	12%	—	20%	—
	Worship.....	27%	—	40%	100%
	Music.....	12%	—	40%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	15%	—	40%	—
Q-45.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=33	n=1	n=5	n=1
		+	—	80%	100%
	Very helpful.....	41%	—	—	—
	Helpful.....	41%	—	—	—
	A little helpful.....	4%	100%	20%	—
	Not helpful.....	7%	—	—	—
	Not sure/not applicable.....	7%	—	—	—

**Non-PC(USA) Entity-Sponsored** leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc.

Q46. Have you attended any exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., that were sponsored by a non-PC(USA) entity?

	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	29%	40%	9%	—
No → Skip to Q-54 .....	65%	60%	91%	89%
Not sure → Skip to Q-54 .....	5%	—	—	11%

Q-46a. How many exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a non-PC(USA) entity-sponsored events have you attended? (Write the number in the box; if you don't know, please estimate.)

	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
1 .....	16%	50%	38%	—
2 .....	21%	—	38%	—
3 .....	26%	25%	—	—
4-5 .....	18%	—	25%	—
6-9 .....	5%	25%	—	—
10 or more .....	13%	—	—	—

Q-47. What is the most recent (or only) non-PC(USA) entity-sponsored exclusively Hispanic/Latino/a leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc., that you have attended? Write the name of the event in the box:

[not tabulated]

Please respond to the following questions with regard to this conference, course, program, workshop, etc..

Q-48. When did this leadership or education conference, course, program, workshop, etc. take place?

	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
		+		
During the past year .....	37%	33%	—	—
2-3 years ago .....	45%	67%	50%	—
4-5 years ago .....	8%	—	—	—
6-9 years ago .....	10%	—	25%	—
10 or more years ago .....	—	—	25%	—

Q-49. Where did the conference, course, program, workshop, etc., take place?

	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
		+		
Northeast .....	3%	67%	12%	—
Midwest .....	10%	—	12%	—
South .....	40%	33%	25%	—
West .....	26%	—	12%	—
Puerto Rico .....	10%	—	—	—
Non-USA .....	10%	—	38%	—
Do not remember .....	—	—	—	—

Q-50.	Who attended or participated in this conference, course, program, workshop, etc.? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
	Pastors (solo, head of staff, associate, interim, or co-pastors).....	76% ♦	50% ♦	75% ♦	— ♦
	Other ministers (teaching elders).....	53%	25%	25%	—
	Commissioned lay pastors.....	47%	25%	38%	—
	Elders (ruling elders).....	55%	25%	62%	—
	Seminary students/candidates for ministry.....	45%	50%	25%	—
	Presbytery or synod leaders.....	18%	25%	25%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	40%	50%	38%	—
	Not sure.....	3%	25%	12%	—
Q-51.	Was the event bilingual (English and Spanish)?	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
	Yes, entirely.....	16%	50%	—	—
	Yes, partially.....	34%	25%	62%	—
	No.....	47%	25%	38%	—
	Not sure.....	3%	—	—	—
Q-52.	What was the nature or focus of the event? (Check <i>all</i> that apply.)	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
	Christian education.....	26% ♦	75% ♦	25% ♦	— ♦
	Cultural awareness and diversity.....	32%	50%	62%	—
	Evangelism.....	26%	50%	50%	—
	Stewardship.....	13%	25%	—	—
	Preaching.....	16%	25%	12%	—
	Leadership development.....	47%	75%	62%	—
	Spirituality.....	24%	50%	38%	—
	Women's ministry.....	8%	—	25%	—
	Youth ministry.....	8%	25%	12%	—
	Discipleship.....	21%	75%	12%	—
	Recognition of gifts.....	16%	25%	—	—
	Community service, social work, or action.....	34%	25%	25%	—
	Worship.....	26%	25%	25%	—
	Music.....	16%	25%	12%	—
	Other (please specify):.....	16%	—	12%	—
Q-53.	How helpful was the event for your ministry?	n=38	n=4	n=8	n=0
	Very helpful.....	47%	25%	50%	—
	Helpful.....	40%	50%	38%	—
	A little helpful.....	13%	25%	12%	—
	Not helpful.....	—	—	—	—
	Not sure/not applicable.....	—	—	—	—

**Future Workshops and Programs**

Q-54. How helpful would it be for your ministry context to have a conference, course, program, workshop, etc., on each of these topics designed exclusively for Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterians:

a. Christian education

	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	57%	25%	15%	—
Helpful .....	24%	38%	17%	17%
A little helpful .....	10%	25%	17%	50%
Not helpful .....	4%	—	28%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	4%	12%	23%	17%

b. Cultural awareness and diversity

	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	45%	25%	19%	43%
Helpful .....	36%	50%	27%	29%
A little helpful .....	12%	12%	17%	14%
Not helpful .....	2%	—	23%	14%
Not sure/not applicable .....	5%	12%	14%	—

c. Evangelism

	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	63%	12%	24%	14%
Helpful .....	24%	38%	24%	43%
A little helpful .....	6%	38%	19%	14%
Not helpful .....	2%	—	18%	14%
Not sure/not applicable .....	4%	12%	16%	14%

d. Stewardship

	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	60%	11%	18%	29%
Helpful .....	24%	22%	13%	14%
A little helpful .....	10%	22%	22%	29%
Not helpful .....	2%	—	26%	29%
Not sure/not applicable .....	4%	44%	20%	—

e. Preaching

	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	46%	25%	14%	—
Helpful .....	24%	—	22%	—
A little helpful .....	19%	38%	19%	50%
Not helpful .....	4%	—	24%	33%
Not sure/not applicable .....	7%	38%	21%	17%

Q-54. How helpful would it be for your ministry context to have a conference, course, program, workshop, etc., on each of these topics designed exclusively [cont.]for Hispanic/Latino/a  
 [cont.] Presbyterians:

f. Leadership development				
	+	+		+
Very helpful .....	67%	44%	32%	50%
Helpful .....	24%	11%	20%	33%
A little helpful .....	5%	33%	14%	17%
Not helpful .....	1%	—	18%	—
Not sure/not applicable .....	3%	11%	16%	—
g. Spirituality				
	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	52%	25%	16%	17%
Helpful .....	35%	12%	12%	33%
A little helpful .....	9%	25%	26%	33%
Not helpful .....	2%	—	24%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	3%	38%	22%	—
h. Women's ministry				
	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	44%	12%	15%	17%
Helpful .....	34%	—	16%	17%
A little helpful .....	11%	38%	26%	50%
Not helpful .....	4%	—	22%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	6%	50%	22%	—
i. Youth ministry				
	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	54%	22%	16%	—
Helpful .....	24%	11%	21%	50%
A little helpful .....	10%	22%	21%	17%
Not helpful .....	5%	—	25%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	7%	44%	17%	17%
j. Discipleship				
	+	+	+	+
Very helpful .....	54%	44%	21%	—
Helpful .....	32%	11%	18%	50%
A little helpful .....	5%	33%	20%	17%
Not helpful .....	3%	—	23%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	6%	11%	18%	17%

Q-54. How helpful would it be for your ministry context to have a conference, course, program, workshop, etc., on each of these topics designed exclusively [cont.]for Hispanic/Latino/a  
 [cont.] Presbyterians:

k. Recognition of gifts				
		+	+	+
Very helpful .....	38%	12%	9%	—
Helpful .....	39%	25%	16%	17%
A little helpful .....	15%	12%	28%	50%
Not helpful .....	3%	—	27%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	5%	50%	20%	17%
l. Community service, social work, or action				
		+	+	+
Very helpful .....	49%	33%	19%	17%
Helpful .....	35%	11%	20%	50%
A little helpful .....	7%	22%	19%	17%
Not helpful .....	4%	—	23%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	5%	33%	18%	—
m. Worship				
		+	+	+
Very helpful .....	51%	25%	22%	—
Helpful .....	28%	12%	22%	33%
A little helpful .....	11%	25%	14%	33%
Not helpful .....	4%	—	23%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	6%	38%	19%	17%
n. Music				
		+	+	+
Very helpful .....	45%	—	20%	—
Helpful .....	33%	25%	18%	33%
A little helpful .....	9%	25%	15%	33%
Not helpful .....	6%	—	24%	17%
Not sure/not applicable .....	6%	50%	23%	17%
o. Other (please specify): _____				
		+	+	+
Very helpful .....	48%	—	6%	—
Helpful .....	24%	—	3%	—
A little helpful .....	5%	—	3%	—
Not helpful .....	5%	—	45%	—
Not sure/not applicable .....	19%	100%	42%	—

Q-55. In general, which church entity do you think would be the most appropriate one to sponsor leadership and education conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc., for your ministry context?

	+	+	+	+
Presbytery .....	44%	56%	30%	38%
Synod .....	11%	—	31%	—
General Assembly/National agencies of PC(USA) .....	14%	11%	18%	38%
PC(USA) seminary .....	10%	22%	—	—
Congregation .....	12%	—	6%	—
Other (please specify): .....	4%	11%	7%	—
Not sure .....	6%	—	9%	25%

Q-56. In general, what would do you think would be the best language arrangement at future conferences, courses, programs, workshops, etc. designed to help you and others in your ministry context?

	+	+	+	+
Bilingual .....	65%	100%	79%	88%
English only .....	22%	—	2%	—
Spanish only .....	5%	—	11%	—
No preference .....	8%	—	8%	12%

**Demographics**

Q-57. Where do you currently live?

	+	+	+	+
Northeast .....	16%	44%	21%	25%
Midwest .....	6%	—	25%	—
South .....	41%	44%	34%	62%
West .....	14%	11%	20%	12%
Puerto Rico .....	21%	—	—	—
Non-USA .....	2%	—	—	—

Q-58. What roles/positions do you have in the church? (Check *all* that apply.)

	+, ♦	+, ♦	♦	+, ♦
Pastor (solo, head of staff, associate, interim or co-pastor) .....	60%	11%	10%	12%
Other minister (teaching elder) .....	21%	11%	11%	12%
Elder .....	13%	—	9%	25%
Deacon .....	30%	—	3%	—
Executive, stated clerk, or other staff of a presbytery, synod, or national entity of the church .....	47%	—	98%	62%
Elected board member of national PC(USA) agency .....	10%	—	6%	—
Seminary faculty, staff, or board member .....	12%	100%	3%	—
Other (please specify): .....	25%	—	1%	—

Q-59. Please use this space for any additional comments.

[not tabulated]

Survey language:

Spanish.....	55%	25%	1%	—
English.....	45%	75%	99%	100%

Prepared by:  
Research Services  
A ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)





English to Spanish Translation of Recommendations and Rationale

HISPANIC/LATINO/A LEADERSHIP CONVERSATION GROUP  
RECOMMENDATIONS & RATIONALE

GRUPO DE DIÁLOGO ACERCA DEL LIDERATO HISPANO/LATINO/A  
RECOMENDACIONES & FUNDAMENTOS

- A. *Leadership Development*  
A. *Desarrollo De Liderto*

1. Recommendation: Encourage presbyteries and direct the six agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to develop and maintain web sites and publications in the Spanish language in addition to the English language so that Spanish speakers might have full access to information regarding the work and ministry of the church.

1. *Recomendación: Animar a los presbiterios y encargar a las seis agencias de la Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUUA) que desarrollen y mantengan páginas web y publicaciones en español en adición a las que están en inglés para que las personas que hablan en español puedan tener total acceso a la información relacionada al trabajo y ministerio de la iglesia.*

*Rationale*

In spite of the multilingual presence in our church, currently only a few selected PC(USA) resources and statements are translated into languages other than English. Presently, callers to the Presbyterian Center who do not speak English are faced with difficulties in getting the information they need. The PC(USA) website is predominantly in the English language. Thus many current and prospective church members cannot read or hear information in their own languages, preventing them from full participation in the connectional church. As we look toward the future of the church, we can make the ministry of the PC(USA) accessible to those who do not speak English.

The January 2012 Research Study commissioned by the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group was conducted by Research Services; at the request of the group, Research Services prepared a version of the survey in Spanish. Of the total 266 persons surveyed, 142 (53 percent) self-identified as Hispanic/Latino/a. Of those who identified as Hispanic/Latino/a, 86 (61 percent) took the Spanish version of the survey. This fact indicates a preference and a need to have Spanish-language materials available especially with respect to official denominational communications and resources.

*Fundamento*

*A pesar de la presencia multilingüe en nuestra iglesia, actualmente solo unos pocos recursos y declaraciones selectas de la IP (EEUUA) están traducidas a idiomas aparte del inglés. Actualmente, las personas que llaman al Centro Presbiteriano se encuentran con dificultades para conseguir la información que necesitan porque son enviadas a otras que hablan su mismo idioma pero que no necesariamente tienen la información que necesitan. El sitio de Internet de la IP(EEUUA) está predominantemente en el idioma inglés. De este modo, mucha de la membresía actual y posible de la iglesia no puede leer o escuchar información en su propio idioma, impidiendo su plena participación en la iglesia conexional. A medida que miramos hacia el futuro de la iglesia, podemos hacer que el ministerio de la IP(EEUUA) sea accesible para aquellas personas que no hablan inglés.*

*El estudio de investigación en enero 2012, comisionado por el Grupo de diálogo acerca del liderato hispano/latino fue llevado a cabo por el Servicio de investigación. El Servicio de investigación preparó una versión del estudio en español, a petición del grupo. Del total de 266 personas entrevistadas, 142 (ó 53%) se identificaron a sí mismas como hispanas/latinas. De esas que se identificaron como hispanas/latinas, 86 (ó 61%) tomó la versión del estudio en español. Este hecho indica una preferencia y una necesidad de contar con materiales en el idioma español disponibles especialmente con respecto a recursos y comunicaciones oficiales de la denominación.*

2. Encourage presbyteries to create staff positions, cross-cultural commissions, and/or committees of sufficiently qualified people that will resource congregations to explore and carry out new ways of ministering with Hispanic/Latino/a communities. These could include, but are not limited to, developing new churches, organizing Bible study fellowships, providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes as well as Spanish classes, engaging in/promoting social action and ministry, and supporting the development of “nesting” and cross-cultural congregations.

2. *Recomendación: Alentar a los presbiterios a crear puestos de personal, comisiones interculturales, y/o comités de personas que estén suficientemente capacitadas, que puedan servir de recursos para las congregaciones para que estas exploren y puedan llevar a cabo nuevas maneras de ministrar con las comunidades hispanas/latinas. Estas pueden incluir, pero no limitarse a, desarrollar nuevas iglesias, organizar grupos de estudios bíblicos, proveer clases de inglés para quienes hablan otros idiomas (ESOL), así como también clases de español, dedicarse/promover la acción social y el ministerio y apoyar el desarrollo de congregaciones en iglesias anfitrionas y congregaciones interculturales*

*Rationale for Recommendation A.2.*

Knowledge of cultural, linguistic, social, and other characteristics of a certain community is paramount to inform and determine how strategies intended to reach out to those communities will be shaped and carried out. Staff and/or committees that understand the Hispanic/Latino/a realities in the United States are necessary in order to develop effective, faithful ministries with Hispanics/Latinos/as as well as to serve as “bridge builders” among all churches in the presbytery.

The January 2012 Research Study found that the Hispanic/Latino/a leaders surveyed indicated a preference for presbyteries to sponsor programs and initiatives designed specifically for Hispanic/Latinos/as. Furthermore, the study also found that the “presence of

Hispanic/Latinos/as in key decision making groups” (within the presbytery) was the most commonly indicated positive influence on effective implementation of a strategy for Hispanics/Latinos/as.

#### Fundamento

*El conocer las características culturales, lingüísticas, sociales y otras de una comunidad particular es primordial para informar y determinar cómo las estrategias previstas para alcanzar a estas comunidades van a ser formadas y llevadas a cabo. Es necesario tener el personal y/o comités que entiendan las realidades hispano/latinas en los Estados Unidos para así poder desarrollar ministerios fieles y efectivos con la población hispana/latina, así como también servir como «constructores/as de puentes» entre todas las iglesias del presbiterio.*

*El estudio de investigación de enero del 2012 encontró que el liderazgo hispano/latino que fue parte de la encuesta señaló que prefiere que los presbiterios patrocinen programas e iniciativas diseñadas específicamente para la comunidad hispana/latina. Además, el estudio también encontró que «la presencia de personas hispanas/latinas en grupos claves para la toma de decisiones» (dentro del presbiterio) fue la influencia positiva más comúnmente indicada sobre la implementación efectiva de una estrategia para la comunidad hispana/latina.*

3. Urge presbyteries to examine the cultural contexts in which their congregations do ministry and help church members and leaders broaden their understandings of community. Furthermore, urge presbyteries to offer the benefit of antiracism and immigration issues educational opportunities to learn how white privilege and power, as well as other discriminatory attitudes and practices, limit the potential for building up the body of Christ.

3. *Recomendación: Instar a los presbiterios a examinar los contextos culturales en el cual sus congregaciones hacen ministerio y ayudar a la membresía y al liderato de las iglesias a ampliar sus entendimientos acerca de lo que es una comunidad. Además, instar a los presbiterios a ofrecer el beneficio de oportunidades educativas sobre antiracismo y asuntos de inmigración para aprender como el poder y privilegio blanco, así como otras actitudes y prácticas discriminatorias, limitan le potencial para construir el cuerpo de Cristo.*

#### Rationale for Recommendation A.3.

The church is a community opposed to racism, yet many presbyteries and congregations resist the call to understand fully how internalized privilege informs attitudes about people of color and how racism continues to harm the Body of Christ. Today, more than ever, helpful tools and training models exist for improving negative attitudes toward people of color. Such training will help Christians minister more effectively in a broken world, grateful for God’s love for all and prepared to discern together how to grow in understanding of one another.

*Fundamento: La iglesia es una comunidad que está opuesta al racismo. Sin embargo, muchas personas y congregaciones presbiterianas resisten el llamado a entender completamente cómo el privilegio internalizado informa las actitudes acerca de las personas de color, y como el racismo continúa haciendo daño al cuerpo de Cristo. Hoy, más que nunca, existen herramientas útiles y modelos de entrenamiento para mejorar las actitudes negativa hacia la gente de color Tal entrenamiento ayudará a que el pueblo cristiano ministre más efectivamente en un mundo quebrantado, agradecido por el amor de Dios hacia todas las personas y preparado para discernir en unidad cómo crecer en entendimiento mutuo.*

4. Empower and resource the Racial/Ethnic/Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women program and the Theology, Worship, and Education areas of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) in cooperation with the National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus to develop and implement programs and resources that will help Hispanic/Latino/a communities engage in cross-cultural opportunities amongst the different Spanish-speaking cultures and nationalities.

4. *Recomendación: Facultar y proveer recursos al área de ministerio Étnico/Racial, Ministerios con la mujer/ Mujeres Presbiterianas y al área de ministerio de Teología, Adoración y Educación del CMAG, en cooperación con el Caucus Nacional Presbiteriano Hispano/Latino, para desarrollar e implementar programas y recursos que ayudarán a las comunidades hispanas/latinas a involucrarse en oportunidades interculturales entre las distintas culturas y nacionalidades de habla hispana.*

#### Rationale for Recommendation A.4.

Hispanic/Latinos/as in the United States come from more than twenty countries. Though these countries share a common language, each has unique linguistic and cultural characteristics. These unique characteristics often include political, socioeconomic, and historical differences, which can sometimes create divisions amongst Hispanic/Latino/a communities. These varied Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian groups need to engage in intentional, ongoing dialogue regarding how they can work together and thereby more effectively impact the church.

#### Fundamento

*La comunidad hispana/latina en los Estados Unidos vienen de más de veinte países. Aunque estos países comparten un idioma en común, cada uno tiene características lingüísticas y culturales únicas. Estas características únicas en muchas ocasiones diferencias políticas, socioeconómicas e historias que en ocasiones pueden crear divisiones entre las comunidades hispano/latinas. Estos variados grupos hispano/latinos, necesitan involucrarse en un diálogo intencional y constante sobre cómo pueden trabajar en conjunto y de ese modo impactar más efectivamente a la iglesia.*

B. *Theological Education*  
B. *Educación Teológica*

1. Request the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to revisit underlying cultural assumptions not limited to but including those related to language and socioeconomic groupings in the ordination exams, and make recommendations to the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates (PCCEC). Such recommendations will be identified by a prior study.

1. *Recomendación: Solicitar a COTE (Comité sobre la educación teológica) que examine nuevamente los supuestos culturales subyacentes no limitándose a, sino incluyendo aquellos relacionados al idioma y a los grupos socioeconómicos en los exámenes de ordenación, y que haga recomendaciones al PCCEC (Comité Cooperativo de los Presbiterios sobre Exámenes para Candidatos/as). Tales recomendaciones serán identificadas por un estudio previo.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation B.1.*

Certain cultural assumptions exist within the ordination exams that cause unintentional but significant disadvantages to many Hispanic/Latino/a students. The PCCEC has known about these longstanding cultural challenges, and has sought to address them, but has not yet been able to adequately resolve them. With a better understanding of cultural assumptions and challenges, certain obstacles can be easily removed (i.e., versions of the Bible, translation issues, illustrations based on contexts not found in Hispanic/Latino/a congregations, etc.). Drawing from standardized exam studies (GRE, SAT, etc.), a comparative analysis can be conducted to discover the common cultural issues associated with the construction of public examinations. Theological schools need this study to inform their curricula in order to prepare students for exams.

#### *Fundamento*

*Existen algunos supuestos culturales dentro de los exámenes de ordenación que causan desventajas involuntarias pero significativas a muchos/as estudiantes hispanos/latinos. El PCCEC ha tenido conocimiento de estos perdurables retos culturales y ha buscado maneras de trabajar con ellos, pero todavía no ha podido resolverlos adecuadamente. Ciertos obstáculos pueden ser fácilmente removidos (p.ej. versiones de la Biblia, asuntos de traducción, ilustraciones basadas en contextos que no se encuentran en congregaciones hispano/latinas, etc.) con un mejor entendimiento de supuestos y retos culturales. Al partir de estudios acerca de exámenes estandarizados (GRE, SAT, etc.) se puede llevar a cabo un análisis comparativo para descubrir asuntos culturales comunes asociados con la construcción de exámenes públicos. Las escuelas teológicas necesitan este estudio para informar sus currículos para así poder preparar a sus estudiantes para los exámenes.*

2. Direct the COTE to partner with Presbyterian theological educators and PC(USA) seminary faculty and senior staff to identify funding and to participate in the Hispanic Summer Program's "Through Hispanic Eyes."

2. *Recomendación: Indicar al COTE que colabore con los/as educadores/as teológicos/as presbiterianos/as, la facultad y los directivos de los seminarios de la Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUUA) para identificar fondos y participar en la clase «Through Hispanic Eyes» (A través de ojos hispanos) del Programa Hispano de Verano.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation B.2.*

The January 2012 research study found that the issue of cultural awareness and sensitivity merited important consideration, especially among those involved in the formation of Presbyterian inquirers and candidates for ministry. One model, the Hispanic Summer Program (an ecumenical program founded in 1988 and based in Chicago, Illinois), has proven to be especially successful in increasing the cultural awareness and sensitivity of its participants. Currently the program is accessible to seminary presidents and academic deans (registration fee required), though the program would be beneficial to a much wider audience of theological educators.

The Hispanic Summer Program supplements and enriches the theological and ministerial education offered in seminaries and universities, with academic courses and other activities directly addressing Hispanic/Latino/a history, ministry and theology. (See <http://www.hispanicsummerprogram.org/>.)

According to the January 2012 research study, Hispanic/Latino/a leaders indicated that PC(USA) seminary-sponsored programs/workshops designed specifically for Hispanic/Latino/as were more helpful than the programs/workshops of any other sponsoring entity. [Other entities listed included General Assembly/national church sponsorship, presbytery, synod, and non-PC(USA) sponsoring entities.]

#### *Fundamento*

*El estudio de investigación de enero de 2012 encontró que el asunto de la conciencia y la sensibilidad cultural merecían consideración importante, especialmente entre aquellas personas involucradas en la formación de precandidatos/as y candidatos/as presbiterianos al ministerio. Un modelo, el Programa Hispano de Verano (un programa ecuménico fundado en el 1988 y basado en Chicago, Illinois), ha probado ser especialmente exitoso en aumentar la conciencia y la sensibilidad cultural de sus participantes. Actualmente, el programa está accesible a los/as presidentes/as de seminario y decanos académicos (se requiere una cuota de matrícula), aunque el programa sería beneficioso para una audiencia más amplia de educadores/as teológicos/as.*

*El Programa Hispano de Verano complementa y enriquece la educación teológica y ministerial ofrecida por los seminarios y universidades, con cursos académicos y otras actividades que tratan directamente con la historia, ministerio y teología hispana/latina.* <http://www.hispanicsummerprogram.org/>

*De acuerdo al estudio de investigación de enero 2012, el liderazgo hispano/latino de la IP (EEUUA) indicó que los programas/talleres específicamente diseñados para la comunidad hispana/latina y auspiciados por seminarios fueron más útiles que los programas/talleres auspiciados por alguna otra entidad auspiciadora (otras entidades en la lista incluyen a la Asamblea General /iglesia nacional como auspiciadora, presbiterio, sinodo, y entidades auspiciadoras no presbiterianas).*

3. Direct the COTE to collect and compile from PC(USA) seminaries data regarding the race, ethnicity, denominational affiliation, and gender composition of faculty, board members, and students and provide a comparative annual report to each seminary president and board.

3. *Recomendación: Indicar al COTE que recopile la composición racial, étnica, denominacional, y sexual de la facultad, de la membresía de las juntas, y de los estudiantes/as y que provea un informe comparativo anual a cada presidente/a y junta de los seminarios.*

### *Rationale for Recommendation B.3.*

A decline from previous levels in recruitment and retention of Hispanic/Latino/a faculty, especially those who are Presbyterian, and the lack of success so far in building a sizable cohort is a matter of real concern. Appeals for inclusion have had limited impact. This recommendation wishes to try offering comparative figures so that particular schools can benchmark their success against others and thereby find an incentive for change.

#### *Fundamento*

*Es un asunto de verdadera preocupación la disminución de los niveles anteriores en el reclutamiento y la retención de facultad hispana/latina, especialmente aquella que es presbiteriana, y la falta de éxito hasta ahora en desarrollar un grupo considerable de esta. Los pedidos de inclusión han tenido un impacto limitado. Esta recomendación desea hacer el intento de ofrecer cifras comparativas para que las escuelas particulares puedan hacer pruebas de su éxito frente a las demás y así encontrar un incentivo para el cambio.*

- C. *New Church Developments (NCDs)*
- C. *Desarrollo De Nuevas IglesiaS (DNIs)*

1. Encourage presbyteries to develop a vision and strategy and to prioritize and allocate resources for Hispanic/Latino/a NCDs, new worshiping communities, and other ministries; and encourage presbyteries to share these visions/strategies and to work in partnership with the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office.

*1. Recomendación: Alentamos a los presbiterios a que desarrollen una visión y una estrategia y a darle prioridad y a asignar recursos para desarrollos de nuevas iglesias hispanas/latinas, nuevas comunidades de adoración y otros ministerios. También animamos a los presbiterios a compartir sus visiones/estrategias y trabajo en colaboración con la Oficina de Apoyo Congregacional Hispana/Latina.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation C.1.*

Mid councils have a responsibility for developing new communities of faith to further the mission of Jesus Christ. In order to do so, a vision and strategy are needed, which should include a focus on the growing Hispanic/Latino/a population. Once a strategy has been developed, sharing this strategy with the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office will foster communication and grow a connectional body among the communities and the PC(USA).

#### *Racional*

*Los concilios medios tienen la responsabilidad de desarrollar nuevas comunidades de fe para extender la misión de Jesucristo. Para lograrlo, se necesita una visión y una estrategia, que deberán incluir un enfoque en el crecimiento de la población hispana/latina. Luego de que se haya desarrollado una estrategia, el compartir esta estrategia con la Oficina de Apoyo Congregacional Hispana/Latina fomentará la comunicación y hará crecer un cuerpo conexional entre las comunidades y la IP (EEUU).*

2. Encourage presbyteries, in partnership with PC(USA) seminaries, to identify Hispanic/Latino/a inquirers, candidates, and commissioned ruling elders who demonstrate leadership qualities appropriate for NCD ministry, and share this information with presbyteries and the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office.

*2. Recomendación: Animar a los presbiterios, en colaboración con los seminarios IP (EEUU), a identificar a precandidatos/as, candidatos/as y ancianos/as gobernantes comisionados/as que demuestren cualidades de liderazgo apropiadas para el ministerio de desarrollo de nuevas iglesias, y compartir esa información con los presbiterios y con la Oficina de Apoyo Congregacional Hispana/Latina.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation C.2.*

Specific leadership skills are needed to initiate, implement, and sustain NCDs. Individuals possessing such skills should be availed various resources that will encourage and support the development of NCDs and other new worshiping communities.

#### *Fundamento*

*Se necesitan destrezas específicas de liderazgo para iniciar, implementar y sostener los desarrollos de nuevas iglesias. Las personas que posean tales destrezas deberán hacer uso de varios recursos que alentarán y apoyarán el desarrollo de nuevas iglesias y otras comunidades nuevas de adoración.*

3. Encourage presbyteries and GAMC ministry areas to provide resources for Hispanic/Latino/a commissioned ruling elders, seminary students, pastors, and other interested leadership to participate in local, regional, and national NCD events and services to foster enrichment and education of the NCD program.

*3. Recomendación: Exhortar a los presbiterios y a las áreas de ministerio del Concilio de misión de la Asamblea General a proveer recursos para los/as ancianos/as gobernantes comisionados/as, estudiantes del seminario, pastores/as y otros/as líderes interesados/as en participar en eventos y servicios de desarrollo de nuevas iglesias locales, regionales y nacionales, para fomentar el enriquecimiento y la educación del programa para el desarrollo de nuevas iglesias.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation C.3.*

The January 2012 research study found that in addition to the primary importance of leadership development programs/workshops designed specifically for Hispanic/Latinos/as, survey participants also indicated “evangelism” (targeted toward Hispanic/Latinos/as) as a secondary area in need of additional resources and training. Some presbyteries are working intentionally to nurture Hispanic/Latino/a NCD leaders, but others where the Hispanic/Latino/a presence is growing are not acknowledging such growth or providing appropriate NCD support and training for Hispanic/Latino/a leaders. The Office of Evangelism and Church Growth of the GAMC has a program for the training of Hispanic/Latino/a NCD pastors through a coaching program. More programs such as this are needed at a local level.

*El estudio de investigación de enero del 2012 encontró que, en adición a la importancia primaria de programas/talleres de desarrollo de liderazgo diseñados específicamente para hispanos/latinos, las personas que participaron de la encuesta también indicaron que el «evangelismo» (dirigido a la comunidad hispana/latina) es la segunda área en necesidad de recursos adicionales y entrenamiento. Algunos presbiterios están trabajando intencionalmente en nutrir a líderes hispanos/latinos de desarrollo de nuevas iglesias, pero hay otros en donde la presencia hispana/latina está creciendo, que no están reconociendo tal crecimiento o proveyendo el apoyo apropiado a los desarrollos de nuevas iglesias y entrenamiento para el liderato hispano/latino. La Oficina de evangelismo y crecimiento de la iglesia del Concilio de Misión de la Iglesia Presbiteriana tiene un programa de entrenamiento de pastores/as hispanos/latinos a través de un programa de entrenamiento. Se necesitan más programas como estos al nivel local.*

D. *Youth and Young Adults*

D. *Jóvenes y Adultos/as Jóvenes:*

1. Direct the Office of Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support and the Office of Resources and Relationships with Hispanic/Latino/a constituencies to convene a group of people (young adults and adults) to serve as a mentoring network for youth and young adults in the different regions where they are needed.

1. *Recomendación: Indicar a la Oficina de Apoyo Congregacional Hispana/Latina y a la Oficina de Recursos y Relaciones con las constituyentes hispanas/latinas a que convoque a un grupo de personas (jóvenes y adultos/as jóvenes) para servir como una red de mentores/as para los/as jóvenes y adultos/as jóvenes en diferentes regiones donde sean necesarios/as.*

*Rationale for Recommendation D.1.*

Currently no systemic mentoring strategy designed for Hispanic/Latino/a youth and young adults exists. Such a mentoring process would provide youth and young adults with a trusting relationship with a caring leader who will help foster discipleship. The creation of this mentoring network will provide support and motivation for local leaders and help them inspire youth and young adults to a higher commitment to Jesus Christ, resulting in their involvement at all levels of the church's mission.

According to the January 2012 Research Study commissioned by the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group, the survey participants indicated that the Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic/Latino/a constituencies in the PC(USA) [215th General Assembly (2003)] has been more effectively implemented nationally than regionally. However, the study also found that leadership initiatives and programs designed specifically for Hispanics/Latinos/as would be most effectively implemented at the regional level.

*Fundamento*

*En este momento no existe una estrategia de capacitación sistemática a través de mentores/as diseñada para jóvenes y adultos/as jóvenes hispano/latinos/as. Un proceso de mentores proveería a los/as jóvenes y adultos/as jóvenes con una relación de confianza con un/a líder comprensivo/a que le ayude a fomentar el discipulado. La creación de esta red de mentores/as proveerá el apoyo y la motivación para líderes locales y les ayudará a inspirar a jóvenes y a adultos/as jóvenes a tener un compromiso más fuerte con Jesucristo, resultando esto en un involucramiento en todos los niveles de la misión de la iglesia.*

*De acuerdo al estudio de investigación de enero de 2012 comisionado por el Grupo de diálogo acerca del liderato hispano/latino, las personas que participaron de la encuesta indicaron que la Estrategia para el Ministerio con Grupos Hispanos/Latinos en la Iglesia Presbiteriana E.U.A. (Asamblea General 215, 2003) ha sido más efectivamente implementada a nivel nacional que regional. Sin embargo, el estudio también encontró que las iniciativas de liderazgo y programas diseñados específicamente para la comunidad hispana/latina serían más efectivamente implementados a nivel regional.*

2. Direct the Office of Ministries with Youth and encourage other PC(USA) entities to incorporate cultural proficiency/sensitivity training in relation to Hispanic/ Latino/a young people as a part of the training process for leadership of all events, gatherings, and resources (including providing interpreters for Spanish-speaking participants, bilingual worship, and multilingual promotional resources).

2. *Recomendación: Indicar a la Oficina de Ministerios con la Juventud y animar a otras entidades de la IP (EEUUA) a incorporar el entrenamiento sobre sensibilidad/competencia cultural en relación a la gente hispana/latina joven como parte del proceso de entrenamiento para el liderazgo de todos los eventos, encuentros y recursos (incluyendo el proveer traductores/as para participantes de habla hispana, adoración bilingüe y recursos promocionales multilingües).*

*Rationale for Recommendation D.2.*

Due to the changing nature of the church, events for youth and young adults should accurately reflect the diversity of the larger society. Young people should be able to connect their own lives and experiences to the contents presented through worship and faith encounters. The church as a whole can benefit from the rich diversity that already exists within it. All leadership should be aware of and include the gifts of all of God's children.

*Fundamento*

*Debido a la naturaleza cambiante de la iglesia, los eventos para jóvenes y adultos/as jóvenes deben reflejar fielmente la diversidad de la sociedad en general. Los/as jóvenes deben poder conectar sus propias vidas y experiencias con los contenidos presentados a través de la adoración y de los encuentros de fe. La iglesia como un todo se puede beneficiar de la rica diversidad que ya existe dentro de ella. Todo el liderazgo debe estar consciente de e incluir los dones de todos los hijos e hijas de Dios.*

E. *Other*

E. *Otros*

The Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Hispanic/Latino/a Congregational Support Office, in conversations with its constituencies, to effectively implement the PC(USA) Hispanic National Strategy [approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003); *Minutes*, 2003, Part I, pp. 531ff] into a strategic plan that will provide guidance to Hispanic/Latino/a communities and groups for partnering with the General Assembly, mid councils, and PCUSA) seminaries in addressing these matters. This should happen in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus to monitor progress and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

*Indicar a la Oficina de Apoyo Congregacional Hispano/Latina, en conversación con sus constituyentes, que implemente efectivamente la Estrategia Hispana Nacional de la IP (EEUUA) (adoptada por la Asamblea General 215 en el 2003) a través de un plan estratégico que proveerá dirección a las comunidades y grupos hispanos/latinos, colaborando con la Asamblea General, con los concilios medios y con los seminarios de la IP (EEUUA) en trabajar con estos asuntos. Esto debe suceder en consulta con el Comité de defensa de las preocupaciones étnico raciales y el Caucus Nacional Presbiteriano Hispano/Latino para monitorear el progreso e informar a la Asamblea General 221.*

#### *Rationale for Recommendation E.*

The January 2012 research study found widespread unfamiliarity about the 2003 Hispanic National Strategy among all groups surveyed. Specifically, nearly seven of 10 (68 percent) of Hispanic/Latino/a leaders indicated some degree of unfamiliarity with the 2003 strategy. Of those more familiar with the strategy, many indicated that it had not been implemented effectively, particularly at the regional level. This lack of awareness and lack of effective implementation can be attributed to the absence of a clear communication strategy, a centralized monitoring system, and well-defined evaluation mechanisms. These areas can be improved with the development of a well-designed strategic plan that includes, as measurable objectives, the recommendations of this report.

#### *Fundamento*

*El estudio de investigación de enero de 2012 reveló una falta de conocimiento acerca de la Estrategia Nacional Hispana entre todos los grupos encuestados. En concreto, casi siete de cada diez (68%) del liderazgo hispano/latino indicó algún grado de desconocimiento de la Estrategia de 2003. De las personas más familiarizadas con la estrategia, muchas indicaron que no había sido implementada efectivamente, particularmente en el nivel regional. Esta falta de conocimiento y falta de implementación efectiva puede ser atribuida a la ausencia de una estrategia clara de comunicación, un sistema centralizado de monitoreo, y unos mecanismos de evaluación bien definidos. Estas áreas pueden mejorarse con el desarrollo de un plan estratégico bien diseñado, que incluya, como objetivos medibles, las recomendaciones de este informe.*

#### *Overall Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 15-09. On Convening a Conversation to Develop a Strategy for Addressing Hispanic/Latino Participation at All Levels of the Church (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p.1164).*

#### *Fundamento/Contexto*

*Referencia 2010: Artículo 15-09. Sobre convocar a un diálogo para desarrollar una estrategia para trabajar con la participación hispana/latina a todos los niveles de la iglesia:*

The recommendation was as follows:

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) recommends that the 219th General Assembly (2010) convene a conversation within the larger church to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the concern for Hispanic/Latino/a leadership at all levels of the church that would include and be led by no fewer than two representatives appointed or elected by each of the following groups: the PC(USA) Hispanic/ Latina/o Caucus, the PC(USA) Office of Vocation, the Advisory Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Committee on Theological Education, and the General Assembly Mission Council. Other groups and/or appropriate individuals may be invited into the conversations with all individually responsible for reporting to their respective groups and corporately back to the 220th General Assembly (2012). – COTE (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1164)

*El Comité de educación teológica (COTE) recomienda que la Asamblea General 219 (2010) convoque a un diálogo dentro de la iglesia extendida para desarrollar una estrategia exhaustiva para trabajar con la inquietud sobre el asunto del liderazgo hispano/latino en todos los niveles de la iglesia que incluiría y sería dirigida por no menos de dos representantes seleccionados o elegidos por cada uno de los siguientes grupos: el Caucus Nacional Presbiteriano Hispano Latino, la Oficina de Vocaciones de la IP (EEUUA), el Comité de defensa de las preocupaciones étnico raciales, el Comité de educación teológica, y el Concilio de misión de la Asamblea General. Otros grupos y/o personas apropiadas pueden ser invitadas al diálogo, y todas ellas individualmente tendrán la responsabilidad de informar a sus grupos respectivos y corporativamente a las Asamblea Genera 220 (2012)—COTE (Minutas, 2010, p.10).*

The *Book of Order*<sup>1</sup> states, “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups ... shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church” (*Book of Order*, G-4.0403). In an ever-increasing multicultural and multiethnic United States society, the statement above takes on new meaning and relevance.<sup>2</sup>

The 2010 U.S. Census indicates that communities of European descent are a minority in many areas of the country. Certainly, by mid-century or even before, demographers predict, the racial-ethnic population “will outnumber whites throughout the nation.” Among these “emerging majorities,” Hispanics/Latinos/as constitute the fastest-growing ethno-cultural group, at over 55 million.<sup>3</sup> Many consider this reality an opportunity to enhance their world view and to learn from others who hold different perspectives on life and faith. Unfortunately, many others react negatively to this projected increase in the Hispanic/Latino/a population. Racist attitudes have crystallized in anti-immigration laws in many parts of the country, especially in the South, with the overt intent of targeting Hispanics/Latinos/as. Even the church struggles to make the changes necessary to reflect these present dynamics and to prepare for what the future will bring. For the most part, strategies intended to make the church more ethnically inclusive lack both resources and full institutional support. In spite of many years of official efforts by the General Assembly Mission Council and the development of programs aimed to help the church become more

ethnically inclusive, on the last count, the PC(USA) was still approximately 91 percent white. Even as the growth rate is more stable within racial ethnic communities, these figures reflect not so much the success of any effort to increase the ethnic diversity of the church as much as the rapid attrition of its white members. Thus the percentage of people of color in the PC(USA) is growing in large part because white communities are declining.<sup>4</sup> While the United States moves toward an increasingly multiethnic and multicultural future, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appears to move counterculturally, maintaining primarily a monocultural, ethnocentric church while, at the same time, declining in numbers.

God created a diverse world of forms, colors, languages, cultures, and peoples (*ethne*) and “saw everything that [God] had made, and indeed, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31a). In time, God’s own offspring—Jesus Christ—through the Incarnation, became a human being born as a Jew within the context of the Roman Empire. Raised in Galilee “of the nations,” his milieu included the cultural experience of Macedonians, Persians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Syrians, Romans and indigenous Canaanites. His genealogy included Canaanites and Moabites. He spoke Aramaic and Hebrew, perhaps even Greek. Jesus ministered to Samaritans and Roman citizens, as well as to his own Jewish people. The gospel gives witness to Jesus who, since birth, experienced outsider status and whose presence attracted those who felt marginalized by society. Jesus reached out to them and found them worthy of inclusion at the table of fellowship. Jesus died for the world (Jn. 3:16) and sent his followers to all nations (Mt. 28:19). He broke down societal, cultural, religious, and racial barriers by speaking to and accepting water from the woman at the well, an ethnic and social outcast (John 4). By the power of the Spirit, Jesus’ Word gave birth to the church on the day of Pentecost as a multilingual/multicultural community (Acts 2:1–13), a community that welcomed the diverse gifts of its members and lived in true solidarity by the sharing of common resources (Acts 2:43–47) and by accepting everyone as equal partners in ministry and mission despite differences in ethnicity or nationality (Acts 6 and 10ff).

If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a predominantly white, English-speaking denomination, is going to thrive and have effective, faithful ministries in a multicultural and multiethnic society, then it must develop strategies to face the challenge of becoming a more intentional community of inclusion. The church must evolve from a model of diversity that seeks inclusion through mere representation and quotas toward a model of equality, hospitality, and justice, based on full partnership in mission, so that it can be a church in true solidarity with peoples from different cultures, ethnicities, and languages. The church that shares and welcomes the diverse gifts of its people, in service and leadership, becomes a first fruit of God’s Realm; a true house of prayer for all nations (Mk. 11:17).

*El Libro de Orden<sup>1</sup> declara que: «La Iglesia Presbiteriana (E.U.A.) dará expresión completa a la rica diversidad de sus miembros y proveerá los medios que hagan posible la inclusividad máxima conducente al sentido de unidad en su vida emergente. Personas de todos los grupos étnicos-raciales... tendrán la garantía de completa participación y acceso a la representación en el proceso para tomar decisiones en la Iglesia» (G-4.043). En una sociedad cada vez más multicultural y multiétnica, la declaración antes citada toma un nuevo significado y relevancia.<sup>2</sup>*

*El Censo de los Estados Unidos 2010 indica que las comunidades de descendencia europea son una minoría en muchas áreas de la nación. Es cierto que, a mediados del siglo o hasta antes, los/as demógrafos/as predicen que la población étnico racial «superará en número a la población blanca en todo el país». Entre estas «mayorías emergentes» la población hispana/latina constituye al grupo étnico cultural de más rápido crecimiento, con más de 55 millones de personas.<sup>3</sup> Muchas personas consideran que esta realidad es una oportunidad para mejorar su visión del mundo y para aprender de otras personas que tienen diferentes perspectivas acerca de la vida y de la fe. Desafortunadamente, muchas otras reaccionan negativamente a este aumento proyectado en la población hispana/latina. Las actitudes racistas se han cristalizado en leyes anti migratorias en muchas partes del país, y especialmente en el sur, con el intento declarado de acosar a la comunidad hispana/latina. Hasta la iglesia lucha con hacer los cambios necesarios que reflejen estas dinámicas presentes y con prepararse para lo que traiga el futuro. En su mayor parte, las estrategias que tienen la intención de hacer que la iglesia sea más étnicamente inclusiva carecen tanto de recursos como del apoyo total de la institución. A pesar de muchos años de esfuerzos oficiales hechos por el Concilio de Misión de la Asamblea General, y el desarrollo de programas destinados a ayudar a la iglesia a ser más étnicamente inclusiva, a fin de cuentas, la IP (EEUU) todavía era aproximadamente 91 % blanca. A pesar de que la tasa de crecimiento es más estable dentro de las comunidades étnico raciales, estas cifras no reflejan tanto el éxito de algún esfuerzo por aumentar la diversidad étnica de la iglesia como la disminución rápida de la membresía blanca. Así, el porcentaje de personas de color en la IP (EEUU) está creciendo en gran parte porque las comunidades blancas están en declive.<sup>4</sup> Mientras que los EEUU se mueven hacia un futuro cada vez más multiétnico y multicultural, la Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUU) parece moverse en contra de la cultura, manteniendo una iglesia mono cultural y etnocéntrica, mientras que, a la misma vez, disminuye en sus números.*

*Dios creó un mundo diverso de formas, colores, idiomas, culturas, y pueblos (ethne) «...y Dios vio que todo lo que había hecho estaba muy bien» (Génesis 1:31). Con el tiempo, el mismísimo hijo de Dios, Jesucristo, a través de la encarnación, se convirtió en un ser humano nacido como un judío dentro del contexto de Imperio Romano. Criado en Galilea «de las naciones» su entorno incluyó la experiencia cultural de los pueblos macedonio, persa, asirio, babilónico, sirio, romano, y del pueblo autóctono cananeo. Su genealogía incluyó a los pueblos cananeo y moabita. Habló arameo y hebreo y a lo mejor hasta griego. Jesús ministró al pueblo samaritano y a la ciudadanía romana, así como también a su propio pueblo judío. El evangelio da testimonio de que Jesús, desde que nació, experimentó el estatus de un forastero y cuya presencia atrajo a aquellas personas que se sentían marginalizadas por la sociedad. Jesús se acercó a ellos/as y les hayo dignos/as de ser incluidos/as en la mesa de hermandad. Jesús murió por el mundo (Juan 3:16) y envió a quienes le seguía a todas las naciones (Mateo 28:19). Él destruyó las barreras sociales, culturales, religiosas, y raciales cuando habló con y acepto el agua de la mujer en el pozo, una rechazada étnica y social (Juan 4). Por el poder del Espíritu, la palabra de Jesús hizo nacer a la iglesia en el día de Pentecostés como una comunidad multilingüe y multicultural (Hechos 2: 13), una comunidad que dio la bienvenida a los diversos dones de sus miembros y que vivió en verdadera solidaridad al compartir los recursos colectivos (Hechos 2: 43-47) y que acepto a todo el mundo en pie de igualdad en el ministerio y la misión a pesar de su etnia o nacionalidad (Hechos 6 y 10ss).*

*Si la Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUU), una denominación predominante blanca y anglófona, va a prosperar y a tener ministerios efectivos y fieles en una sociedad multicultural y multiétnica, entonces tiene que desarrollar estrategias para enfrentar el reto de convertirse en una comunidad de inclusión más intencional. La iglesia tiene que evolucionar de un modelo de diversidad que busca la inclusión meramente a través de la representación y las cuotas, hacia un modelo de igualdad, hospitalidad, y justicia, basado en una colaboración completa en la misión, para que así pueda ser una iglesia de verdadera solidaridad con los pueblos de diferentes culturas, étnicas, e idiomas. La iglesia que comparte y da la bienvenida a los diversos dones de sus gentes, en servicio y liderazgo, se convierte en el primer fruto del reino de Dios; un verdadera cada de oración para todas las naciones (Marcos 11:17)*

Specifically regarding the Hispanic/Latino/a constituency and the need to continue to improve outreach efforts to those constituents, in 2003 the General Assembly approved the Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic-Latino Constituencies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This comprehensive strategy's purpose was to encourage and resource the entire church to engage in ministries with and outreach to the Latino communities throughout the country.

In late 2009, representatives of the Hispanic/Latino/a National Presbyterian Caucus met with the Committee on Theological Education in San Anselmo, California, to present their concerns about the recent loss of the only two Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian professors in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries. The request included plans for intentional recruitment of Hispanic/Latino/a professors and students by PC(USA) seminaries as well as changes in the core curricula of these institutions to prepare students from all ethno-cultural backgrounds to minister effectively cross-culturally given the present and future dynamics.

This conversation led the COTE to direct an action to the 219th General Assembly (2010) that in essence asked the church to "convene a conversation within the larger church to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the concern for Hispanic/Latino/a leadership at all levels of the church." The General Assembly approved this request.

The conversation group met via conference call as well as at one face-to-face meeting in June 2011. At the June meeting, the group realized that they needed more information about Hispanic/Latino/a ministries in the PC(USA). To this end, the group commissioned a national research study with the primary objective of cataloguing educational programs, workshops, and other initiatives designed specifically for Hispanics/Latinos/as and evaluating the impact of these programs/workshops on the ministries of the participants. A secondary goal of the research study was to evaluate the awareness and implementation of the National Hispanic Strategy approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003).

The group contracted with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Research Services, who conducted this national study in January 2012. The overall sample of 266 participants contained 149 Hispanic/Latino/a leaders (ruling elders and teaching elders), 94 mid council executives, 12 leaders from PC(USA) seminaries, and 11 PC(USA) agency chairs and senior staff. The complete results of the study are included in Appendix A.

*En lo que se refiere específicamente a la constituyente hispana/latina y a la necesidad de continuar mejorando los esfuerzos para alcanzarla, la Asamblea General en el año 2003 adoptó la «Estrategia para el Ministerio con Grupos Hispanos/Latinos en la Iglesia Presbiteriana E.U.A.». El propósito de esta estrategia exhaustiva fue el motivar y proveer recursos a toda la iglesia para que se involucrara en los ministerios con y alcance a las comunidades latinas en todo el país.*

*A finales de 2009, representantes del Caucus Nacional Presbiteriano Hispano/Latino se reunieron con el Comité de Educación Teológica (COTE) en San Anselmo, CA, para presentar sus preocupaciones acerca de la pérdida reciente de los únicos dos profesores presbiterianos latinos en seminarios presbiterianos (EEUUA). La solicitud incluyó planes para el reclutamiento intencional de profesores/as y estudiantes hispanos/latinos/as en los seminarios de la IP (EEUUA) así como cambios en el currículo básico de estas instituciones para preparar a sus estudiantes de todo trasfondo étnico cultural para efectivamente ministrar interculturalmente dadas las dinámicas actuales y futuras.*

*Esta conversación llevó a COTE a dirigir una acción a la Asamblea General 219 (2010) que en esencia pidió a la iglesia a que « convoque a un diálogo dentro de la iglesia extendida para desarrollar una estrategia exhaustiva para trabajar con la inquietud sobre el asunto del liderazgo hispano/latino en todos los niveles de la iglesia». La Asamblea General aprobó esta petición.*

*Este grupo de diálogo se reunió a través de conferencia telefónica, así como en una reunión cara a cara en junio de 2011. En la reunión de junio, el grupo se dio cuenta de que necesitaba más información sobre los ministerios hispano/latinos de la IP (EEUUA). Con este fin, el grupo comisionó un estudio nacional de investigación con el objetivo principal de catalogar los programas educacionales, talleres, y otras iniciativas diseñadas específicamente para la comunidad hispana/latina y evaluar el impacto de estos programas/talleres en los ministerios de quienes participaron. Un objetivo secundario de la investigación fue el evaluar el conocimiento y la aplicación de la Estrategia Nacional Hispana adoptada por la Asamblea General 215 en el 2003.*

*El grupo contrató a la oficina de Servicios de investigación de la Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUUA) quien llevó a cabo este estudio nacional en enero de 2012. La muestra general de 266 participantes contenía 149 líderes hispanos/latinos (ancianos/as docentes y gobernantes), 94 ejecutivos/as de concilios medios, 12 líderes de los seminarios de la IP (EEUUA), y 11 moderadores/as y altos/as funcionarios/as de las agencias de la IP (EEUUA). Los resultados completos del estudio están incluidos en el apéndice A.*

#### Endnotes

1. *Book of Order 2009–2011, before the changes that were approved in 2011.*
1. *Libro de Orden 2009–2011, antes de los cambios que fueron aprobados en el 2011.*
2. Phillip Jenkins asserts that "The religious future of the Christian world is in the hands and under the influence of Global South Christians, most of them people of color with very different world views, culture and languages from the presently dominant white, Western church." The Presbyterian national churches in Mexico and Guatemala together, for example, are more numerous than the PC(USA), with a combined membership of more than three million congregants. Many of these Presbyterian Christians from the "Global South" are also new immigrants who now reside in the United States.
2. *Philip Jenkins afirma que «El futuro religioso del mundo cristiano está en las manos y bajo la influencia de la comunidad cristiana del sur global, la mayoría de esta gente de color con visiones del mundo, cultura e idiomas muy diferentes de la actualmente dominante iglesia blanca occidental». Por ejemplo, las iglesias presbiterianas nacionales en México y Guatemala unidas, son más numerosas que la IP (EEUUA) con una membresía combinada de más de tres millones de congregantes. Mucha de esta población presbiteriana cristiana del «sur global» también es parte de los nuevos/as inmigrantes que ahora residen en los EEUU.*
3. More than half of the growth in the total U.S. population between 2000 and 2010 resulted from an increase of the Hispanic population. Between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic population grew by 43 percent, rising from 35.3 million in 2000 to 50.5 million in 2010. The rise in the Hispanic population accounted for more than half of the 27.3 million increase in the total U.S. population. By 2010, Hispanics comprised 16 percent of the total U.S. population



of 308.7 million (National Institute for Latino Policy and 2010 Census).

3. *Más de la mitad del crecimiento en la población de los EEUA entre el año 2000 y el 2010 resultó de un incremento de la población hispana. Entre el 2000 y el 2010, la población hispana aumentó un 43 por ciento, creciendo de 35.3 millones en el 2000 a 50.5 millones en el 2010. El aumento en la población hispana representó más de la mitad del aumento de 27.3 millones de personas en la población total de los EEUA. Para el año 2010, la comunidad hispana constituía el 16 por ciento de la población total de los EEUA de 308.7 millones (Instituto Nacional de Política Latina, y el Censo de 2010).*

4. Jack Marcum, Ph.D., coordinator of Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), July 1, 2011. Dr. Marcum explained in a recent PowerPoint presentation at a national church gathering: "While the total number of PC(USA) congregations declined from 11,260 in 1998 to 10,657 in 2009, most of the churches that closed were white. In contrast, the growth that has occurred in the past decade has generally been among immigrant ethnic churches."

4. *Marcum, Jack, Dr.. Coordinador de los Servicios de Investigación, Iglesia Presbiteriana (EEUUA), 1 de julio de, 2011. Jack explicó en una reciente presentación visual en un encuentro de la iglesia nacional que: «Mientras el número total de las congregaciones de la IP (EEUUA) declinaba de 11,260 en 1998 a 10,657 en el 2009, la mayoría de las iglesias que cerraron eran blancas. En contraste, el crecimiento que ha ocurrido en la última década ha sido generalmente entre las iglesias inmigrantes étnicas.*

**General Assembly Mission Program Receipts  
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2010**

Receipts	MISSION BUDGET								
	Unrestricted			Restricted			Grand Total		
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2009	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2009	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2009
<b>I. Support from Congregations &amp; Presbyteries</b>									
<b>Basic Mission Support</b>									
Shared Mission Support	10,200,000	9,307,710	10,288,565	-	-	-	10,200,000	9,307,710	10,288,565
Directed Mission Support	-	-	-	3,800,000	3,597,475	3,982,083	3,800,000	3,597,475	3,982,083
	<b>10,200,000</b>	<b>9,307,710</b>	<b>10,288,565</b>	<b>3,800,000</b>	<b>3,597,475</b>	<b>3,982,083</b>	<b>14,000,000</b>	<b>12,905,185</b>	<b>14,270,648</b>
<b>Churchwide Spec. Offerings</b>									
Christmas Joy	-	-	-	4,400,000	4,243,408	4,537,815	4,400,000	4,243,408	4,537,815
One Great Hour of Sharing	-	-	-	7,500,000	7,655,272	7,901,896	7,500,000	7,655,272	7,901,896
Peacemaking	-	-	-	1,000,000	995,996	1,017,849	1,000,000	995,996	1,017,849
Pentecost	-	-	-	880,000	823,988	859,362	880,000	823,988	859,362
Witness	-	-	-	-	11,576	27,420	-	11,576	27,420
	-	-	-	<b>13,780,000</b>	<b>13,730,240</b>	<b>14,344,342</b>	<b>13,780,000</b>	<b>13,730,240</b>	<b>14,344,342</b>
<b>II. Supplementary Support (Beyond Budget) From Congregations &amp; Presbyteries &amp; Individuals</b>									
<b>Other Specific Appeals</b>									
Emergency and Disaster Relief	-	-	-	2,500,000	13,438,088	1,903,224	2,500,000	13,438,088	1,903,224
Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO)	-	-	-	8,680,000	7,665,122	7,223,281	8,680,000	7,665,122	7,223,281
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	573,923	509,712	952,595	573,923	509,712	952,595
Special Missionary Support	-	-	-	141,500	331,347	291,902	141,500	331,347	291,902
Hunger	-	-	-	500,000	585,597	506,312	500,000	585,597	506,312
Theological Education Fund	-	-	-	1,700,000	1,521,418	1,743,159	1,700,000	1,521,418	1,743,159
	-	-	-	<b>14,095,423</b>	<b>24,051,284</b>	<b>12,620,473</b>	<b>14,095,423</b>	<b>24,051,284</b>	<b>12,620,473</b>
<b>Add'l Forms of Giving</b>									
Presbyterian Women	900,000	479,164	916,287	52,000	382,381	15,000	952,000	861,545	931,287
Bequests and Annuities	2,500,000	6,177,817	231,701	200,000	223,012	148,862	2,700,000	6,400,829	380,563
Other Gifts	-	-	-	125,000	168,000	55,947	125,000	168,000	55,947
Validated Mission Support	-	-	-	12,000	-	121,244	12,000	-	121,244
Grants from Outside Fdns.	-	-	-	983,342	71,289	142,104	983,342	71,289	142,104
	<b>3,400,000</b>	<b>6,656,981</b>	<b>1,147,988</b>	<b>1,372,342</b>	<b>844,682</b>	<b>483,157</b>	<b>4,772,342</b>	<b>7,501,663</b>	<b>1,631,145</b>
<b>III. Endowments, Interest and Dividends</b>									
PC (USA) Restr. Endow. Fds.	-	-	-	6,461,130	6,403,997	6,063,620	6,461,130	6,403,997	6,063,620
PC (USA) Unres. Endow. Fds.	7,505,853	7,668,701	7,505,666	-	-	-	7,505,853	7,668,701	7,505,666
Pby. Mission Program Fund	250,000	208,954	319,442	579,631	364,527	235,494	829,631	573,481	554,936
Outside Trusts	800,000	889,020	1,347,686	135,000	120,000	151,252	935,000	1,009,020	1,498,938
Jarvie Commonweal Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jinshian Fund	-	-	-	1,923,425	1,870,292	1,828,056	1,923,425	1,870,292	1,828,056
Short Term Investment	500,000	1,024,024	1,155,460	700,000	522,913	763,531	1,200,000	1,546,937	1,918,991
	<b>9,055,853</b>	<b>9,790,699</b>	<b>10,328,254</b>	<b>9,799,186</b>	<b>9,281,729</b>	<b>9,041,953</b>	<b>18,855,039</b>	<b>19,072,428</b>	<b>19,370,207</b>
<b>IV. Other</b>									
Partner Churches and Other	-	-	-	454,833	204,339	398,785	454,833	204,339	398,785
Hubbard Press	50,000	50,000	400,000	-	-	-	50,000	50,000	400,000
Sales: Curriculum	-	-	-	2,923,500	2,406,981	2,842,924	2,923,500	2,406,981	2,842,924
Sales: Program Services	491,671	491,671	-	10,673,113	10,173,038	9,349,983	11,164,784	10,664,709	9,349,983
Sales: Resources	-	-	5,288	1,824,809	2,058,679	2,030,237	1,824,809	2,058,679	2,035,525
Other Income	-	110,922	139,351	-	-	-	-	110,922	139,351
	<b>617,438</b>	<b>652,593</b>	<b>544,639</b>	<b>15,876,255</b>	<b>14,843,037</b>	<b>14,621,929</b>	<b>16,493,693</b>	<b>15,495,630</b>	<b>15,166,568</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>23,273,291</b>	<b>26,407,983</b>	<b>22,309,446</b>	<b>58,723,206</b>	<b>66,348,447</b>	<b>55,093,937</b>	<b>81,996,497</b>	<b>92,756,430</b>	<b>77,403,383</b>
<b>V. Prior Year Accumulations</b>	<b>2,512,125</b>	<b>(2,872,581)</b>	<b>471,468</b>	<b>9,332,651</b>	<b>(2,510,748)</b>	<b>8,210,653</b>	<b>11,844,776</b>	<b>(5,383,329)</b>	<b>8,682,121</b>
<b>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</b>	<b>25,785,416</b>	<b>23,535,402</b>	<b>22,780,914</b>	<b>68,055,857</b>	<b>63,837,699</b>	<b>63,304,590</b>	<b>93,841,273</b>	<b>87,373,101</b>	<b>86,085,504</b>

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
MISSION PROGRAM  
EXPENDITURES BY ENTITY  
For the Period Ended December 31, 2010**

BUDGETED ENTITY	MISSION BUDGET								
	UNRESTRICTED			RESTRICTED			GRAND TOTAL		
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2009 Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2009 Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2009 Actual
<b>I Executive Director</b>									
Executive Administrator	964,450	682,760	832,991	1,252,832	1,270,671	1,373,441	2,217,282	1,953,431	2,206,432
	<b>964,450</b>	<b>682,760</b>	<b>832,991</b>	<b>1,252,832</b>	<b>1,270,671</b>	<b>1,373,441</b>	<b>2,217,282</b>	<b>1,953,431</b>	<b>2,206,432</b>
<b>II Communication and Funds Dev.</b>									
Deputy Executive Director Office	394,791	365,501	347,720	-	-	-	394,791	365,501	347,720
News Service	284,178	216,474	199,856	-	-	2,815	284,178	216,474	202,671
General Assembly Communication	208,500	195,780	34	-	-	-	208,500	195,780	34
Executive Office Communication	538,165	534,275	502,082	-	-	-	538,165	534,275	502,082
Creative Services	1,067,607	744,758	885,049	110,500	39,362	216,250	1,178,107	784,120	1,101,299
Mission Communication	1,038,748	940,355	859,855	-	7,350	7,448	1,038,748	947,705	867,303
Mission Interpretation	122,033	203,282	530,622	3,523,334	3,387,456	3,196,138	3,645,367	3,590,738	3,726,760
Development	-	138,886	211,035	1,002,765	832,939	451,259	1,002,765	971,825	662,294
Development Services	346,812	414,384	342,383	10,000	-	-	356,812	414,384	342,383
Church Financial Campaign Service	-	(58,077)	(49,226)	539,390	568,104	415,337	539,390	510,027	366,111
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	80,200	63,702	54,030	80,200	63,702	54,030
	<b>4,000,834</b>	<b>3,695,618</b>	<b>3,829,410</b>	<b>5,266,189</b>	<b>4,898,913</b>	<b>4,343,277</b>	<b>9,267,023</b>	<b>8,594,531</b>	<b>8,172,687</b>
<b>III Mission</b>									
Deputy Executive Director Office	211,561	144,392	185,953	235,900	263,136	171,434	447,461	407,528	357,387
Vocation	214,750	214,750	214,750	1,873,254	1,467,784	1,437,913	2,088,004	1,682,534	1,652,663
Theology Worship and Education	1,631,498	2,222,500	1,753,645	7,412,172	5,133,203	5,884,598	9,043,670	7,355,703	7,638,243
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,063,691	1,934,998	1,704,714	5,795,339	5,167,981	4,344,392	7,859,030	7,102,979	6,049,106
Compassion, Peace and Justice	1,024,546	786,523	691,008	13,332,911	16,845,082	16,723,582	14,357,457	17,631,605	17,414,590
World Mission	3,780,798	3,714,549	3,032,789	19,381,326	16,358,416	16,380,826	23,162,124	20,072,965	19,413,615
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,510,770	1,995,344	1,770,065	3,460,977	3,074,892	3,283,640	5,971,747	5,070,236	5,053,705
	<b>11,437,614</b>	<b>11,013,056</b>	<b>9,352,924</b>	<b>51,491,879</b>	<b>48,310,494</b>	<b>48,226,385</b>	<b>62,929,493</b>	<b>59,323,550</b>	<b>57,579,309</b>
<b>IV Shared Services</b>									
Human Resources	521,992	572,692	511,693	50,200	68,895	48,322	572,192	641,587	560,015
Finance and Accounting	997,892	646,714	688,910	1,798,806	2,112,465	1,905,031	2,796,698	2,759,179	2,593,941
Information Technology	2,180,302	1,494,806	2,359,844	227,188	276,801	227,753	2,407,490	1,771,607	2,587,597
Presbyterian Distribution Services	716,730	591,709	674,820	1,468,760	1,298,606	1,174,692	2,185,490	1,890,315	1,849,512
Mail, Print Services	154,989	227,596	183,456	265,000	148,729	241,304	419,989	376,325	424,760
Facilities	704,061	573,289	652,307	489,658	598,279	562,092	1,193,719	1,171,568	1,214,399
	<b>5,275,966</b>	<b>4,106,806</b>	<b>5,071,030</b>	<b>4,299,612</b>	<b>4,503,775</b>	<b>4,159,194</b>	<b>9,575,578</b>	<b>8,610,581</b>	<b>9,230,224</b>
<b>V Other</b>									
Shared Expenses	620,000	567,455	98,378	-	-	29,872	620,000	567,455	128,250
Insurance	652,600	604,190	640,514	1,301,400	1,214,487	1,177,625	1,954,000	1,818,677	1,818,139
Restricted Fund Allocation					127,972	191,271		127,972	191,271
Investment Management Fees	173,596	205,161	182,714		37,950	-	173,596	243,111	182,714
Presby Fdn Investment Management Fees		-	-		-	-		-	-
Board of Pensions				1,943,945	1,906,598	2,036,720	1,943,945	1,906,598	2,036,720
ECO Agency				2,500,000	1,566,839	1,751,230	2,500,000	1,566,839	1,751,230
Mission Partnership	2,660,356	2,660,356	2,772,953		-	15,575	2,660,356	2,660,356	2,788,528
Reduction in Force	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>4,106,552</b>	<b>4,037,162</b>	<b>3,694,559</b>	<b>5,745,345</b>	<b>4,853,846</b>	<b>5,202,293</b>	<b>9,851,897</b>	<b>8,891,008</b>	<b>8,896,852</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>25,785,416</b>	<b>23,535,402</b>	<b>22,780,914</b>	<b>68,055,857</b>	<b>63,837,699</b>	<b>63,304,590</b>	<b>93,841,273</b>	<b>87,373,101</b>	<b>86,085,504</b>

**General Assembly Mission Program Receipts  
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2011**

Receipts	MISSION BUDGET								
	Unrestricted			Restricted			Grand Total		
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2010	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2010	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	YTD 2010
<b>I. Support from Congregations &amp; Presbyteries</b>									
<b>Basic Mission Support</b>									
Shared Mission Support	10,000,000	8,812,103	9,307,710	-	-	-	10,000,000	8,812,103	9,307,710
Directed Mission Support	-	-	-	3,800,000	3,559,500	3,597,475	3,800,000	3,559,500	3,597,475
	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>8,812,103</b>	<b>9,307,710</b>	<b>3,800,000</b>	<b>3,559,500</b>	<b>3,597,475</b>	<b>13,800,000</b>	<b>12,371,603</b>	<b>12,905,185</b>
<b>Churchwide Spec. Offerings</b>									
Christmas Joy	-	-	-	4,300,000	4,124,341	4,243,408	4,300,000	4,124,341	4,243,408
One Great Hour of Sharing	-	-	-	7,100,000	7,732,144	7,655,272	7,100,000	7,732,144	7,655,272
Peacemaking	-	-	-	900,000	1,009,171	995,996	900,000	1,009,171	995,996
Pentecost	-	-	-	900,000	758,284	823,988	900,000	758,284	823,988
Witness	-	-	-	-	3,121	11,576	-	3,121	11,576
	-	-	-	<b>13,200,000</b>	<b>13,627,061</b>	<b>13,730,240</b>	<b>13,200,000</b>	<b>13,627,061</b>	<b>13,730,240</b>
<b>II. Supplementary Support (Beyond Budget) From Congregations &amp; Presbyteries &amp; Individuals</b>									
<b>Other Specific Appeals</b>									
Emergency and Disaster Relief	-	-	-	2,500,000	5,713,852	13,438,088	2,500,000	5,713,852	13,438,088
Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO)	-	-	-	9,180,000	7,323,330	7,665,122	9,180,000	7,323,330	7,665,122
Mission Initiative Joining Hearts & Hands	-	-	-	500,000	262,466	509,712	500,000	262,466	509,712
Special Missionary Support	-	-	-	140,000	221,778	331,347	140,000	221,778	331,347
Hunger	-	-	-	600,000	742,183	585,597	600,000	742,183	585,597
Theological Education Fund	-	-	-	1,750,000	1,324,617	1,521,418	1,750,000	1,324,617	1,521,418
	-	-	-	<b>14,670,000</b>	<b>15,588,226</b>	<b>24,051,284</b>	<b>14,670,000</b>	<b>15,588,226</b>	<b>24,051,284</b>
<b>Add'l Forms of Giving</b>									
Presbyterian Women	491,668	409,798	479,164	458,332	412,979	382,381	950,000	822,777	861,545
Bequests and Annuities	2,500,000	728,216	6,177,817	200,000	76,897	223,012	2,700,000	805,113	6,400,829
Other Gifts	-	-	-	-	38,055	168,000	-	38,055	168,000
Validated Mission Support	-	-	-	12,000	11,350	-	12,000	11,350	-
Grants from Outside Fdns.	-	-	-	130,000	20,620	71,289	130,000	20,620	71,289
	<b>2,991,668</b>	<b>1,138,014</b>	<b>6,656,981</b>	<b>800,332</b>	<b>559,901</b>	<b>844,682</b>	<b>3,792,000</b>	<b>1,697,915</b>	<b>7,501,663</b>
<b>III. Endowments, Interest and Dividends</b>									
PC (USA) Restr. Endow. Fds.	-	-	-	5,823,146	5,832,049	6,403,997	5,823,146	5,832,049	6,403,997
PC (USA) Unres. Endow. Fds.	6,746,678	7,007,446	7,668,701	-	-	-	6,746,678	7,007,446	7,668,701
Pby. Mission Program Fund	250,000	183,550	208,954	372,590	168,105	364,527	622,590	351,655	573,481
Outside Trusts	800,000	1,343,388	889,020	150,000	114,000	120,000	950,000	1,457,388	1,009,020
Jinshian Fund	-	-	-	1,684,343	1,703,244	1,870,292	1,684,343	1,703,244	1,870,292
Short Term Investment	600,000	621,763	1,024,024	700,000	262,411	522,913	1,300,000	884,174	1,546,937
	<b>8,396,678</b>	<b>9,156,147</b>	<b>9,790,699</b>	<b>8,730,079</b>	<b>8,079,809</b>	<b>9,281,729</b>	<b>17,126,757</b>	<b>17,235,956</b>	<b>19,072,428</b>
<b>IV. Other</b>									
Partner Churches and Other	-	-	-	473,824	164,203	204,339	473,824	164,203	204,339
Hubbard Press	50,000	15,000	50,000	-	38,050	-	50,000	53,050	50,000
Sales: Curriculum	-	-	-	2,619,954	2,481,583	2,406,981	2,619,954	2,481,583	2,406,981
Sales: Program Services	-	-	-	7,830,320	8,020,126	10,173,038	7,830,320	8,020,126	10,173,038
Sales: Resources	-	11,141	491,671	1,637,755	1,832,349	2,058,679	1,637,755	1,843,490	2,550,350
Other Income	-	-	110,922	-	-	-	-	-	110,922
	<b>50,000</b>	<b>26,141</b>	<b>652,593</b>	<b>12,561,853</b>	<b>12,536,311</b>	<b>14,843,037</b>	<b>12,611,853</b>	<b>12,562,452</b>	<b>15,495,630</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>21,438,346</b>	<b>19,132,405</b>	<b>26,407,983</b>	<b>53,762,264</b>	<b>53,950,808</b>	<b>66,348,447</b>	<b>75,200,610</b>	<b>73,083,213</b>	<b>92,756,430</b>
<b>V. Prior Year Accumulations</b>	<b>1,437,674</b>	<b>1,002,223</b>	<b>(2,872,581)</b>	<b>11,015,643</b>	<b>3,785,708</b>	<b>(2,510,748)</b>	<b>12,453,317</b>	<b>4,787,931</b>	<b>(5,383,329)</b>
<b>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</b>	<b>22,876,020</b>	<b>20,134,628</b>	<b>23,535,402</b>	<b>64,777,907</b>	<b>57,736,516</b>	<b>63,837,699</b>	<b>87,653,927</b>	<b>77,871,144</b>	<b>87,373,101</b>

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
MISSION PROGRAM  
EXPENDITURES BY ENTITY  
For the Period Ended December 31, 2011  
(Before Cost Allocation)**

BUDGETED ENTITY	MISSION BUDGET								
	UNRESTRICTED			RESTRICTED			GRAND TOTAL		
	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2010 Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2010 Actual	Annual Budget	YTD Actual	2010 Actual
<b>I Executive Director</b>									
Executive Administrator	757,648	548,258	558,300	773,175	539,051	881,216	1,530,823	1,087,309	1,439,516
	<b>757,648</b>	<b>548,258</b>	<b>558,300</b>	<b>773,175</b>	<b>539,051</b>	<b>881,216</b>	<b>1,530,823</b>	<b>1,087,309</b>	<b>1,439,516</b>
<b>II Communication and Funds Dev.</b>									
Deputy Executive Director	345,011	341,372	365,501	-	-	-	345,011	341,372	365,501
Funds Development Ministry	25,000	141,426	80,809	1,731,084	1,373,116	1,464,745	1,756,084	1,514,542	1,545,554
Relationship & Development Operations	542,296	634,149	437,944	1,842,422	1,431,580	2,236,622	2,384,718	2,065,729	2,674,566
Mission Communication	817,698	733,097	940,355	-	8,173	7,350	817,698	741,270	947,705
Presbyterian News Services	214,251	221,152	216,474	-	-	-	214,251	221,152	216,474
General Assembly	-	-	195,780	-	-	-	-	-	195,780
Executive Communication and Policy	134,646	139,852	534,275	-	-	-	134,646	139,852	534,275
Mission Resources	42,843	(55,658)	-	1,520,438	1,579,830	1,116,420	1,563,281	1,524,172	1,116,420
Creative Services	908,519	934,384	744,760	87,853	86,014	39,362	996,372	1,020,398	784,122
Stewardship	326,247	313,082	179,720	9,500	1,575	34,414	335,747	314,657	214,134
	<b>3,356,511</b>	<b>3,402,856</b>	<b>3,695,618</b>	<b>5,191,297</b>	<b>4,480,288</b>	<b>4,898,913</b>	<b>8,547,808</b>	<b>7,883,144</b>	<b>8,594,531</b>
<b>III Mission</b>									
Deputy Executive Director Office	574,307	564,920	566,945	593,650	673,757	715,702	1,167,957	1,238,677	1,282,647
Vocation	182,538	182,538	214,750	1,715,124	1,442,870	1,467,784	1,897,662	1,625,408	1,682,534
Theology Worship and Education	1,441,608	1,161,527	2,222,500	6,306,689	4,912,630	5,133,203	7,748,297	6,074,157	7,355,703
Evangelism and Church Growth	1,824,619	1,607,980	1,934,998	3,785,407	3,282,582	5,167,981	5,610,026	4,890,562	7,102,979
Compassion, Peace and Justice	1,165,482	1,035,507	1,061,122	14,180,941	15,832,209	16,850,866	15,346,423	16,867,716	17,911,988
World Mission	3,696,026	2,899,568	3,714,549	19,765,008	15,492,905	16,358,416	23,461,034	18,392,473	20,072,965
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,135,534	1,798,496	1,995,344	3,284,141	2,378,401	3,074,892	5,419,675	4,176,897	5,070,236
	<b>11,020,114</b>	<b>9,250,536</b>	<b>11,710,208</b>	<b>49,630,960</b>	<b>44,015,354</b>	<b>48,768,844</b>	<b>60,651,074</b>	<b>53,265,890</b>	<b>60,479,052</b>
<b>IV Shared Services</b>									
Finance and Accounting	742,850	430,515	646,714	1,838,590	2,011,024	2,112,465	2,581,440	2,441,539	2,759,179
Information Technology	1,756,053	1,405,341	1,494,806	277,121	277,810	276,801	2,033,174	1,683,151	1,771,607
Presbyterian Distribution Services	582,998	597,277	591,709	1,332,685	1,398,723	1,298,606	1,915,683	1,996,000	1,890,315
Mail, Print Services	166,936	219,223	227,536	265,000	145,404	148,729	431,936	364,627	376,325
Facilities	726,552	788,021	573,289	478,577	399,492	598,279	1,205,129	1,187,513	1,171,568
	<b>3,975,389</b>	<b>3,440,377</b>	<b>3,534,114</b>	<b>4,191,973</b>	<b>4,232,453</b>	<b>4,434,880</b>	<b>8,167,362</b>	<b>7,672,830</b>	<b>7,968,994</b>
<b>V Other</b>									
Shared Expenses	510,000	487,304	567,455	-	33,035	127,972	510,000	520,339	695,427
Insurance	673,750	484,794	604,190	1,344,070	1,255,606	1,214,487	2,017,820	1,740,400	1,818,677
Investment Management Fees	251,940	208,927	205,161	-	-	37,950	251,940	208,927	243,111
Board of Pensions	-	-	-	1,896,432	1,834,980	1,906,598	1,896,432	1,834,980	1,906,598
ECCO Agency	-	-	-	1,750,000	1,326,655	1,566,839	1,750,000	1,326,655	1,566,839
Mission Partnership	2,330,668	2,311,576	2,660,356	-	19,094	-	2,330,668	2,330,670	2,660,356
	<b>3,766,358</b>	<b>3,492,601</b>	<b>4,037,162</b>	<b>4,990,502</b>	<b>4,469,370</b>	<b>4,853,846</b>	<b>8,756,860</b>	<b>7,961,971</b>	<b>8,891,008</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>22,876,020</b>	<b>20,134,628</b>	<b>23,535,402</b>	<b>64,777,907</b>	<b>57,736,516</b>	<b>63,837,699</b>	<b>87,653,927</b>	<b>77,871,144</b>	<b>87,373,101</b>

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2012 RECEIPTS BUDGET**

SOURCE OF FUNDING		MISSION BUDGET		GRAND TOTAL
		UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	
<b>I BASIC MISSION SUPPORT</b>				
	Shared Mission Support	9,800,000		9,800,000
	Directed Mission Support		3,800,000	3,800,000
<b>II CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>				
	Christmas Joy		4,200,000	4,200,000
	One Great Hour of Sharing		7,100,000	7,100,000
	Peacemaking		900,000	900,000
	Pentecost		900,000	900,000
<b>III OTHER SPECIFIC APPEALS</b>				
	Emergency and Disaster Relief		2,500,000	2,500,000
	Extra Commitment		9,680,000	9,680,000
	Mission Initiative-MIJHH		510,000	510,000
	Special Missionary Support		308,000	308,000
	Hunger		600,000	600,000
	Theological Education Fund		1,750,000	1,750,000
<b>IV ADDITIONAL FORMS OF GIVING</b>				
	Presbyterian Women	498,604	451,396	950,000
	Bequests & Annuities	2,500,000	200,000	2,700,000
	Other Gifts			
	Validated Mission Support			
	Grants from Outside Foundations		90,000	90,000
<b>V ENDOWMENTS, INTEREST &amp; DIVIDENDS</b>				
	PC( USA) Restricted Endowment Funds		5,352,340	5,352,340
	PC( USA) Unrestricted Endowment Funds	6,061,818		6,061,818
	Presbyterian Mission Program Fund	250,000		250,000
	Outside Trusts	800,000	150,000	950,000
	Jinishian		1,534,197	1,534,197
	Short Term Investments	600,000	600,000	1,200,000
<b>VI OTHER</b>				
	Enterprise Fund, Hubbard	50,000		50,000
	Other Income			
	Partner Churches and Other		100,000	100,000
	Sales: Curriculum		2,155,800	2,155,800
	Sales: Program Services		7,963,180	7,963,180
	Sale: Resources		1,625,559	1,625,559
	PMPF Allocation		289,532	289,532
<b>TOTAL FROM CURRENT RECEIPTS</b>		<b>20,560,422</b>	<b>52,760,004</b>	<b>73,320,426</b>
<b>UTILIZATION OF PRIOR YEAR ACCUM'N</b>		<b>2,245,211</b>	<b>13,525,853</b>	<b>15,771,064</b>
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>		<b>22,805,633</b>	<b>66,285,857</b>	<b>89,091,490</b>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2012 MISSION EXPENDITURE BUDGET

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
<b>I Executive Director</b>			
Executive Administrator	921,128	475,108	1,396,236
Total Executive Director	921,128	475,108	1,396,236
<b>II Communications and Funds Development</b>			
Creative Services	0	3,853	3,853
Mission Resources	710,203	1,599,910	2,310,113
CFCS	86,229	559,756	645,985
Total Communications and Funds Development	796,432	2,163,519	2,959,951
<b>III Mission</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	645,050	525,300	1,170,350
Vocation	454,284	1,666,342	2,120,625
Theology Worship and Education	2,485,183	5,622,058	8,107,241
Evangelism and Church Growth	2,503,778	4,128,814	6,632,592
Compassion Peace and Justice	3,391,523	17,797,521	21,189,044
World Mission	6,164,912	22,176,846	28,341,757
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,923,385	3,710,923	6,634,308
Total Mission	18,568,115	55,627,805	74,195,920
<b>IV Shared Services</b>			
Finance and Accounting	0	327,935	327,935
Information Technology	0	280,449	280,449
Presbyterian Distribution Services	0	1,364,285	1,364,285
Mail, Print Services	0	265,000	265,000
Facilities	0	465,764	465,764
Total Shared Services	0	2,703,433	2,703,433
<b>V Other</b>			
Insurance	0	1,393,818	1,393,818
Board of Pensions	181,493	2,056,599	2,238,090
ECO Agency	79,053	1,801,716	1,880,769
Mission Partnership	2,259,413	63,861	2,323,273
Total Other	2,519,958	5,315,992	7,835,950
Total Expenditures	22,805,633	66,285,857	89,091,490

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2013 RECEIPTS BUDGET

SOURCE OF FUNDING		MISSION BUDGET		GRAND TOTAL
		UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	
<b>I BASIC MISSION SUPPORT</b>				
	Shared Mission Support	8,500,000		8,500,000
	Directed Mission Support		3,500,000	3,500,000
<b>II CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>				
	Christmas Joy		4,200,000	4,200,000
	One Great Hour of Sharing		7,100,000	7,100,000
	Peacemaking		900,000	900,000
	Pentecost		900,000	900,000
<b>III OTHER SPECIFIC APPEALS</b>				
	Emergency and Disaster Relief		2,500,000	2,500,000
	Extra Commitment		9,100,000	9,100,000
	Mission Initiative-MJHH			
	Special Missionary Support		140,000	140,000
	Hunger		600,000	600,000
	Theological Education Fund		1,400,000	1,400,000
<b>IV ADDITIONAL FORMS OF GIVING</b>				
	Presbyterian Women	450,000	400,000	850,000
	Bequests & Annuities	2,000,000	150,000	2,150,000
	Other Gifts		90,000	90,000
	Validated Mission Support			
	Grants from Outside Foundations		100,000	100,000
<b>V ENDOWMENTS, INTEREST &amp; DIVIDENDS</b>				
	PC( USA) Restricted Endowment Funds		5,232,719	5,232,719
	PC( USA) Unrestricted Endowment Funds	5,798,046		5,798,046
	Presbyterian Mission Program Fund	200,000		200,000
	Outside Trusts	900,000	120,000	1,020,000
	Jinishian		1,393,663	1,393,663
	Short Term Investments	600,000	300,000	900,000
<b>VI OTHER</b>				
	Enterprise Fund, Hubbard	15,000	149,719	164,719
	Partner Churches and Other		117,000	117,000
	Sales: Curriculum		2,148,403	2,148,403
	Sales: Program Services		7,910,785	7,910,785
	Sale: Resources		1,985,473	1,985,473
	PMPF Allocation		152,413	152,413
<b>TOTAL CURRENT RECEIPTS</b>		<b>18,463,046</b>	<b>50,590,175</b>	<b>69,053,221</b>
<b>UTILIZATION OF PRIOR YEAR ACCUM'N</b>		<b>2,117,865</b>	<b>10,405,017</b>	<b>12,522,882</b>
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>		<b>20,580,911</b>	<b>60,995,192</b>	<b>81,576,103</b>



GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2013 MISSION EXPENDITURE BUDGET

BUDGETED ENTITY	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
<b>I Executive Director</b>			
Executive Administrator	589,073	815,263	1,404,336
Total Executive Director	589,073	815,263	1,404,336
<b>II Communications and Funds Development</b>			
Mission Resources	121,447	1,833,418	1,954,865
Total Communications and Funds Development	121,447	1,833,418	1,954,865
<b>III Mission</b>			
Deputy Executive Director	736,008	353,363	1,089,371
Vocation	366,494	1,648,011	2,014,506
Theology Worship and Education	2,307,229	4,931,462	7,238,692
Evangelism and Church Growth	1,966,541	6,451,504	8,418,044
Compassion Peace and Justice	2,266,406	14,894,974	17,161,380
World Mission	7,453,502	19,139,671	26,593,174
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,586,991	3,186,961	5,773,952
Total Mission	17,683,171	50,605,947	68,289,118
<b>IV Shared Services</b>			
Finance and Accounting	0	113,851	113,851
Information Technology	0	213,853	213,853
Presbyterian Distribution Services	0	1,071,895	1,071,895
Mail, Print Services	0	150,000	150,000
Facilities	0	480,633	480,633
Total Shared Services	0	2,030,232	2,030,232
<b>V Other</b>			
Insurance	0	1,575,388	1,575,388
Board of Pensions	88,496	2,048,415	2,136,910
ECO Agency	54,480	1,998,362	2,052,841
Mission Partnership	2,044,244	88,169	2,132,413
Total Other	2,187,219	5,710,333	7,897,552
Total Expenditures	20,580,911	60,995,192	81,576,103

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2014 RECEIPTS BUDGET**

SOURCE OF FUNDING		MISSION BUDGET		GRAND TOTAL
		UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	
<b>I BASIC MISSION SUPPORT</b>				
	Shared Mission Support	8,000,000		8,000,000
	Directed Mission Support		3,500,000	3,500,000
<b>II CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>				
	Christmas Joy		4,200,000	4,200,000
	One Great Hour of Sharing		7,100,000	7,100,000
	Peacemaking		900,000	900,000
	Pentecost		900,000	900,000
<b>III OTHER SPECIFIC APPEALS</b>				
	Emergency and Disaster Relief		2,500,000	2,500,000
	Extra Commitment		9,100,000	9,100,000
	Mission Initiative-MIJHH			
	Special Missionary Support		140,000	140,000
	Hunger		600,000	600,000
	Theological Education Fund		1,300,000	1,300,000
<b>IV ADDITIONAL FORMS OF GIVING</b>				
	Presbyterian Women	430,000	400,000	830,000
	Bequests & Annuities	2,000,000	150,000	2,150,000
	Other Gifts			
	Validated Mission Support			
	Grants from Outside Foundations		100,000	100,000
<b>V ENDOWMENTS, INTEREST &amp; DIVIDENDS</b>				
	PC( USA) Restricted Endowment Funds		4,767,807	4,767,807
	PC( USA) Unrestricted Endowment Funds	5,266,584		5,266,584
	Presbyterian Mission Program Fund	200,000		200,000
	Outside Trusts	850,000	120,000	970,000
	Jinishian		1,266,351	1,266,351
	Short Term Investments	600,000	200,000	800,000
<b>VI OTHER</b>				
	Enterprise Fund, Hubbard	15,000	153,886	168,886
	Other Income			
	Partner Churches and Other		117,000	117,000
	Sales: Curriculum		2,198,334	2,198,334
	Sales: Program Services		6,897,383	6,897,383
	Sale: Resources		2,001,695	2,001,695
	PMPF Allocation		124,783	124,783
<b>TOTAL FROM CURRENT RECEIPTS</b>		<b>17,361,584</b>	<b>48,737,239</b>	<b>66,098,823</b>
<b>UTILIZATION OF PRIOR YEAR ACCUM'N</b>		<b>4,014,845</b>	<b>8,082,363</b>	<b>12,097,208</b>
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>		<b>21,376,429</b>	<b>56,819,602</b>	<b>78,196,031</b>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION PROGRAM  
2014 MISSION EXPENDITURE BUDGET

BUDGETED  
ENTITY

UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	GRAND TOTAL
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<b>I</b> Executive Director			
Executive Administrator	646,681	793,070	1,439,751
Total Executive Director	646,681	793,070	1,439,751

<b>II</b> Communications and Funds Development			
Mission Resources	158,319	1,857,881	2,016,200
Total Communications and Funds Development	158,319	1,857,881	2,016,200

<b>III</b> Mission			
Deputy Executive Director	767,189	381,170	1,148,359
Vocation	422,579	1,555,496	1,978,076
Theology Worship and Education	2,458,269	4,879,013	7,337,282
Evangelism and Church Growth	1,744,956	4,659,211	6,404,167
Compassion Peace and Justice	2,448,061	12,924,066	15,372,127
World Mission	9,335,157	18,829,016	28,164,173
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	2,712,904	3,129,909	5,842,813
Total Mission	19,889,116	46,357,881	66,246,997

<b>IV</b> Shared Services			
Finance and Accounting	0	113,851	113,851
Information Technology	0	217,643	217,643
Presbyterian Distribution Services	0	1,047,666	1,047,666
Mail, Print Services	0	150,000	150,000
Facilities	0	486,334	486,334
Total Shared Services	0	2,015,494	2,015,494

<b>V</b> Other			
Insurance	0	1,732,927	1,732,927
Board of Pensions	103,025	2,043,796	2,146,821
ECO Agency	65,378	1,996,679	2,062,057
Mission Partnership	513,910	21,873	535,783
Total Other	682,313	5,795,275	6,477,588

Total Expenditures	21,376,429	56,819,602	78,196,031
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**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
 PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PROGRAM FUND  
 FUNDS COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS  
 AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**

UNRESTRICTED				
	UNCOMMITTED FUNDS	COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS	PROGRAMMATIC LOAN FUND	COMBINED TOTAL
1 Balance as of January 1, 2011	17,891,882	4,305,807	1,714,342	23,912,031
2 Market value adjustment in investments	(19,284)			(19,284)
3 Net increase (decrease) in loans/receivables	885,741		(885,741)	-
4 New allocation	(767,782)	767,782		-
5 Use of allocations		(401,487)		(401,487)
6 Unused allocations restored	684,851	(684,851)		-
7 Transfer from Plant Fund		34,859		34,859
8 Increase (Decrease) YTD	783,527	(283,697)	(885,741)	(385,911)
9 Subtotal	18,675,409	4,022,110	828,601	23,526,119
10 Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from GA Mission Budget		(1,002,223)		(1,002,223)
11 <b>Balance DECEMBER 31, 2011</b>	18,675,409	3,019,887	828,601	22,523,896
12 Reserve requirement:				
Unrestricted receipts	21,438,346			
Directed mission support receipts	3,800,000			
Total	<u>25,238,346</u>			
30% Reserve requirement	<u>7,571,504</u>			



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**  
**PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PROGRAM FUND**  
**FUNDS COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS**  
**AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**



GRANTS	Original Designation	Balance 1/1/11	Designated	Payments	Restored	12/31/11
1 Balance of allocations of \$1,093,000 (4/03), \$814,210 (2/04), \$150,000 (12/04), and reallocations (9/06), (2/08), (10/08), & (5/10) to support the Independent Abuse Review Panel						
a. 2010	786,800	56,708	(56,708)			0
b. 2011	198,574	187,776	10,798	(78,587)		119,987
c. 2012	116,574		116,574			116,574
2 Sales of Resources		428,242		(159,241)	1,597	270,598
3 Allocation of \$996,653 for the National Mission Partnership Funds (3/07)	996,653	176,723		(74,500)	(102,223)	0
Interest Earned on National Mission Partnership Funds	7,568	45,422		359	(45,781)	0
4 Allocation of \$574,585 (3/31/2011) for National Mission Partnership Funds (Osborn gift)	574,585		574,585			574,585
5 Allocation of \$115,625 for World Mission from proceeds from sale of Ithaca, NY property (3/09)	115,625	36,305		(29,553)		6,752
6 Allocation of \$174,900 for World Mission from sale of Morningside Gardens Apartments (9/09)	174,900	174,900		(59,965)		114,935
7 Allocation (5/10) and (10/10) to balance the 2011 Mission Budget (03/11)	1,138,988	1,315,141	122,533	(1,002,223)	(435,451)	0
8 Allocation (5/10),(10/10) and (9/11) to balance the 2012 Mission Budget (03/11)	1,597,759	1,884,590			(102,993)	1,781,597
9 Transfer from Plant Fund to Black Pipe SD Property	34,859		34,859			34,859
<b>10 TOTAL</b>		<b>4,305,807</b>	<b>802,641</b>	<b>(1,403,710)</b>	<b>(684,851)</b>	<b>3,019,887</b>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
SALES OF RESOURCES  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**

	<u>Balance</u> 1/1/11	<u>Additions</u>	<u>(Payments)</u>	<u>Balance</u> 12/31/11
Deputy Executive Director Communications and Development				
Media Services	112,034.84		(112,034.84)	-
Mission Education & Promotion	182,756.64		-	182,756.64
Church Financial Campaign	32,132.89	-	(32,132.89)	-
Funds Development	<u>3,967.57</u>			<u>3,967.57</u>
Total	330,891.94	<u>0.00</u>	<u>(144,167.73)</u>	<u>186,724.21</u>
 Deputy Executive Director - Mission				
Mission	80,073.86	1,574.20	(15,073.15)	66,574.91
Social Witness Policy	17,276.07	22.49		17,298.56
Research Services	<u>0.00</u>		-	-
Total	97,349.93	<u>1,596.69</u>	<u>(15,073.15)</u>	<u>83,873.47</u>
 TOTAL	<u>428,241.87</u>	<u>1,596.69</u>	<u>(159,240.88)</u>	<u>270,597.68</u>



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
PROGRAMMATIC LOAN FUND  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**

<b>RECEIVABLE</b>	<b>Balance 1/1/11</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Balance 12/31/11</b>
Receivable from Congregational Ministries Publishing	1,714,342	(885,741)	828,601
<b>TOTAL PMPF</b>	<b>1,714,342</b>	<b>(885,741)</b>	<b>828,601</b>
 <b>OTHER RECEIVABLES</b>			
Ghost Ranch Conference Center (Abiquiu & Santa Fe)			1,833,418
Stony Point Center			1,589,642
<b>TOTAL OTHER RECEIVABLES</b>			<b>3,423,060</b>



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
 SELF INSURANCE FUND  
 AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**

1	<b>Balance as of 1/01/11</b>		5,212,977
2	<b>Revenues:</b>		
3	Income from investments	94,393	
4	Unrealized gain (loss)	(149,838)	
5	<b>Total revenues</b>		(55,445)
6	<b>Expenditures:</b>		
7	Foundation investment fees	(256)	
8	Shared Services management fees	(10,000)	
9	Risk Management recoveries	(110,000)	
10	Insurance claims paid	(111,493)	
11	<b>Total expenditures</b>		(231,749)
12	<b>Funds available 12/31/11</b>		4,925,783



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
Years Ending December 31, 2009, 2010 & 2011

	2009	2010	%	2011	%
<b>One Great Hour of Sharing</b>					
Presbyterian World Service	2,266,649	2,196,133	-3.11%	2,232,688	1.66%
Self Development of People	2,266,094	2,185,517	-3.56%	2,213,776	1.29%
Presbyterian Hunger Program	2,534,278	2,455,426	-3.11%	2,479,562	0.98%
Promotion	439,779	435,528	-0.97%	385,816	-11.41%
Administrative Fee	395,096	382,668	-3.15%	383,853	0.31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,901,896</b>	<b>7,655,272</b>	<b>-3.12%</b>	<b>7,695,695</b>	<b>0.53%</b>
<b>Christmas/Joy Offering</b>					
Board of Pensions	2,036,720	1,906,598	-6.39%	1,834,980	-3.76%
Minority Education	2,014,724	1,873,704	-7.00%	1,805,110	-3.66%
Promotion Cost	259,479	251,067	-3.24%	278,032	10.74%
Administrative Fee	226,893	212,039	-6.55%	206,218	-2.75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,537,816</b>	<b>4,243,408</b>	<b>-6.49%</b>	<b>4,124,340</b>	<b>-2.81%</b>
<b>Peacemaking Offering</b>					
Peacemaking	756,235	784,412	3.73%	770,365	-1.79%
Promotion Cost	211,948	162,036	-23.55%	189,236	16.79%
Administrative Fee	49,673	49,548	-0.25%	49,570	0.04%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,017,856</b>	<b>995,996</b>	<b>-2.15%</b>	<b>1,009,171</b>	<b>1.32%</b>
<b>Witness Offering</b>					
Global Mission Unit	13,025	5,499	-57.78%	1,483	-73.03%
Education & Congregational Nurture	5,210	2,200	-57.77%	890	-59.55%
Evangelism & Church Development	7,815	3,299	-57.79%	593	-82.02%
Promotion Cost	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Administrative Fee	1,371	579	0.00%	156	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,421</b>	<b>11,577</b>	<b>-57.78%</b>	<b>3,122</b>	<b>-73.03%</b>
<b>Pentecost Offering</b>					
Receipts	627,553	605,436	-3.52%	561,915	-7.19%
Promotion Costs	188,718	177,352	-6.02%	158,455	-10.66%
Administrative Fee	43,091	41,200	-4.39%	37,914	-7.98%
<b>Total</b>	<b>859,362</b>	<b>823,988</b>	<b>-4.12%</b>	<b>758,284</b>	<b>-7.97%</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>14,344,351</b>	<b>13,730,241</b>	<b>-4.28%</b>	<b>13,590,612</b>	<b>-1.02%</b>
<b>Designations</b>					
Hunger	497,369	546,610	9.90%	726,328	32.88%
Emergency Relief	1,483,940	13,072,024	780.90%	5,655,457	-56.74%

Note: This report reflects actual receipts and all related adjustments and pass through donations.

Item 10-C

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION**

**CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
December 31, 2011

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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## REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

The Board of Directors  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation  
Louisville, Kentucky

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statement of financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (the "Organization") as of December 31, 2011 and the related statements of activities and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation as of December 31, 2011 and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

*Crowe Horwath LLP*  
Crowe Horwath LLP

Louisville, Kentucky  
May 8, 2012

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
December 31, 2011

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**ASSETS**

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 10,891,336
Investments	
Beneficial interests in investments and accrued income held by the Foundation	69,533,719
Other investments and accrued income	<u>52,057,452</u>
Total investments	121,591,171
Receivables	
Contributions from congregations	5,065,365
Mortgages and loans on churches and manses, including accrued interest, less allowance of \$3,750	3,317,319
Receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans, less allowance of \$2,414,615	5,865,242
Due from the Foundation	2,669,124
Other accounts receivable	<u>300,954</u>
Total receivables	17,218,004
Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets	1,202,827
Property and equipment, net	20,030,573
Residual interest in annuity and life income funds held by the Foundation	4,809,690
Beneficial interests in investments held by the Foundation	293,705,607
Funds held in trust by others	<u>53,995,443</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 523,444,651</u></b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

Liabilities	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 8,053,447
Amounts received from congregations and designated for others	767,652
Amounts held for missionaries and committed for projects	3,496,386
Amounts due to other agencies	6,604,547
Due to the Foundation	880,225
Deferred revenue	737,007
Other	<u>1,552,407</u>
Total liabilities	22,091,671
Net assets	
Unrestricted	
Undesignated	15,921,743
Designated	<u>39,756,085</u>
Total unrestricted	55,677,828
Temporarily restricted	187,908,326
Permanently restricted	<u>257,766,826</u>
Total net assets	<u>501,352,980</u>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 523,444,651</u></b>

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See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
Year ended December 31, 2011

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Revenue, gains and other support</b>				
<b>Contributions</b>				
Congregations	\$ 22,305,674	\$ 3,559,500	\$ -	\$ 25,865,174
Presbyterian Women	409,798	5,000	-	414,798
Gifts, bequests, and grants	1,868,544	2,925,953	6,089,230	10,883,727
Special giving and special offering	-	<u>25,886,746</u>	-	<u>25,886,746</u>
Total contributions	24,584,016	32,377,199	6,089,230	63,050,445
Income from endowment funds held by the Foundation	2,392,075	2,528,755	49,714	4,970,544
Income on investments	1,026,282	567,064	77,790	1,671,136
Income from funds held by others	1,343,388	114,000	-	1,457,388
Realized and unrealized gains (losses) on investments, net	144,885	(11,630,734)	(695,641)	(12,181,490)
Interest income from loans	37,203	67,934	183,497	288,634
Change in value of beneficial interest in life income funds	-	34,603	(2,340,393)	(2,305,790)
Hubbard Press	1,486,201	-	-	1,486,201
Sales of resources and services	16,022,216	112,170	-	16,134,386
Other	<u>1,075,724</u>	<u>172,508</u>	<u>(130,947)</u>	<u>1,117,285</u>
	48,111,990	24,343,499	3,233,250	75,688,739
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>43,413,079</u>	<u>(43,413,079)</u>	-	-
Total revenue, gains, and other support	91,525,069	(19,069,580)	3,233,250	75,688,739
<b>Expenses</b>				
Office of the Executive Administrator	608,783	-	-	608,783
Communication and Fund Development	2,241,120	-	-	2,241,120
Office of the Deputy Executive Director	645,246	-	-	645,246
Vocation	2,048,952	-	-	2,048,952
Theology Worship and Education	6,851,437	-	-	6,851,437
Evangelism and Church Growth	5,992,509	-	-	5,992,509
Compassion, Peace and Justice	20,145,906	-	-	20,145,906
World Mission	23,228,000	-	-	23,228,000
Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries	5,606,990	-	-	5,606,990
Shared Services	2,453,765	-	-	2,453,765
Office of the General Assembly	9,321,876	-	-	9,321,876
General Assembly Mission Council	2,323,054	-	-	2,323,054
Presbyterian Historical Society	400,649	-	-	400,649
Conference Center – Ghost Ranch	4,383,786	-	-	4,383,786
Conference Center – Stony Point	1,846,003	-	-	1,846,003
Hubbard Press	1,647,113	-	-	1,647,113
Related Bodies and Other Programs	2,672,976	-	-	2,672,976
Shared	1,358,168	-	-	1,358,168
Other	<u>4,616,658</u>	-	-	<u>4,616,658</u>
Total expenses	<u>98,392,991</u>	-	-	<u>98,392,991</u>
Change in net assets before transfer	(6,867,922)	(19,069,580)	3,233,250	(22,704,252)
Transfers for endowment funds with deficiencies	<u>(862,158)</u>	<u>862,158</u>	-	-
Change in net assets	(7,730,080)	(18,207,422)	3,233,250	(22,704,252)
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>63,407,908</u>	<u>206,115,748</u>	<u>254,533,576</u>	<u>524,057,232</u>
Net assets at end of year	\$ <u>55,677,828</u>	\$ <u>187,908,326</u>	\$ <u>257,766,826</u>	\$ <u>501,352,980</u>

See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
Year ended December 31, 2011

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<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>	
Change in net assets	\$ (22,704,252)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities	
Depreciation	3,020,980
Net recoveries for losses on church loans	(100)
Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment	(756,093)
Realized and unrealized losses on investments, net	12,181,490
Change in fair value of annuity and life income funds	(1,215,974)
Loss on disposal of property	56,657
Additions to annuity and life income funds	(20,246)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities	
Contributions from congregations	672,812
Due to/from the Foundation	(3,434,447)
Other accounts receivable	(41,630)
Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets	84,851
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	213,708
Amounts received from congregations and other liabilities	1,071,995
Amounts due to other agencies	(444,535)
Deferred revenue	(233,440)
Net cash from operating activities	<u>(11,548,224)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>	
Purchases of investments	(94,020,223)
Sales of investments	107,144,777
Payments received on church loans	491,818
Change in accrued interest receivable on church loans	232
Net change in receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans	36,551
Acquisition of property and equipment	<u>(1,163,057)</u>
Net cash from investing activities	12,490,098
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>	
Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment	756,093
Maturities of annuity and life income funds	<u>3,542,010</u>
Net cash from financing activities	<u>4,298,103</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	5,239,977
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>5,651,359</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<u>\$ 10,891,336</u>

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See accompanying notes.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 1 – ORGANIZATION AND NATURE OF OPERATIONS**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), (“PCUSA”) is an unincorporated body of Reformed Christians, who have agreed to conduct worship and other religious activities in conformity with the then current version of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitution, which contains among other things, in its Book of Order, a Form of Government setting forth a detailed formal structure of the Church. As an ecclesiastical organization, PCUSA does not exist under any federal law. Central to the structure of PCUSA is the concept of governing bodies. At the national level, the governing body is the General Assembly. The ecclesiastical work of the PCUSA at the General Assembly level is carried out by a number of ministry units and related agencies.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (“PCUSA, A Corporation”) is a corporate entity of the General Assembly of PCUSA, and is the principal corporation of the General Assembly. All voting members of the General Assembly Mission Council are members of the Board of Directors of PCUSA, A Corporation. PCUSA, A Corporation receives and holds title to property and income at the General Assembly level related to mission activities; generally maintains and manages all real and tangible property, including the insuring of such property; effects short-term investment of funds prior to either their disbursement or transfer to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the “Foundation”) for longer-term investment; acts as the disbursing agent for all funds held for the General Assembly and for other governing bodies and entities upon their request; and provides accounting, reporting and other financial and related services as the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council may direct or approve.

PCUSA, A Corporation is a tax-exempt religious corporation under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

**NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Basis of Presentation: The accompanying consolidated financial statements reflect the consolidated operations of PCUSA, A Corporation and its constituent corporations, which are presented on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The constituent corporations of PCUSA, A Corporation are the following: General Assembly Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc.; The Hubbard Press; Pedco, Inc.; The Presbyterian Historical Society, Inc.; Presbyterian Life, Inc.; Presbyterian Publishing House of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc.; The Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (formerly known as Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America), a New York corporation; Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and The Woman’s Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a New York nonprofit corporation. All intercompany transactions have been eliminated in consolidation. The current financial statements are presented as single year statements due to a change in the method of allocating program expenses during 2011 which would not allow for comparability to the 2010 presentation.

In order to ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of available resources, PCUSA, A Corporation maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting. This is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting purposes into funds established in accordance with their nature or purpose.

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(Continued)



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

For external reporting purposes, however, PCUSA, A Corporation's financial statements have been prepared to focus on the organization as a whole and to present balances and transactions classified in accordance with the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets and related activity are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted as follows:

- Unrestricted Undesignated - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted undesignated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon, which are available for general church purposes.
- Unrestricted Designated - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted designated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon that have been designated for specific purposes by the General Assembly Mission Council of the General Assembly.
- Temporarily Restricted - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions that may or will be met either by actions of PCUSA, A Corporation or the passage of time. Temporarily restricted net assets primarily consist of contributions and related investment income.
- Permanently Restricted - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions to be maintained permanently by PCUSA, A Corporation. Generally, the donors of these assets permit PCUSA, A Corporation to use all or part of the income earned on related investments for general or specific purposes. Permanently restricted net assets consist primarily of endowment funds and revolving loan funds.

Cash Equivalents: For purposes of reporting cash flows, PCUSA, A Corporation considers investments with an original maturity of three months or less when purchased to be cash equivalents.

Investments: Investments are recorded at fair value. Investment transactions are recorded on a trade-date basis. Realized gains and losses are recorded using the specific identification of securities sold on funds held by the Foundation and using the historical cost of securities sold on funds held by other investment managers.

The trustee believes that the carrying amount of its alternative investments is a reasonable estimate of fair value as of December 31, 2011. Since alternative investments are not readily marketable, the estimated value is subject to uncertainty and, therefore, may differ from the value that would have been used had a ready market for the investments existed and such differences could be material.

Long-term investments held by the Foundation represent General Assembly endowment funds, which are generally not available for immediate use.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

As noted in Note 6, PCUSA, A Corporation adopted The *Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act* (“UPMIFA”) in 2010. Under UPMIFA, net appreciation on endowment fund investments, whose income is otherwise unrestricted as to use, is reported as temporarily restricted net assets until appropriated for expenditure by PCUSA, A Corporation, unless the donor has permanently restricted such net appreciation. In cases where the donor has placed temporary restrictions on the use of the income from endowed gifts, related net appreciation is subject to those restrictions and is reported as a part of temporarily restricted net assets until the restriction has been met. Prior to adoption, PCUSA, A Corporation followed the *Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act* (“UMIFA”). PCUSA, A Corporation interpreted UMIFA as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment funds absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. The portion of the donor-restricted endowment fund that was not classified in permanently restricted net assets were previously classified as unrestricted net assets.

Contributions from Congregations: Contributions from congregations include amounts in-transit at year-end.

Allowance for Loan Losses: The allowance for loan losses is maintained at a level considered by management to be adequate to provide for loan losses inherent in the loan portfolio. Management determines the adequacy of the allowance based upon reviews of payment history, recent loss experience, current economic conditions, the risk characteristics of the various categories of loans and such other factors, which in management’s judgment deserve current recognition in estimating loan losses. The allowance for loan losses is increased by the provision for loan losses and reduced by net loan charge-offs.

Annuity and Life Income Funds: PCUSA, A Corporation is an income beneficiary of trust funds held by the Foundation. In accordance with current accounting standards, PCUSA, A Corporation has recorded as an asset the net present value of the future income to be received from the funds.

Inventories: Inventories represent books, periodicals, and curriculum produced by PCUSA, A Corporation for distribution. These items are stated at average cost.

Property and Equipment: Property and equipment consists principally of the PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment, and domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land and property held for disposition.

The PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment are stated at cost, or fair value at the date of donation, if donated. The domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, racial ethnic schools, undeveloped land and other properties are recorded based on fair value at the date of donation, appraisal value or replacement cost. Expenditures of greater than \$5,000 which increase values or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are capitalized. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

PCUSA, A Corporation holds title to various other foreign properties. Such properties include properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land and property held for disposition. Shared Services has administrative responsibility for property taxes, insurance, maintenance and improvements for these properties. Generally, it is PCUSA, A Corporation’s policy to exclude the cost or donated value of foreign properties from its financial records.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

PCUSA, A Corporation reviews for the impairment of long-lived assets subject to depreciation and amortization, including property and equipment, whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of these assets may not be recoverable in accordance with ASC 350 and ASC 360. If this review were to result in the conclusion that the carrying value of long-lived assets would not be recoverable, then a write down of the assets would be recorded through a charge to earnings equal to the difference in the fair market value of the assets and their carrying value. No such impairment losses were recognized for the year ended December 31, 2011.

Deferred Revenue: PCUSA, A Corporation holds special events each year. Monies received to support future special events are recorded as deferred revenue.

Collections: PCUSA, A Corporation's collections consist of works of art, ecclesiastical objects and papers, historical treasures, scientific specimens and other assets. The collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions since PCUSA, A Corporation's inception, are not recognized as assets on the consolidated statements of financial position. Purchases of collection items are recorded as decreases in unrestricted net assets in the year in which the items are acquired, or as temporarily or permanently restricted net assets if the assets used to purchase the items are restricted by donors. Contributed collection items are not reflected on the consolidated financial statements. Proceeds from deaccessions or insurance recoveries are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes.

Use of Estimates: The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements. Estimates also affect the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. The more significant estimates made relate to the valuation of mortgages, loans, and contributions receivable and valuation of investments. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Income Taxes: The Internal Revenue Service has determined that PCUSA, A Corporation is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. However, PCUSA, A Corporation is subject to federal income tax on any unrelated business taxable income.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America prescribe recognition thresholds and measurement attributes for the financial statement recognition and measurement of a tax position taken or expected to be taken in a tax return. Tax benefits or liabilities will be recognized only if the tax position would "more-likely-than-not" be sustained in a tax examination, with a tax examination being presumed to occur. The amount recognized will be the largest amount of tax benefit or liability that is greater than 50% likely of being realized on examination. For tax positions not meeting the more-likely-than-not test, no tax benefit or liability will be recorded. Management has concluded that they are unaware of any tax benefits or liabilities to be recognized at December 31, 2011 and does not expect this to change in the next 12 months.

PCUSA, A Corporation would recognize interest and penalties related to uncertain tax positions in interest and income tax expense, respectively. PCUSA, A Corporation has no amounts accrued for interest or penalties as of December 31, 2011. PCUSA, A Corporation is no longer subject to examination by taxing authorities for the years before December 31, 2008.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

Subsequent Events: Management has performed an analysis of the activities and transactions subsequent to December 31, 2011 to determine the need for any adjustments to and/or disclosures within the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2011. Management has performed their analysis through May 8, 2012, which is the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

**NOTE 3 – TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS**

Temporarily and permanently restricted net assets at December 31, 2011 are available for the following purposes:

	<u>Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted Net Assets</u>
Church loans	\$ 2,850,099	\$ 18,747,801
Jinishian Memorial Program	19,413,912	9,731,696
Education	20,965,717	20,834,664
Mission work	18,522,205	4,626,663
Presbyterian disaster assistance	16,667,733	-
Evangelism and church growth	15,030,538	6,542,356
Health	14,210,546	12,700,363
Missionary support	35,492,442	15,011,793
Christian education	11,554,475	14,336,302
Peace making/Justice	2,062,487	84,382
Hunger	2,450,255	405,811
Outside trusts/Life income funds	1,456,473	57,348,661
Racial ethnic	147,127	220,399
Women	592,827	101,428
Historical Foundation/Per capita	1,188,128	782,633
General endowments	24,220,961	95,318,161
Other	<u>1,082,401</u>	<u>973,713</u>
	<u>\$ 187,908,326</u>	<u>\$ 257,766,826</u>

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 3 – TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS** (Continued)

Net assets released from restrictions during the year ended December 31, 2011 consisted of the following:

Jinishian Memorial Program	\$ 1,682,882
Education	3,500,671
Mission work	8,101,794
Evangelism and church growth	3,692,928
Health	2,463,531
Missionary support	5,869,764
Christian education	2,546,096
Peace making/Justice	1,081,900
Hunger	2,557,701
Presbyterian disaster assistance	9,634,509
Self-development of people	<u>2,281,303</u>
	<u>\$ 43,413,079</u>

**NOTE 4 – INVESTMENTS**

Investments, including long-term investments, are primarily held in common funds managed by the Foundation on behalf of PCUSA, A Corporation. A summary of PCUSA, A Corporation's ownership of the investments held at December 31, 2011 is as follows:

	<u>Fair Value</u>
Short-term investments	\$ 73,395,165
Deposits	61,933
Stocks	2,059,415
Bonds	40,652,426
Stock mutual funds	177,555,096
Bond mutual funds	102,087,823
Alternative investments	<u>19,484,920</u>
Total investments	<u>\$ 415,296,778</u>

Income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of outside investment managers, custodian and Foundation administrative fees.

**NOTE 5 – FUNDS HELD IN TRUST BY OTHERS**

Funds held in trust by others represent resources neither in the possession nor under the control of PCUSA, A Corporation, but held and administered by outside trustees, with PCUSA, A Corporation deriving only income from such funds. Such investments are recorded in the consolidated statement of financial position at the fair value of the principal amounts, which represents the estimated present value of the expected future cash flows, and the income, including fair value adjustments, is recorded in the consolidated statement of activities and changes in net assets.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION**

Interpretation of Relevant Law: UPMIFA was adopted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky in March 2010 and is effective July 2010. The Organization interprets UPMIFA as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment funds absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Organization classifies as permanently restricted net assets (a) the original value of gifts donated to the permanent endowment, (b) the original value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment and (c) accumulations to the permanent endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added to the fund. The remaining portion of the donor-restricted endowment fund that is not classified in permanently restricted net assets is classified as temporarily restricted net assets until those amounts are appropriated for expenditure by the Organization in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA.

In accordance with UPMIFA, the Organization considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- (1) The duration and preservation of the fund
- (2) The purposes of the donor-restricted endowment fund
- (3) General economic conditions
- (4) The possible effect of inflation and deflation
- (5) The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- (6) Other resources of the Organization
- (7) The investment policies of the Organization.

Appropriation of Endowment Assets: PCUSA, A Corporation has a spending formula agreement with the Foundation whereby PCUSA, A Corporation receives investment income from unrestricted and restricted endowments held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly for mission use.

Starting with calendar year 2011, spending is 90% of the prior year's spending amount in dollar terms. This adjusted policy will continue until the standard spending formula (5% of the five year average asset value, calculated using an 18 month lag) results in a spending amount that is less than 5% of the current asset value, at which time the standard policy will again be used to determine the spending level. It is anticipated that payments will approximate the estimated sustainable rates of total return (income and capital appreciation) after inflation. The spending formula will be monitored to determine the effects of changing return and inflation expectations on the preservation of purchasing power and the generation of appropriate levels of spendable income.

Investment Policies: The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation are charged with the responsibility of managing the endowment assets of the Church. The overall goal in management of these funds is to generate a long-term total rate of return that provides sustainable distributions to support the mission within reasonable levels of risk.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION** (Continued)

The Trustees adhere to modern portfolio theory, which has as its basic risk reduction through diversification. Diversification is obtained through the use of multiple asset classes as well as multiple investments within these asset classes. Asset classes that may be used include (but are not limited to) domestic and international stocks and bonds, hedge funds, private equity (venture capital and corporate finance), and real property (real estate, minerals, and timber). The investment strategy is implemented through the selection of external advisors and managers with expertise and successful histories in the management of specific asset classes.

The Trustees believe their role is one of setting and reviewing policy; and retaining, monitoring, and evaluating advisors and investment managers. It is the Trustees' desire to find ways to invest these funds in accordance with the social witness principles of the PCUSA. The Trustees will review the investment policy statement at least annually.

The primary financial objectives of the investment funds ("Fund") are to (1) provide a stream of relatively stable and constant earnings in support of annual budgetary needs and (2) to preserve and enhance the real (inflation-adjusted) purchasing power of the Fund.

The long-term investment objective of the Fund is to attain a real total annualized return of at least 5%. The calculation of real total return includes all realized and unrealized capital changes plus all interest, rent, dividend, and other income earned by the portfolio, adjusted for inflation, during a year, net of investment expenses, on average, over a five to seven year period. Secondary objectives are to (1) outperform the Fund's custom benchmark, a weighted average return based on the target asset allocation and index returns and (2) to outperform the median return of a pool of endowment funds with broadly similar investment objectives and policies. The Fund's objective is to attain estimated nominal compound return of 7.8% with a standard deviation of 10.9% of the current portfolio.

Endowment net asset composition as of December 31, 2011:

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Donor-restricted endowment funds	\$ (9,679,082)	\$ 147,950,877	\$ 186,320,253	\$ 324,592,048
Other restricted funds	-	-	71,446,573	71,446,573
Board-designated funds	<u>39,756,085</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,756,085</u>
Total endowment net assets	30,077,003	147,950,877	257,766,826	435,794,706
Net assets other than endowment	<u>25,600,825</u>	<u>39,957,449</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,558,274</u>
Total net assets	<u>\$ 55,677,828</u>	<u>\$ 187,908,326</u>	<u>\$ 257,766,826</u>	<u>\$ 501,352,980</u>

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION** (Continued)

Changes in endowment net assets for the years ended December 31, 2011:

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Beginning balance, January 1, 2011	\$ 29,741,112	\$ 115,905,219	\$ 254,533,576	\$ 400,179,907
Additions	1,140,328	2,515,840	576,039	4,232,207
Income earned	13,112,510	2,660,336	311,001	16,083,847
Transfers and adjustments	23,821,312	38,381,282	(130,947)	62,071,647
Withdrawals	(32,193,620)	-	-	(32,193,620)
Realized/unrealized gains and losses	<u>(5,544,639)</u>	<u>(11,511,800)</u>	<u>2,477,157</u>	<u>(14,579,282)</u>
Ending balance, December 31, 2011	<u>\$ 30,077,003</u>	<u>\$ 147,950,877</u>	<u>\$ 257,766,826</u>	<u>\$ 435,794,706</u>

Funds with Deficiencies: From time to time the fair value of assets associated with individual donor restricted endowment funds may fall below the level the donor requires PCUSA, A Corporation to retain as a fund of perpetual duration. Deficiencies of this nature that are reported in unrestricted and designated net assets were \$9,679,082 as of December 31, 2011.

**NOTE 7 – MORTGAGES AND LOANS ON CHURCHES AND MANSES**

A summary of the activity relating to mortgages and loans on churches and manses during the year ended December 31, 2011 are as follows:

Receivables at January 1	\$ 3,808,952
Repayments	<u>(491,818)</u>
Receivables at December 31	3,317,134
Add accrued interest receivable	<u>3,935</u>
	3,321,069
Less allowance for loss	<u>(3,750)</u>
Net receivables at December 31	<u>\$ 3,317,319</u>

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(Continued)



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 7 – MORTGAGES AND LOANS ON CHURCHES AND MANSES (Continued)**

The ability of each borrower congregation to pay PCUSA, A Corporation for the loan (s) made to the congregation may depend on the contributions the congregation receives from its members. Therefore, payments to PCUSA, A Corporation may depend on the continued growth in membership of the borrower congregations, and on the maintenance of adequate contributions by individual members to their congregations, as well as on prudent management by those congregations of their finances. The following is a summary of the gross loan balances for each Synod at December 31, 2011:

Covenant	\$ 369,947
Lincoln Trails	383,196
Living Waters	7,923
Mid-Atlantic	66,364
Northeast	273,215
Pacific	272,985
South Atlantic	1,272,102
Southern California/Hawaii	291,439
Southwest	129,163
The Sun	143,368
Trinity	<u>107,432</u>
	<u>\$ 3,317,134</u>

**NOTE 8 – ALLOWANCES FOR LOAN LOSSES AND IMPAIRMENT OF LOANS**

The outstanding principal balances of loans to churches, students, and Presbyterian schools and colleges for which an impairment has been recognized at December 31, 2011 were \$52,454, and the related allocated allowances for loan losses at December 31, 2011 was \$0. There was no interest received by PCUSA, A Corporation, on the impaired loans during 2011. The total average impaired loan balances were approximately \$70,944 at December 31, 2011.

**NOTE 9 – RECEIVABLES FROM RELATED ENTITIES**

A summary of the activity relating to receivables from related entities, which includes unsecured student loans of approximately \$2.5 million, during the year ended December 31, 2011, is as follows:

Receivables at January 1	\$ 7,252,458
Assessments and other	13,836,243
Collections of assessments and other	(11,502,458)
New loans	268,255
Loan repayments	(576,933)
Charge-offs	<u>(997,708)</u>
Receivables at December 31	8,279,857
Less allowance for loss	<u>(2,414,615)</u>
Net receivables at December 31	<u>\$ 5,865,242</u>

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 10 – PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

The components of property and equipment at December 31, 2011 are as follows:

Land	\$ 3,878,920
Buildings and building improvements	43,348,161
Furniture and equipment	<u>16,127,419</u>
	63,354,500
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(43,323,927)</u>
	<u>\$ 20,030,573</u>

**NOTE 11 – BENEFITS DATA**

As explained below, PCUSA, A Corporation offers a multi-employer defined benefit plan, a major medical plan and a retirement savings plan to eligible employees.

Substantially all employees of PCUSA, A Corporation participate in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Benefits Plan”) which is administered by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Board of Pensions”). The Benefits Plan is a comprehensive benefits program, which provides a defined benefit pension plan, a long-term disability plan, a death benefits plan and a major medical plan. The assets of the Benefits Plan are commingled for investment purposes; however, accounting for each plan is separately maintained.

The defined benefit pension plan’s total net assets available for benefits, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were approximately \$6,185,456,000 at December 31, 2011. The defined benefit pension plan’s total Accumulated Plan Benefit Obligations, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were approximately \$5,754,912,000 at December 31, 2011. Since the Benefits Plan is a Church Plan under the Internal Revenue Code, PCUSA, A Corporation has no financial interest in the Benefits Plan assets nor does it have any liability for benefits payable, contingent or otherwise, under the Benefits Plan or its components.

PCUSA, A Corporation pays the entire cost associated with the major medical plan. Employees have the option to purchase additional coverage such as dental, long-term care, and life insurance.

In addition, PCUSA, A Corporation sponsors a retirement savings plan, which is a tax-deferred annuity plan. The employer contribution is designed to provide equalization of the impact of tax differences between clergy and lay personnel. All exempt lay employees are eligible to participate in the employer portion of the plan. PCUSA, A Corporation pays an amount based upon a calculation of tax differences. Substantially all employees may make voluntary contributions to the plan.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 11 – BENEFITS DATA** (Continued)

PCUSA, A Corporation's expenses for the plans for the year ended December 31, 2011 were as follows:

Administered by Board of Pensions	
Pension plan	\$ 3,611,201
Major medical plan	<u>6,162,724</u>
	9,733,925
Administered by others - retirement savings plan	<u>321,082</u>
	<u>\$ 10,095,007</u>

**NOTE 12 – CONCENTRATION OF RISKS**

Revenue Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation's primary source of revenue is contributions from Congregations, Presbyteries, Synods and individuals. The majority of these contributions are transmitted via the Presbyteries that are grouped into 16 Synods comprised of a total of 173 Presbyteries. The following is a summary of the contributions by each of the Synods during the year ended December 31, 2011:

<u>Synod</u>	
Alaska-Northwest	\$ 935,257
Covenant	2,781,736
Individuals and Other Church Related	9,331,535
Lakes and Prairies	2,534,779
Lincoln Trails	2,237,792
Living Waters	1,632,544
Mid-America	1,336,254
Mid-Atlantic	4,761,661
Northeast	3,349,988
Pacific	2,247,880
Puerto Rico	25,761
South Atlantic	3,167,131
Southern California/Hawaii	1,818,179
Southwest	641,329
The Rocky Mountains	777,637
The Sun	2,551,317
Trinity	<u>4,378,151</u>
	<u>\$ 44,508,931</u>

Credit Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation maintains cash and cash equivalents with various financial institutions. At times, such cash and cash equivalents may be in excess of the FDIC insurance level.

At December 31, 2011, approximately 0.7% of total short-term investments and long-term investments held by the Foundation were held in one common stock, The Proctor & Gamble Company.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE**

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America define fair value as the price that would be received for an asset or paid to transfer a liability (an exit price) in PCUSA, A Corporation's principal or most advantageous market for the asset or liability in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date and establish a fair value hierarchy which requires an entity to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs when measuring fair value. The three levels of inputs that may be used to measure fair value are described below:

Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the entity has the ability to access as of the measurement date.

Level 2: Significant other observable inputs other than Level 1 prices such as quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

Level 3: Significant unobservable inputs that reflect a reporting entity's own assumptions about the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing an asset or liability.

In many cases, a valuation technique used to measure fair value includes inputs from multiple levels of the fair value hierarchy. The lowest level of significant input determines the placement of the entire fair value measurement in the hierarchy.

Treasury bonds are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the bonds are traded (Level 1 inputs). Corporate bonds and agency bonds are valued at quoted prices for identical or similar assets in non-active markets since these bonds trade infrequently (Level 2 inputs - market). Mortgages are valued using matrix pricing, which is a mathematical technique widely used to value debt securities without relying exclusively on quoted prices for the specific securities, but rather by relying on the securities' relationship to other benchmark quoted securities (Level 2 inputs - market).

The fair value of the certificates of deposit, equity investment and Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program denominational accounts were recalculated by applying the interest rate to the initial investments and no discount for credit quality or liquidity were determined to be applicable (Level 2 inputs).

PCUSA's beneficial interest in investments held by the Foundation includes cash and cash equivalents, common stocks, fixed income and equity mutual funds, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program denominational accounts, other investments and alternative investments. PCUSA has the ability to redeem the investments within 60 days; therefore, these investments have been reported as Level 2 inputs. The information that follows is related to PCUSA's beneficial interest in the Foundation investments.

The carrying amounts for cash and cash equivalents included in investments and as reported in the consolidated statements of financial position approximate their fair value.

The fair values of common stocks are determined by obtaining quoted prices on nationally recognized securities exchanges. These stocks are part of PCUSA, A Corporation's beneficial interest in the common stocks held at the Foundation (Level 2 inputs - market).

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE** (Continued)

The fixed income and equity mutual funds invest in publicly traded securities and bonds with quoted market prices. PCUSA, A Corporation has full transparency to the holdings of the mutual funds, and the fair value of these investments has been determined by the Fund managers based on the market prices of the underlying holdings. As part of its beneficial interest in these investments at the Foundation, PCUSA, A Corporation has the ability to redeem these investments within 60 days (Level 2 inputs - market).

The fair value of the beneficial interests in the perpetual trust assets (life income funds and funds held in trust by others) is based on a valuation model that calculates the present value of estimated distributed income. The valuation model incorporates the fair value of investment holdings which are readily marketable securities valued at quoted prices and incorporates assumptions that market participants would use in estimating future distributed income. PCUSA, A Corporation is able to compare the valuation model inputs and results to widely available published industry data for reasonableness. PCUSA does not have the ability to redeem the investment within 90 days (Level 3 inputs - market).

As of December 31, 2011, the PCUSA, A Corporation's alternative investments consist of hedge funds, private equity funds and real estate within the beneficial interest in investments held by the Foundation. The initial fair value of each of the funds investment is initially based on valuations determined by the investment manager using audited net asset values ("NAVs"), as of their most recent statements, adjusted for cash receipts, cash disbursements, and other anticipated income or loss through December 31. The NAV of the fund of funds is determined on the accrual basis of accounting in conformity with U.S. GAAP; in certain instances, secondary investments require reporting other than U.S. GAAP such as International Financial Reporting Standards or Tax Basis accounting, in which case the investment managers adjust values to more accurately comply with U.S. GAAP. The manager utilizes standard valuation procedures and policies to assess the fair value of the underlying investment holdings to derive NAV. For holdings in marketable securities listed on national security exchanges, the values represent the publicly traded values and holdings in private securities are generally valued using the mark-to-market method, which attempts to apply a fair value standard by referring to meaningful third-party transactions, comparable to public market valuations, appraisals and/or the income approach. As part of its beneficial interest in the investments at the Foundation, PCUSA, A Corporation has the ability to redeem the investment at the NAV within 60 days (Level 2 inputs - market and income).

The PCUSA, A Corporation's management has determined that NAV is a reasonable and prudent estimate of valuations reported by the investment manager of the alternative investments. However, alternative investments are not readily marketable and their estimated value is subject to uncertainty. Therefore, there may be a material difference between their estimated value and the value that would have been used had a readily determinable fair value for such investments existed.

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(Continued)

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**NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE (Continued)**

Description of Alternative Investments Strategy for Its Beneficial Interest in Foundation Investments

**Hedge Funds**

Hedge funds are distinguished by: (1) investment flexibility provided to the manager and (2) the investment objective to earn absolute returns in up and down markets. The flexibility to short securities and use leverage are generally cited as defining characteristics of hedge funds. Equally important is the hedge fund manager's flexibility to invest in non-traditional securities or employ non-traditional strategies. Investments may be made in the U.S. and abroad. The common performance objective is to earn a return comparable to stocks with volatility between stocks and bonds that result in an attractive return/risk ratio. Investments in hedge funds generally require a lock-up period of one to two years. From the end of the lock-up period, there can be additional limitations (e.g. gates) on the liquidity of limited partner capital.

**Private Equity**

Private equity funds make investments in private companies in the U.S. and abroad or take public companies private. Investment strategies include venture capital, distressed debt and buyouts. At the company level, private equity capital funds new technologies, expands working capital, funds acquisitions, or strengthens a company balance sheet. Private equity investing can require long holding periods and thus fund partnership terms require long lock-up periods for investor committed capital. Given higher levels of risk and illiquidity than the public markets, private equity funds are expected to achieve a long term investment return of public equities, plus a return premium. Investments in private equity do not allow for withdrawals from the partnership until the partnership is dissolved, unless special approval is awarded by the general partner. In nearly all of the partnerships, there are special provisions that allow for the life of the entity to be extended beyond the original dissolution date, typically two to four years.

**Real Estate**

Private real estate funds make investments in commercial real estate properties in the U.S. and abroad. Primary property types include office, multi-family, retail, hotel, industrial and undeveloped land. Investment strategies include value-added initiatives such as lease-up, renovations and repositioning of existing property and more opportunistic initiatives such as development and redevelopment. Private real estate investing can require long holding periods and thus fund partnership terms require long lock-up periods for investor committed capital. Given higher levels of risk and illiquidity than the public real estate market (e.g. REITs), private real estate funds are expected to achieve a long term investment return of REITs, plus a return premium. Investments in private real estate do not allow for withdrawals from the partnership until the partnership is dissolved, unless special approval is awarded by the general partner. In nearly all of the partnerships, there are special provisions that allow for the life of the entity to be extended beyond the original dissolution date, typically two to four years.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE (Continued)**

Assets and Liabilities Measured on a Recurring Basis

Assets and liabilities measured at fair value on a recurring basis are summarized below for 2011:

	Fair Value Measurements at December 31, 2011 Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)
Assets:			
Cash equivalents	\$ 1,654,706	\$ -	\$ -
Marketable securities			
Fixed income securities			
Corporate bonds	-	16,873,486	-
Treasury bonds	13,694,121	-	-
Agency bonds	-	5,052,068	-
Mortgages	-	5,216,363	-
Beneficial interest in investments held by the Foundation	-	363,239,326	-
Certificates of deposit	-	61,933	-
Oikocredit Equity Shares	-	58,115	-
Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program denominational accounts	-	9,446,660	-
Total investments	<u>\$ 15,348,827</u>	<u>\$ 399,947,951</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Life income funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,809,690
Funds held in trust by others	-	-	53,995,443

The table below presents a reconciliation and income statement classification of gains and losses for all assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3) for the year ended December 31, 2011:

	Beginning Balance January 1, 2011	Net Realized/ Unrealized Gains (Losses)	Settlements	Transfers In and Out of Level 3	Ending Balance December 31, 2011
Other investments	\$ 7,668,724	\$ -	\$ (4,110,609)	\$ (3,558,115)	\$ -
Life income funds	7,115,480	(2,305,790)	-	-	4,809,690
Funds held in trust by others	<u>56,535,006</u>	<u>(2,539,563)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>53,995,443</u>
	<u>\$ 71,319,210</u>	<u>\$ (4,845,353)</u>	<u>\$ (4,110,609)</u>	<u>\$ (3,558,115)</u>	<u>\$ 58,805,133</u>

The transfers out of Level 3 are to reclassify the investments as Level 2 investments. The investments should be classified as Level 2 investments based on their fair value inputs. Management's policy is to recognize transfers at the end of the year.

(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 14 – FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION**

A summary of PCUSA, A Corporation's operating expenses by functional classification for the year ended December 31, 2011 is as follows:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>%</u>
Program expenses	\$ 92,324,915	93.8%
Management and general expenses	738,872	0.8
Fundraising expenses	2,924,033	3.0
Payments to affiliates	<u>2,405,171</u>	<u>2.4</u>
	<u>\$ 98,392,991</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

**NOTE 15 – COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES**

PCUSA, A Corporation holds and participates in an insurance fund (the "Fund") that exists to provide a source of funds for that portion of certain losses not covered by commercial insurance to cover deductibles on commercial insurance and for certain classes of uninsured losses. Various General Assembly-level agencies and corporations are included in the Fund. The largest possible loss to be assumed in any one event or occurrence is \$250,000, with \$1,000,000 as the largest potential aggregate of all claims in a single calendar year.

The minimum balance of the self-insurance fund shall not fall below \$5,000,000 as a result of claims paid. In the event this happens, an assessment will be made to the insured entities to return the fund to the \$5,000,000 minimum balance. The assessment will be based on each insured entity's 5-year loss ratio. A 1% minimum assessment will be made by the entities that have not experienced any losses in the 5-year period. The balance of the Fund held by PCUSA, A Corporation was \$5,212,977 at December 31, 2011.

Additionally, PCUSA, A Corporation has excess insurance coverage for certain losses covered by commercial insurance up to \$25 million per occurrence on a policy that sits over the general liability and auto liability policies.

During the ordinary course of business, PCUSA, A Corporation is subject to pending and threatened legal actions. Management of PCUSA, A Corporation does not believe that any of these actions will have a material adverse effect on PCUSA, A Corporation's consolidated financial position or change in net assets.

**NOTE 16 – RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The Foundation provides certain investment, custodial and deferred giving services to PCUSA, A Corporation. The Foundation recoups the cost of those services not covered from the income of its own endowment funds and the annual grant from the General Assembly by quarterly charges against the investment pools in which the funds administered by the Foundation are invested. These charges were recovered equally from the principal and income of these pools. Such costs consist of salary and benefits (50% of the Foundation's operating expenses), outside investment services (23% of the Foundation's operating expenses) and other operating expenses (27% of the Foundation's operating expenses).

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(Continued)



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
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**NOTE 16 – RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (Continued)**

The income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of outside investment managers, custodial and Foundation administrative fees as described previously. PCUSA, A Corporation's investments and unrestricted and restricted endowment funds held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly at December 31, 2011, totaled approximately \$364 million.

The Foundation's custodial cost recovery and investment management fees are assessed daily based on the prior day's market value against the total fund.

There are certain church loan funds whereby the fiduciary ownership belongs to the Board of National Missions, a constituent corporation of the Foundation. Accordingly, these funds are not reflected in the consolidated financial statements but are administered by PCUSA, A Corporation. These loan funds were approximately \$207 million at December 31, 2011.

PCUSA, A Corporation served as a receiving agent for funds designated for the Board of Pensions. PCUSA, A Corporation received \$1,834,980 for the year ended December 31, 2011, of which \$574,026 was yet to be remitted to the Board of Pensions.

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space and provides administrative support to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. ("PILP") by contract. For the year ended December 31, 2011, administrative support charged to PILP was \$135,438. Office space charged to PILP was \$54,615 for 2011.

On June 29, 2000, PCUSA, A Corporation entered into an operating agreement with PILP under which PILP will provide administrative services (e.g., origination and loan servicing) for PCUSA, A Corporation's church loan program at cost in an effort to streamline the coordination process between PCUSA, A Corporation's church loan program and PILP's loan program. PCUSA, A Corporation reimbursed PILP \$284,601 for the actual costs of such services during 2011.

PCUSA, A Corporation and PILP have issued joint loans through a participation arrangement. For the year ended December 31, 2011, total loans outstanding were \$37,032,384 under this participation arrangement.

The current commitment, effective May 1, 2010, to PILP is a five-year commitment to invest up to \$5,000,000 in short and intermediate term deposit accounts. As of December 31, 2011, investments with PILP were \$9,436,185. At December 31, 2011, fixed interest rates ranged from 1.09% to 2.27% and the adjustable rate ranged from 1.00% to 1.39%. For the year ended December 31, 2011, the Foundation did not invest with PILP from PCUSA, A Corporation's unrestricted endowment funds.

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space to Presbyterian Publishing Corporation ("PPC") under an operating lease. For the years ended December 31, 2011, rental income was \$199,494. Future minimum rental income under the operating lease, which expires in December 2014 with an option to renew, is \$428,323 annually.

Other related expenses charged to PPC for telephone, postage and copy services were \$85,478 in 2011. Also, a new phone system and a new computer were purchased during 2011 at a total cost of \$17,272 charged to PPC.

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(Continued)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),  
A CORPORATION  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
December 31, 2011

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**NOTE 16 – RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (Continued)**

PPC pays PCUSA for supplemental warehousing and distribution services. Fees paid by PPC under this agreement in 2011 were \$17,770 for fulfillment fees and \$124,024 for freight.

PPC publishes various pamphlets, magazines, and books for PCUSA, A Corporation during the year on a project-by-project basis. There were no expenses related to this type of work in 2011. PPC also pays PCUSA, A Corporation for advertising space in various church publications. Advertising expense under such arrangements was \$1,796 in 2011.

PCUSA, A Corporation participates in commercial insurance programs, whereby premiums are negotiated and paid by PCUSA, A Corporation. The Board of Pensions, Foundation, PILP and PPC reimburse PCUSA, A Corporation for expenses paid on their behalf. Expenses incurred for commercial insurance paid by PCUSA, A Corporation for December 31, 2011:

Foundation	\$ 103,792
Board of Pensions	442,916
PILP	44,460
PPC	74,772

# Appendix C: 2010 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt			
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %		
<b>GAMC</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
	Asian	7	1	8	2.7%	4	1	5	1.7%	13	4.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	14	4.8%
	African American	6	0	6	2.1%	12	0	12	4.1%	18	6.2%	5	0	5	1.7%	17	3	20	6.9%	25	8.6%	43	14.8%
	Hispanic	3	0	3	1.0%	2	1	3	1.0%	6	2.1%	1	0	1	0.3%	5	0	5	1.7%	6	2.1%	12	4.1%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	2	0	2	0.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	1	0	1	0.3%	2	0	2	0.7%	3	1.0%	5	1.7%
	White	55	5	60	20.6%	85	5	90	30.9%	150	51.5%	10	2	12	4.1%	43	11	54	18.6%	66	22.7%	216	74.2%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>65.3%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>34.7%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic	18	1	19	6.5%	19	2	21	7.2%	40	13.7%	7	0	7	2.4%	25	3	28	9.6%	35	12.0%	75	25.8%	
Women					104	7	111	38.1%							68	14	82	28.2%			193	66.3%	
<b>OGA</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	2	0	2	2.4%	1	0	1	1.2%	3	3.6%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.2%	1	1.2%	4	4.8%
	African American	2	0	2	2.4%	3	0	3	3.6%	5	6.0%	2	0	2	2.4%	7	1	8	9.5%	10	11.9%	15	17.9%
	Hispanic	1	0	1	1.2%	1	0	1	1.2%	2	2.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.4%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.2%	1	0	1	1.2%	2	2.4%	2	2.4%
	White	10	1	11	13.1%	24	3	27	32.1%	38	45.2%	3	2	5	6.0%	15	3	18	21.4%	23	27.4%	61	72.6%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic	5	0	5	6.0%	5	0	5	6.0%	10	11.9%	6	2	3	3.6%	9	4	10	11.9%	13	15.5%	23	27.4%	
Women					29	3	32	38.1%							24	4	28	33.3%			60	71.4%	
<b>CONFERENCE CENTERS</b> 3 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.7%	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.7%	1	0.7%	2	1.4%
	Asian	3	0	3	2.1%	1	0	1	0.7%	4	2.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	2.8%
	African American	0	0	0	0.0%	2	0	2	1.4%	2	1.4%	1	0	1	0.7%	0	4	4	2.8%	5	3.4%	7	4.8%
	Hispanic	3	1	4	2.8%	10	2	12	8.3%	16	11.0%	12	5	17	11.7%	18	10	28	19.3%	45	31.0%	61	42.1%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	2	0	2	1.4%	2	1.4%	2	1.4%
	White	8	1	9	6.2%	27	2	29	20.0%	38	26.2%	7	4	11	7.6%	18	2	20	13.8%	31	21.4%	69	47.6%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic	6	1	7	4.8%	14	2	16	11.0%	23	15.9%	13	5	18	12.4%	21	14	35	24.1%	53	36.6%	76	52.4%	
Women					41	4	45	31.0%							39	16	55	37.9%			100	69.0%	
<b>SYNODS</b> 11 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	1	0	1	2.0%	1	0	1	2.0%	2	4.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	4.0%
	African American	0	1	1	2.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1	2	4.0%	2	4.0%	3	6.0%
	Hispanic	1	0	1	2.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	0	1	1	2.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	7	4	11	22.0%	14	2	16	32.0%	27	54.0%	1	4	5	10.0%	8	3	11	22.0%	16	32.0%	43	86.0%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34.0%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic	2	1	3	6.0%	1	0	1	2.0%	4	8.0%	0	1	1	2.0%	1	1	2	4.0%	3	6.0%	7	14.0%	
Women					15	2	17	34.0%							9	4	13	26.0%			30	60.0%	

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/18/10.

# Appendix C: 2010 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

	Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %	
	Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt				
	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %			
<b>PRESBYTERIES</b> 139 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	4	4	0.4%	4	0.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1	2	0.2%	2	0.2%	6	0.6%
	Asian	7	6	13	1.3%	5	0	5	0.5%	18	1.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	1	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	19	1.8%
	African American	11	10	21	2.0%	23	8	31	3.0%	52	5.0%	0	5	5	0.5%	13	8	21	2.0%	26	2.5%	78	7.6%
	Hispanic	19	6	25	2.4%	5	4	9	0.9%	34	3.3%	1	3	4	0.4%	9	2	11	1.1%	15	1.5%	49	4.7%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	1	0	1	0.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	0	2	2	0.2%	0	3	3	0.3%	5	0.5%	6	0.6%
	White	164	120	284	27.5%	174	140	314	30.4%	598	57.9%	15	43	58	5.6%	96	123	219	21.2%	277	26.8%	875	84.7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>68.4%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Total Racial Ethnic Women	38	22	60	5.8%	33	16	49	4.7%	109	10.6%	1	10	11	1.1%	23	15	38	3.7%	49	4.7%	158	15.3%	
					207	156	363	35.1%							119	138	257	24.9%			620	60.0%	
<b>THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS</b> 7 reporting	Native American	1	0	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	Asian	5	0	5	1.2%	5	0	5	1.2%	10	2.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	11	2.6%
	African American	10	0	10	2.4%	21	2	23	5.4%	33	7.8%	5	2	7	1.7%	12	3	15	3.5%	22	5.2%	55	13.0%
	Hispanic	6	0	6	1.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	6	1.4%	4	1	5	1.2%	2	1	3	0.7%	8	1.9%	14	3.3%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	1	0	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	White	110	4	114	26.9%	108	14	122	28.8%	236	55.7%	20	5	25	5.9%	63	17	80	18.9%	105	24.8%	341	80.4%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>35.6%</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>67.9%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>32.1%</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Total Racial Ethnic Women	23	0	23	5.4%	27	2	29	6.8%	52	12.3%	9	3	12	2.8%	15	4	19	4.5%	31	7.3%	83	19.6%	
					135	16	151	35.6%							78	21	99	23.3%			250	59.0%	
<b>HUBBARD PRESS</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	African American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	3	0	3	20.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	3	20.0%	2	0	2	13.3%	10	0	10	66.7%	12	80.0%	15	100.0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Total Racial Ethnic Women	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
					0	0	0	0.0%							10	0	10	66.7%			10	66.7%	
<b>PPC</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	1	0	1	3.7%	1	0	1	3.7%	2	7.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.4%
	African American	1	0	1	3.7%	2	0	2	7.4%	3	11.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	11.1%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	3.7%	1	3.7%	1	3.7%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	11	0	11	40.7%	10	0	10	37.0%	21	77.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21	77.8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>96.3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Total Racial Ethnic Women	2	0	2	7.4%	3	0	3	11.1%	5	18.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	3.7%	1	3.7%	6	22.2%	
					13	0	13	48.1%							1	0	1	3.7%			14	51.9%	

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/18/10.

# Appendix C: 2010 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %		
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt					
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %				
<b>PILP</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	African American	1	0	1	7.1%	1	0	1	7.1%	2	14.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	7.1%	1	7.1%	3	21.4%		
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	White	3	0	3	21.4%	3	0	3	21.4%	6	42.9%	0	0	0	0.0%	5	0	5	35.7%	5	35.7%	11	78.6%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic		1	0	1	7.1%	1	0	1	7.1%	2	14.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	7.1%	1	7.1%	3	21.4%		
Women						4	0	4	28.6%							6	0	6	42.9%			10	71.4%		
<b>BOP</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%
	Asian	2	0	2	1.1%	4	0	4	2.1%	6	3.2%	1	0	1	0.5%	1	0	1	0.5%	2	1.1%	8	4.3%		
	African American	5	0	5	2.7%	19	0	19	10.1%	24	12.8%	1	0	1	0.5%	19	0	19	10.1%	20	10.6%	44	23.4%		
	Hispanic	1	0	1	0.5%	2	0	2	1.1%	3	1.6%	1	0	1	0.5%	2	0	2	1.1%	3	1.6%	6	3.2%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%		
	White	46	0	46	24.5%	58	0	58	30.9%	104	55.3%	6	0	6	3.2%	16	2	18	9.6%	24	12.8%	128	68.1%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>45.2%</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic		8	0	8	4.3%	27	0	27	14.4%	35	18.6%	3	0	3	1.6%	22	0	22	11.7%	25	13.3%	60	31.9%		
Women						85	0	85	45.2%							38	2	40	21.3%			125	66.5%		
<b>FOUNDATION</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.4%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%		
	African American	3	0	3	4.3%	5	0	5	7.2%	8	11.6%	0	0	0	0.0%	7	0	7	10.1%	7	10.1%	15	21.7%		
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	White	22	0	22	31.9%	22	1	23	33.3%	45	65.2%	3	0	3	4.3%	5	0	5	7.2%	8	11.6%	53	76.8%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>40.6%</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>76.8%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18.8%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic		3	0	3	4.3%	5	0	5	7.2%	8	11.6%	0	0	0	0.0%	8	0	8	11.6%	8	11.6%	16	23.2%		
Women						27	1	28	40.6%							13	0	13	18.8%			41	59.4%		
<b>JARVIE COMMONWEAL SERVICE</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	African American	1	0	1	7.1%	1	0	1	7.1%	2	14.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	14.3%		
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	7.1%	1	7.1%	1	0	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	2	14.3%		
	White	1	0	1	7.1%	6	2	8	57.1%	9	64.3%	1	0	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	10	71.4%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>71.4%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic		1	0	1	7.1%	2	0	2	14.3%	3	21.4%	1	0	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	4	28.6%		
Women						8	2	10	71.4%							0	0	0	0.0%			10	71.4%		

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/18/10.

# Appendix C: 2010 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total		Grand %	
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt					
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %				
<b>CHURCHWIDE TOTALS</b>	Native American	1	0	1	0.0%	3	4	7	0.3%	8	0.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	2	1	3	0.1%	3	0.1%	11	0.5%		
	Asian	28	7	35	1.5%	22	1	23	1.0%	58	2.5%	1	0	1	0.0%	5	1	6	0.3%	7	0.3%	65	2.8%		
	African American	40	11	51	2.2%	89	10	99	4.2%	150	6.4%	14	7	21	0.9%	77	20	97	4.1%	118	5.0%	268	11.4%		
	Hispanic	34	7	41	1.7%	20	7	27	1.1%	68	2.9%	19	10	29	1.2%	37	13	50	2.1%	79	3.4%	147	6.2%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	1	0	1	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	3	0	3	0.1%	3	0	3	0.1%	6	0.3%	3	2	5	0.2%	5	3	8	0.3%	13	0.6%	19	0.8%		
	White	440	135	575	24.4%	531	169	700	29.7%	1275	54.2%	68	60	128	5.4%	279	161	440	18.7%	568	24.1%	1843	78.3%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>547</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>1566</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>2354</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>21.7%</b>		
<b>Women</b>						<b>668</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>36.5%</b>							<b>405</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>25.7%</b>			<b>1463</b>	<b>62.1%</b>		

Attachment C: 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %		
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt					
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %				
<b>GAMC</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	7	0	7	2.2%	7	1	8	2.6%	15	4.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	5	0	5	1.6%	5	1.6%	20	6.4%		
	African American	6	0	6	1.9%	13	0	13	4.2%	19	6.1%	1	0	1	0.3%	20	1	21	6.7%	22	7.1%	41	13.1%		
	Hispanic	2	0	2	0.6%	7	0	7	2.2%	9	2.9%	0	0	0	0.0%	5	1	6	1.9%	6	1.9%	15	4.8%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	1	0	1	0.3%	1	0	1	0.3%	2	0.6%	1	0	1	0.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	3	1.0%		
	White	67	2	69	22.1%	104	1	105	33.7%	174	55.8%	8	0	8	2.6%	45	6	51	16.3%	59	18.9%	233	74.7%		
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>70.2%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic	16	0	16	5.1%	28	1	29	9.3%	45	14.4%	2	0	2	0.6%	30	2	32	10.3%	34	10.9%	79	25.3%			
Women					132	2	134	42.9%							75	8	83	26.6%			217	69.6%			
<b>OGA</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	2	0	2	3.1%	1	0	1	1.5%	3	4.6%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	4	6.2%		
	African American	0	0	0	0.0%	4	0	4	6.2%	4	6.2%	2	0	2	3.1%	5	0	5	7.7%	7	10.8%	11	16.9%		
	Hispanic	1	0	1	1.5%	1	0	1	1.5%	2	3.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.1%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	1	1.5%		
	White	10	1	11	16.9%	22	0	22	33.8%	33	50.8%	2	1	3	4.6%	11	0	11	16.9%	14	21.5%	47	72.3%		
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>43.1%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>64.6%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic	3	0	3	4.6%	6	0	6	9.2%	9	13.8%	4	1	5	7.7%	7	0	7	10.8%	9	13.8%	18	27.7%			
Women					28	0	28	43.1%							18	0	18	27.7%			46	70.8%			
<b>CONFERENCE CENTERS</b> 3 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	1	1.3%		
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	1	1	1.3%	1	1.3%	1	1.3%		
	African American	1	0	1	1.3%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	0	1	1	1.3%	0	5	5	6.3%	6	7.6%	7	8.9%		
	Hispanic	3	0	3	3.8%	6	1	7	8.9%	10	12.7%	5	4	9	11.4%	13	4	17	21.5%	26	32.9%	36	45.6%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.3%	1	1.3%	1	1.3%		
	White	5	0	5	6.3%	7	0	7	8.9%	12	15.2%	2	5	7	8.9%	2	12	14	17.7%	21	26.6%	33	41.8%		
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22.8%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>70.9%</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic	4	0	4	5.1%	6	1	7	8.9%	11	13.9%	6	5	11	13.9%	14	10	24	30.4%	35	44.3%	46	58.2%			
Women					13	1	14	17.7%							16	22	38	48.1%			52	65.8%			
<b>SYNODS</b> 13 reporting	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	2	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.0%		
	Asian	1	0	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	1	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	2	3.0%		
	African American	0	1	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	2	3.0%		
	Hispanic	1	0	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.5%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	White	14	8	22	32.8%	13	7	20	29.9%	42	62.7%	1	3	4	6.0%	10	4	14	20.9%	18	26.9%	60	89.6%		
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>70.1%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29.9%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
Total Racial Ethnic	2	1	3	4.5%	0	2	2	3.0%	5	7.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	7	10.4%			
Women					13	9	22	32.8%							11	5	16	23.9%			38	56.7%			

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/13/2011.

Attachment C: 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total	Grand %
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt			
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %		
<b>PRESBYTERIES</b> 123 reporting	Native American	1	0	1	0.1%	0	3	3	0.4%	4	0.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	2	2	0.2%	2	0.2%	6	0.7%
	Asian	3	4	7	0.9%	1	3	4	0.5%	11	1.3%	0	1	1	0.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	12	1.5%
	African American	10	8	18	2.2%	22	6	28	3.4%	46	5.6%	0	13	13	1.6%	8	15	23	2.8%	36	4.4%	82	10.0%
	Hispanic	9	4	13	1.6%	6	2	8	1.0%	21	2.6%	6	0	6	0.7%	4	5	9	1.1%	15	1.8%	36	4.4%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	1	1	2	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	2	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	1	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	3	0.4%
	White	111	101	212	25.9%	139	108	247	30.2%	459	56.2%	6	41	47	5.8%	58	114	172	21.1%	219	26.8%	678	83.0%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>135</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic Women		24	17	41	5.0%	29	14	43	5.3%	84	10.3%	6	14	20	2.4%	12	23	35	4.3%	55	6.7%	139	17.0%
						168	122	290	35.5%							70	137	207	25.3%			497	60.8%
<b>THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS</b> 8 reporting	Native American	1	0	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	Asian	4	0	4	1.0%	4	0	4	1.0%	8	1.9%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	1.9%
	African American	10	0	10	2.4%	17	0	17	4.0%	27	6.4%	5	2	7	1.7%	13	3	16	3.8%	23	5.5%	50	11.9%
	Hispanic	7	9	16	3.8%	7	4	11	2.6%	27	6.4%	3	1	4	1.0%	9	1	10	2.4%	14	3.3%	41	9.7%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	1	0	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
	White	99	1	100	23.8%	105	9	114	27.1%	214	50.8%	25	1	26	6.2%	65	14	79	18.8%	105	24.9%	319	75.8%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>122</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>66.3%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic Women		23	9	32	7.6%	29	4	33	7.8%	65	15.4%	8	3	11	2.6%	22	4	26	6.2%	37	8.8%	102	24.2%
						134	13	147	34.9%							87	18	105	24.9%			252	59.9%
<b>HUBBARD PRESS</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	African American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	4	0	4	28.6%	4	28.6%	4	28.6%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	3	0	3	21.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	3	21.4%	4	0	4	28.6%	3	0	3	21.4%	7	50.0%	10	71.4%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78.6%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic Women		0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	4	0	4	28.6%	4	28.6%	4	28.6%
						0	0	0	0.0%							7	0	7	50.0%			7	50.0%
<b>PPC</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	1	0	1	3.8%	1	0	1	3.8%	2	7.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.7%
	African American	1	0	1	3.8%	1	0	1	3.8%	2	7.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	7.7%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	3.8%	1	3.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	10	0	10	38.5%	11	0	11	42.3%	21	80.8%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21	80.8%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>46.2%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53.8%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Racial Ethnic Women		2	0	2	7.7%	3	0	3	11.5%	5	19.2%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	19.2%
						14	0	14	53.8%							0	0	0	0.0%			14	53.8%

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/13/2011.



Attachment C: 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total		Grand %	
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt		Grand Total	Grand %		
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %				
<b>PILP</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	7.1%	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	1	7.1%
	African American	1	0	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	7.1%	1	7.1%
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	White	3	0	3	21.4%	4	0	4	28.6%	7	50.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	5	0	5	35.7%	5	35.7%	12	85.7%		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>Total Racial Ethnic Women</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	
					<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.7%</b>							<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35.7%</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>71.4%</b>			
<b>BOP</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	2	0	2	1.1%	2	1.1%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.1%	2	1.1%
	Asian	1	0	1	0.5%	4	0	4	2.2%	5	2.7%	1	0	1	0.5%	1	0	1	0.5%	2	1.1%	7	3.8%		
	African American	3	0	3	1.6%	19	0	19	10.3%	22	11.9%	1	0	1	0.5%	18	0	18	9.7%	19	10.3%	41	22.2%		
	Hispanic	1	0	1	0.5%	2	0	2	1.1%	3	1.6%	1	0	1	0.5%	2	0	2	1.1%	3	1.6%	6	3.2%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	3	0	3	1.6%	3	1.6%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1.6%		
	White	47	0	47	25.4%	57	1	58	31.4%	105	56.8%	4	0	4	2.2%	17	0	17	9.2%	21	11.4%	126	68.1%		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>47.6%</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>75.7%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>Total Racial Ethnic Women</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>31.9%</b>			
					<b>87</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>47.6%</b>							<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20.5%</b>			<b>126</b>	<b>68.1%</b>			
<b>FOUNDATION</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	1.6%	1	1.6%	1	1.6%		
	African American	4	0	4	6.3%	4	0	4	6.3%	8	12.5%	0	0	0	0.0%	6	0	6	9.4%	6	9.4%	14	21.9%		
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	White	18	0	18	28.1%	24	0	24	37.5%	42	65.6%	1	0	1	1.6%	5	1	6	9.4%	7	10.9%	49	76.6%		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>Total Racial Ethnic Women</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23.4%</b>			
					<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>43.8%</b>							<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20.3%</b>			<b>41</b>	<b>64.1%</b>			
<b>JARVIE COMMONWEALTH SERVICE</b>	Native American	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	Asian	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	African American	1	0	1	7.7%	1	0	1	7.7%	2	15.4%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	15.4%		
	Hispanic	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0	1	7.7%	1	7.7%	1	0	1	7.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.7%	2	15.4%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		
	White	1	0	1	7.7%	5	2	7	53.8%	8	61.5%	1	0	1	7.7%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	7.7%	9	69.2%		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>Total Racial Ethnic Women</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30.8%</b>			
					<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>69.2%</b>							<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>			<b>9</b>	<b>69.2%</b>			

Note: Figures include data received as of 2/13/2011.

# Attachment C: 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

4/3/2012

		Exempt										Non-Exempt										Grand Total		Grand %	
		Male				Female				Total Exempt		Male				Female				Total Non-Exempt					
		Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Full Time	Part Time	Total	Total %	Total	Total %				
<b>CHURCHWIDE TOTALS</b>	Native American	2	0	2	0.1%	2	5	7	0.3%	9	0.4%	1	0	1	0.0%	0	2	2	0.1%	3	0.1%	12	0.6%		
	Asian	19	4	23	1.1%	19	4	23	1.1%	46	2.2%	1	1	2	0.1%	8	2	10	0.5%	12	0.6%	58	2.8%		
	African American	37	9	46	2.2%	81	6	87	4.2%	133	6.4%	9	16	25	1.2%	75	24	99	4.8%	124	6.0%	257	12.4%		
	Hispanic	24	13	37	1.8%	31	7	38	1.8%	75	3.6%	16	5	21	1.0%	33	11	44	2.1%	65	3.1%	140	6.7%		
	Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.	1	0	1	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%		
	2 or More Races	2	1	3	0.1%	5	0	5	0.2%	8	0.4%	1	0	1	0.0%	2	1	3	0.1%	4	0.2%	12	0.6%		
	White	388	113	501	24.1%	491	128	619	29.8%	1120	53.9%	54	51	105	5.1%	221	151	372	17.9%	477	23.0%	1597	76.9%		
<b>Totals</b>		<b>473</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>29.5%</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>1392</b>	<b>67.0%</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>2077</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		
<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>23.1%</b>		
<b>Women</b>						<b>629</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>37.5%</b>							<b>339</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>25.5%</b>			<b>1309</b>	<b>63.0%</b>		

## Item 11-01

[The assembly approved Item 11-01 with amendment. See pp. 28, 29.]

*On Economic Justice in These Troubled Times—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

**The Presbytery of Atlanta overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012)**~~[, noting the frustration expressed in “Occupy Wall Street” and similar public demonstrations,] to do the following:~~

**1. Condemn personal and corporate greed as a moral sin, and express its concern for the numerous individuals and families affected by our very troubled economy.**

**2. Proclaim that**

- **We stand with and advocate for those who have lost their homes, lost their jobs, lost their health insurance benefits, and those who have lost basic services in their communities including quality public education and vital public infrastructure.**

- **We are concerned by political discussions related to reducing budgetary expenditures for critical safety net programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and community services block grants that support Head Start, WIC, WAP, and other services for our poorest citizens.**

- **We urge policymakers to pursue policies that meet human needs and support the public good, not those that benefit the most powerful.**

- **We decry a moral climate that condones unbridled greed as a necessary ingredient in our economic system.**

- **We uphold the religious and spiritual value of participation that those most affected by decisions be present and involved at the table where decisions are made.**

**3. Call**

- **for our church members to follow the historic Reformed tradition of civic engagement, and insist on accountability, transparency, and responsibility on the part of elected officials and public servants in this time of economic distress; and**

- **on our churches to partner with other ecumenical, interfaith, and nonprofit community organizations to address in practical and effective ways the weaknesses in our social structure, paying particular heed to those people who have long been marginalized and excluded from the fullness of opportunity in American society.**

**[4. Uphold the human value of the participation in decision making of all those affected by the decisions and authorize the Office of the General Assembly, Office of Public Witness, individual Presbyterians, and councils, to support legislation, ballot initiatives, constitutional amendments, and other means to prevent unlimited money from corporations, unions, individuals, and other entities from distorting electoral campaigns and to restore legal boundaries between business corporations and human persons endowed with free speech and other constitutional rights.]**

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**Concurrence to Item 11-01 from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.**

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-01 overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to condemn personal and corporate greed as a sin; to express concern for individuals and families affected by a troubled economy; and to advocate for those who have lost homes, jobs, health insurance benefits, and basic community services. It also requests General Assembly advocacy for policies that meet human needs and support the public good, for participation in decision making by those affected by policy choices, and for civic engagement and ecumenical partnerships to enhance the performance of social institutions with particular attention to disadvantaged groups.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-01 be approved with amendment below. [Text added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

Add a new recommendation 4 to read as follows:

“[4. Authorize the Office of the General Assembly, Office of Public Witness, individual Presbyterians and councils, to support legislation, ballot initiatives, constitutional amendments and other means to prevent unlimited money from corporations, unions, individuals and other entities from distorting electoral campaigns and to restore legal boundaries between business corporations and human persons endowed with free speech and other constitutional rights.]”

*Rationale*

In spirit and intent, Item 11-01 is consistent with the abiding witness of the church on behalf of “the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your midst” ([Deut. 16:11](#)). The UPCUSA stated in The Confession of 1967: “... A church that is indifferent to poverty, or evades responsibility in economic affairs ... makes a mockery of reconciliation and offers no acceptable worship to God (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.46). In the PC(USA), this witness has been demonstrated in a long series of approved policies that address economic injustice, notably the [Social Creed of the Churches \(1908\)](#) (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/connectingtothecreed.pdf>) and [A Social Creed for the 21st Century \(2008\)](#), (<http://game.pcusa.org/ministries/acswp/social-creed/>), as well as *God's Work in our Hands: Employment, Community, and Christian Vocation* (1995), and similar statements. Further, it anticipates the concerns and recommendations being presented to this 220th General Assembly (2012) in Item 11-09, the ACSWP study entitled, “World of Hurt, Word of Life: Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction.”

The recommendation suggested provides specific ways to engage the overture’s concerns for “accountability, transparency, and responsibility on the part of elected officials” by addressing the main factors that allow powerful interests to dominate the U. S. political process.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-01.

*Rationale*

Item 11-01 is well-stated and points to many cogent truths about the nature and scope of the economic crisis in our time. The situation for many racial ethnic residents of the U.S. is graver than the language in Item 11-01 suggests as the situation for Americans at large. The ACREC supports Item 11-01 and calls the church to stand with those in need of economic justice.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON OVERTURE 11-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-01.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta in this item, “On Economic Justice in These Troubled Times.” We believe we are called as a church to stand with and advocate for people who have been marginalized in our country and communities and who are suffering at the hands of systems and structures of political, corporate, and economic greed and corruption.

The ACWC notes that, many times women have been more heavily affected in these systems of oppression and injustice. Women’s health care and decisions regarding a woman’s own body and health continue to be affected by recent legislation and political/social diatribes. The reduction of budgetary expenditures for critical safety net programs also affects the lives and families of many women in ways that are specific to women. The ACWC fully supports this item, which gives voice to the experiential frustrations of many women in this country.

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## Item 11-02

**[The assembly approved Item 11-02 with amendment. See pp. 28, 29.]**

*On Calling for an End to Poverty Zone Development and for the Advocacy of Fair Development—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

**The Presbytery of Baltimore respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:**

1. **Commend the United Workers Association of Baltimore for its efforts at organizing low-wage workers to demand living wages, better working conditions, and respect for human rights.**

2. **Support the call of the United Workers Association of Baltimore for Fair Development Standards that will improve working conditions and alleviate poverty conditions for millions of workers across the United States.**

3. **Direct the Stated Clerk to write a letter to the prominent national developers General Growth Properties and the Cordish Company, the mayor of Baltimore city, and the governor of Maryland, calling for ~~an end to Poverty Zone Development and urging the adoption of~~ Fair Development that respects human rights (work with dignity, the right to health care and education), maximizes public benefits, and fosters sustainability.**

4. **Urge Presbyterians to**

a. **support the organizing of low-wage workers at malls to improve working conditions;**

b. **join together with low-wage service workers to pressure developers to respect human rights and pay living wages in cities and towns across the country; and**

c. **hold developers to account through worker-driven corporate accountability campaigns, changing the relationship between developers, the community, and workers, to secure human rights standards and Fair Development Agreements.**

5. **Request that the Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness, and/or other appropriate entities of the church, help build a national public policy dialogue about how to ensure that public resources are used to benefit the public good rather than private interests.**

#### *Rationale*

Poverty Zone Development produces poverty wage jobs, disregards the health and wellbeing of workers, and creates barriers to education. These human rights abuses take place while developers who control shopping malls, tourism destinations, and other developments profit through the use of public resources. Poverty Zone Development is an affront to the human rights values of respect, dignity, and the sanctity of life. That is why low-wage workers at Baltimore's Inner Harbor are calling for Fair Development. Unfortunately the Inner Harbor is not unique. There are millions of people—the working poor—who work at restaurants and retail outlets as cooks, clerks, servers, cleaners, and security guards, who experience human rights abuses.

The current economic crisis in the U.S., the worst since the Great Depression, has symbolized the continuing decline of worker power in this country. The year 2009 was a record year for CEO compensation while unemployment continued to grow. Little is being done to rectify the primary reasons for this economic decline—the growing gap between the very rich and everyone else. We believe that the missing piece is organizing, and the creation of a large social movement that secures human rights for everyone, everywhere.

The United Workers has chosen Baltimore's Inner Harbor as the first focus of its Fair Development Campaign because it is the perfect example of Poverty Zone Development where developers make billions in profits and exert downward pressure on wages and working conditions. In Baltimore, tourism represents the third largest employment sector, and nationally the service economy has replaced manufacturing as the base of employment. The Inner Harbor is really the new sweatshop factory floor of the early 21st century—without union or governmental protections, workers who run this tourist mecca are extremely vulnerable to human rights abuses. These abuses include being forced to work “off the clock,” no access to health care or sick leave (members of the United Workers have been fired for being in the hospital), and barriers to education (unpredictable scheduling makes it nearly impossible to go to school and work at the same time). The service sector employs millions at shopping corridors, stadiums, and tourist zones across the country, locations that go virtually unregulated by labor laws or include special exemptions like the restaurant industry tip credit. General Growth Properties and David Cordish, the two developers who control the Inner Harbor, and who are at the center of the United Workers' campaign, own nineteen properties in Maryland alone—between 10,000–20,000 low-wage workers that could be brought into a process that builds leadership, organization, and the ability to make systemic change.

Both companies, but particularly Cordish, have become experts at funneling huge amounts of public money into developments billed as “revitalization” projects for depressed areas. Yet the jobs created by these projects are unregulated, minimum wage, seasonal, and rife with human rights abuses. The Cordish Company is the recipient of hundreds of millions of federal dollars in New Market Tax Credits, which have facilitated its development projects around the country. Part of the Community Renewal and New Markets Act of 2000, the purpose of this tax credit is ostensibly to create developments that benefit low-income communities. What is not generally available to the public is whether these tax credits do in fact benefit these communities or better the lives of low-income people. As we have seen with the Inner Harbor, the jobs Cordish has

created are rife with human rights abuses, and the cities for which the developments are created see very little of the revenue they were promised. There is no structure of accountability in place to regulate these tax credits, so developers like Cordish continue to reap huge profits at the expense of the communities on which they prey.

#### Human Rights Abuses Systemic at Baltimore's Inner Harbor:

- ESPNZone and Disney Corporation violate workers rights to be notified of restaurant closing under the WARN Act.
- Cheesecake Factory workers forced to work off the clock without pay.
- Tir Na Nog workers, in order to avoid retaliation from managers, must buy sodas and food from manager.
- Hooters workers go months without receiving paycheck.
- Phillips Seafood found in violation of EEOC regulations regarding race-based discrimination.

The human costs of Poverty Zone Development are tremendous. Inner Harbor workers have become homeless as a result of systemic poverty wages, lack of health care, and denial of education. Workers have been saddled with huge debts trying to pay utility bills and health care bills. Many must rely on food stamps and other subsidies to survive.

Baltimore, like many cities in this country, is grappling with how to grow and maintain a vibrant community life in uncertain economic times. When more and more of its manufacturing base was leaving for other locations, the solution put forward by city leaders and developers was the promise of tourism and service sector jobs. The Inner Harbor was a vision of a city reborn. However, city leaders and developers' promises have not been fulfilled, and many are questioning the economic thinking of relying on tourism (now Baltimore's third largest industry). We believe that this intersection of development, poverty, and human rights must be addressed in order for Baltimore or any other city to have a sustainable and vibrant future.

Calling for an end to Poverty Zone Development and urging the approval of Fair Development principles is in keeping with "A Social Creed for the 21st Century," approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The social creed says, in part:

In faith, responding to our Creator, we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child, all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth, by working for:

- Full civil, political, and economic rights for women and men of all races. ...
- Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.
- The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth.
- Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life. ...

In the love incarnate in Jesus, despite the world's sufferings and evils, we honor the deep connections within our human family and seek to awaken a new spirit of community, by working for:

- Abatement of hunger and poverty, and enactment of policies benefiting the most vulnerable.
- High quality public education for all and universal, affordable, and accessible healthcare.
- An effective program of social security during sickness, disability and old age.
- Tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good.
- Just immigration policies that protect family unity, safeguard workers' rights, require employer accountability, and foster international co-operation.
- Sustainable communities marked by affordable housing, access to good jobs, and public safety. ... (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 924-25)

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-02 be approved.

This overture asks the General Assembly to approve a series of actions in support of more equitable treatment of low-wage service workers in malls, tourist destinations, and re-development areas, both specifically in the Baltimore area and more generally within the country. Additionally, it requests that the Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness, and other appropriate entities of the church be charged with fostering a national public policy dialogue on ways to ensure that public resources are used to benefit the public good instead of private development interests.

The Bible condemns the exploitation of workers, saying “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against ... those who oppress the wage earner in his wages ... says the Lord of Hosts” (Mal. 3:5). John Calvin was a labor activist as well as a theologian. When the Geneva city council sought to limit workers' salaries and make de facto unions illegal, Calvin and other pastors sought worker conciliation and backed a more egalitarian organization of trades.

Advocacy on behalf of low-income workers and against the human rights abuses to which they are often subjected have been longstanding PC(USA) commitments. In 1952, the PCUSA General Assembly urged a “... greater emphasis upon free collective bargaining in labor-management relations,” and that Presbyterians “... participate more actively in management organizations and labor unions as an expression of Christian vocation. ...”(Minutes, PCUSA, 1952, Part I, p. 204). The “Principles of Vocation and Work,” approved by the 207th General Assembly (1995), emphasize that “Inequalities in compensation and working conditions demand the strictest scrutiny.” *A Social Creed for the 21st Century*, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), reconfirms the church’s commitment to: (i) Full civil, political, and economic rights for women and men of all races; (ii) Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work; (iii) The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth; and (iv) Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-02

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 11-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-02.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this overture in support of workers’ rights and fair wages. In order for the economy of the U.S. to be on a sure footing again, we need to strengthen the middle class, without which an economic recovery is not sustainable. Historically, our middle class was built on jobs that paid a living wage with healthcare benefits and access to education that provided the ability to improve one’s prospects. These hard-won rights and the emergence of the large middle class in the twentieth century would not have been possible without collective bargaining and organized workers demanding their rights.

Today, with the shrinking numbers in the middle class, racial ethnic communities have been affected more than others in the economic downturn; they are the first to drop out of the middle class and the last to be lifted out. Trickle down economics only work if you already have a boat to rise when the tide comes; racial ethnic communities need more help to rise when economic recovery comes. Supporting workers’ rights, as this overture outlines, is key to helping those most affected and in building back the middle class as the backbone of the country. This will become even more pronounced as the demographics of the U.S. shift to larger and larger numbers in racial ethnic communities around the country.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-02

*Comment on Item 11-02—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The Office of Public Witness is currently working in this area through the Faithful Budget Campaign in which Presbyterians are provided tools to respond to their national leaders after having discussions in local communities. This is an effective way to organize a national public policy dialogue outside of Washington, D.C. In addition, both the Office of Public Witness and Presbyterian Hunger Program already connect Presbyterians to Interfaith Worker Justice who has field offices throughout the United States to work with faith communities in their specific communities on poverty issues. These issues include an economy that benefits the common good as campaigns like Faith Advocates for Jobs. The Presbyterian Hunger Program also supports SweatFree Communities that specifically seeks to build market demand for decent working conditions and wages for workers in labor-intensive industries that make or grow products purchased by governments.

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## Item 11-03

[The assembly approved Item 11-03 with amendment. See pp. 28, 29.]

*On Endorsing “A Fifty Year Farm Bill”—From the Presbytery of Heartland.*

**The Presbytery of Heartland respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:**

**1. Acknowledge the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, and 216th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984,**

1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is ~~[an-essential]~~ [a vital] part of the Christian faith.

2. Direct the director of the General Assembly Mission Council to endorse “A Fifty Year Farm Bill,” which is related to perennialization of crops and biodiversity with the goal of social and ecological sustainability. Also, direct the Stated Clerk to correspond with members of Congress on our position.

**3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), including the Office of Public Witness, to orient their advocacy and programs concerning agriculture and food supply in accordance with the following principles and goals: renewability, sustainability, resilience, minimized carbon emissions, participatory research and decision-making, revitalized rural communities, strong local food economies, security of food supply, ethical treatment of animals, and fair and dignified treatment of persons working throughout the food chain.**

### *Rationale*

The Fifty Year Farm Bill is a program that uses five-year farm bills as mileposts. Each bill will add larger, more sustainable end goals to existing programs.

This overture is a plan to perennialize the landscape so it will be sustainable for future growth. The goal is to gain social stability and ecological sustainability in secure food supplies. The 50-Year Farm Bill (50YFB) can be seen in its entirety at [www.landinstitute.org](http://www.landinstitute.org).

By using this overall plan, conservation will be a positive result of production, and our food producing land will grow and flourish, as will our producers and our agricultural communities. This bill will help us care for God’s creation and increase the health of the people of the world and sustain the resources of the earth. It will help turn around many of the problems that are causing the eroding of our renewable natural resources, and help to save what is remaining

The 50-Year Farm Bill has effective plans for following areas:

- \*Protect soil from erosion
- \*Cut fossil fuel dependence to zero
- \*Sequester carbon
- \*Reduce toxics in soil and water
- \*Manage nitrogen carefully
- \*Reduce dead zones
- \*Cut wasteful water use
- \*Preserve or rebuild farm communities

Scripture proclaims, “The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps. 24: 1). “As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord GOD . . . . Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture? When you drink of clear water, must you foul the rest with your feet?” . . . Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep” (Ezek. 34:17–20) Our God is concerned with all of creation for which we share and care.

In a time when long-term food security is an issue and there is a need to guarantee sustainable agricultural production in the future of our plains states, we support the proposal of a 50-Year Farm Bill. This bill is being proposed by The Land Institute of Salina, Kansas, in cooperation with five land grant universities and thirteen conservancy, trade, and watershed organizations in the U.S. This is at a time when soil fertility is declining, soil erosion is increasing, land is being poisoned by pesticides, and there is more biodiversity loss in our food-producing land. These research groups have completed studies that demonstrated this bill’s ability to make a positive change in our ecosystem.

This farm policy will create a positive economic transformation. It will bring people back to the family farm to use the improved technology and increase the long-range productivity of the land. The inventions and techniques have already been developed and are continuing to be improved upon. It will bring new health to the earth, clean up the sea’s “dead zones,” and stop the erosion of the good soil that is going seaward.

The *Book of Order* (W-7.5001a) states that “God calls the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God’s work of creation and preservation.” In W-7.5003, it reminds us that we are “stewards of God’s creation who hold the earth in trust . . . .” In W-7.5003b, it asks that we “develop technological methods and processes that work together with the earth’s environment to preserve and enhance life.” Section W-7.5003e states we should “use and shape earth’s goods to create beauty, order, health, and peace in ways that reflect God’s love for all creatures.”



Organizations that partnered to develop this plan are: Green Lands Blue Waters Coalition, University of Illinois, Iowa State University (the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture), Louisiana State University, the University of Minnesota, North Dakota State University, the University of Wisconsin, The Audubon Society, the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, The Land Institute, The Land Stewardship Project, the Minnesota/Iowa Farmers Union, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Practical Farmers of Iowa, and the Rural Advantage and Agricultural Watershed Institute.

We in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a long history of supporting actions that would protect the environment.

#### *Historical References*

In 1954, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) stated:

We call upon the Christian conscience to recognize that our stewardship of the earth and water involves both a land-use program which recognizes the interdependence of soil, water and man and the development of a responsible public policy which will resist the exploitation of land, water, and other natural resources, including forests, for selfish purposes and maintain intelligent conservation for the sustenance of all living creatures through future generations (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1954, Part I, p. 198).

This stewardship commitment has been repeated and reaffirmed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors, as follows:

1967 The Confession of 1967 stressed the justice of sharing resources and the interdependence of resources and living creatures.

1971 The 183rd General Assembly (1971) of the UPCUSA accepted the Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal statement that calls for a new order of values based on an “eco-ethic” and a Statement on Environmental Renewal. (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 574-584)

1975 A recommendation is made to the 187th General Assembly (1975) of the UPCUSA to affirm advocacy of the protection of wildlife areas and parklands. (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I, p.59)

1980 The 192nd General Assembly voted to (1) develop educational resources on the adverse impact that careless technology has on the environment and health of the unborn; (2) instruct the Board of Investment Committee to review corporate responsibility regarding manufacture of dioxins (*Social Policy Compilation*, 1980 Statement to the Mission Board, Item 1, 6.2.4).

1981 The 193rd General Assembly (1981) of the UPCUSA pledges support of the United Nations Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981–1990, calling upon Presbyterians to develop lifestyles that are consistent with the necessity to conserve water. (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 254)

1983 The 195th General Assembly (1983) urged the session of each congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to consider making a “Commitment to Peacemaking” that included making peace with the earth—involve the congregation in efforts to protect and restore the environment (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 438).

1984 The 196th General Assembly (1984) called upon Congress of the United States to reduce the emissions of sulfur dioxide and the oxides of nitrogen to a level that would protect the most sensitive environment and stated that human stewardship was not a “dominion of mastery” and called us to exercise respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p.349).

1987 The 199th General Assembly (1987) voted to urge the United States government to assure acceptable disposal sites for high-level nuclear waste. It also voted to urge each presbytery and local church to encourage and support alternatives to pesticides and support the victims of pesticide poisoning (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 796).

1988 The Environmental Justice Office was created to study past environmental policies of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States to create a combined report of environmental concerns for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Environmental Justice Office was a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lodged in the National Ministries Division, Social Justice Program Area, and is now actively involved in creation care and environmental justice issues.

1989 The 201st General Assembly (1989) called for governments to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding transportation of oil and hazardous substances, in response to the Exxon-Valdez tanker spill in 1989 (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 642).

1990 The 202nd General Assembly (1990) passed “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” affirming “creation cries out in this time of ecological crises,” calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to this cry and engage in an effort to make the 1990s the “turnaround decade,” providing the foundation for the work of the Environmental Justice Office.

Also, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) called attention to the problem of global warming and encouraged the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into “full-cost pricing” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp.646–670).

The Affirmation of Faith from that General Assembly noted that “Restoring Creation is God’s own work in our time, . . .” and that “The love of neighbor, particularly ‘the least’ of Christ’s brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death. The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake. In this critical time of transition to a new era, God’s new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 647).

1992 The 204th General Assembly (1992) directed all future General Assemblies to print all official reports on recycled and recyclable paper and to direct all related bodies to use recycled and recyclable paper for all reports and publications (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p.846).

1993 The 205th General Assembly (1993) reaffirmed the “Call to Restore Creation,” received the document “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity” as a prophetic word to the church, urged President Clinton to follow new policies from the Earth Summit, and directed the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit to advocate for policies that would reduce carbon dioxide emissions (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, pp. 896–97).

1994 The 206th General Assembly (1994), within the context of its “Resolution on the United States in Its Asia-Pacific Relations,” listed five basic principles by which past General Assemblies have been guided related to international affairs. One of the principles, and the resolution that follow it, relates specifically to the environment. “The General Assembly has advocated new understanding of the relationship among human life, institutions, and the total stewardship and care for the planet, which is the common heritage of all peoples. . . .” (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 310).

1996 The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the paper “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development” as policy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being.

1998 The 210th General Assembly (1998) called upon the United States to ratify the protocol negotiated in Kyoto and urged Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and institutions to pursue energy efficiency and conservation in their buildings and property.

1999 The 211th General Assembly (1999) again called upon the U.S. to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, urged the United States to go beyond Kyoto targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions, directed the Presbyterian Center in Louisville and all other properties of the General Assembly to minimize fossil fuel energy (along with urging local congregations to do the same), and directed the General Assembly to promote education regarding global warming and other environmental concerns (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 669–70).

2001 The 213th General Assembly (2001) called to issue and disseminate the “Call to Halt Mass Extinction.” The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) called Presbyterians, other citizens, governments, and societal institutions to face the severity of this threat and to take steps to prevent mass extinction and preserve the biodiversity essential to the flourishing of life (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 473–75).

2003 The 215th General Assembly (2003) called on the United States government to join the world effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to develop and enact a national emergency response, underwritten by law, with adequate financial support, and economic enforcement mechanism, to be fully functioning by 2005, with targeted reductions by that time (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 617).

2006: The 218th General Assembly (2006) asked its members to “make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 896). It was noted that “without significant changes in public policy and corporate behavior to complement actions of personal discipleship, massive and irreversible climate changes will only accelerate over the next century” (PC(USA) Memorandum; Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Dec 4, 2006)

2010: The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved an overture from the Presbytery of Charlotte entitled “On Lifting Up the ‘Call to Restore’ Creation” reaffirming the Call to Restore Creation from the 1990 policy, “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice”; commends churches that are working to care for God’s earth; and encourages churches, members, and institutions to “adopt institutional and individual lifestyles reflecting greater stewardship of resources, particularly in energy consumption.” The overture was amended to include the affirmation that “concern for God’s creation is, for every Christian, an essential way of living faithfully”; to affirm that the best available science should shape the direction of environmental programming and policy; and that access to potable water is a human right.

## ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Recalling the church's longstanding and regularly reiterated commitment to environmental protection, this overture seeks the General Assembly's endorsement of a fifty-year program, proposed by the Land Institute<sup>1</sup>, to progressively improve the sustainability of American agriculture and food supply over the coming half-century.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-03 b approved with the amendment by adding a new Recommendation 3 to read as follows:

"[3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), including the Office of Public Witness, to orient their advocacy and programs concerning agriculture and food supply in accordance with the following principles and goals: renewability, sustainability, resilience, minimized carbon emissions, participatory research and decision-making, revitalized rural communities, strong local food economies, security of food supply, ethical treatment of animals, and fair and dignified treatment of persons working throughout the food chain.]"

### *Rationale*

The purpose of the amendment is to extend the General Assembly's affirmation beyond the specific actions proposed in this overture to embrace the principles that undergird it and their application to our country's agricultural policy.

In God's covenant with us, we are provided with the abundance of the earth although the earth does not belong to us. "The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it" (Ps. 24: 1). Human accountability for the care of God's creation is a reoccurring theme in the Bible. For example, "As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord God . . . Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture? When you drink of clear water, must you foul the rest with your feet?" . . . Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep" (Ezek. 34:17–20).

Human responsibility to maintain God's creation has been affirmed on eighteen separate occasions by General Assemblies since 1971. Among the more notable actions are approval of the policy statements *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice* by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), *Hope for a Global Future: Towards Just and Sustainable Human Development* by the 208th General Assembly (1996), and a *Report and Recommendations on Limited Water Supplies and Takings with Study Guide* by the 216th General Assembly (2004). These actions provide justification for the approval of this overture without the need to restate their arguments.

In addition, the *Book of Order* (W-7.5001a) states that "God calls the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God's work of creation and preservation." In W-7.5003, it reminds us that we are "stewards of God's creation who hold the earth in trust . . ." In W-7.5003b, it asks that we "develop technological methods and processes that work together with the earth's environment to preserve and enhance life." Section W-7.5003e states we should "use and shape earth's goods to create beauty, order, health, and peace in ways that reflect God's love for all creatures."

### Endnote

1. The Land Institute is a thirty-year-old nonprofit center based in Salina, Kansas, which is dedicated to research, public education and training in an effort to develop ecologically sustainable farming systems for the prairies of the Midwest. A main concern has been to maintain soil fertility and groundwater supplies necessary for continuing food production. Its fifty-year Farm Bill was developed in 2009 through partnerships with six state universities, several farmers associations, and six nongovernmental organizations, including the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy.

## Item 11-04

[The assembly approved Item 11-04 with amendment. See pp. 28, 30.]

*On Strengthening Connections with Racial Ethnic Churches—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.*

**The Presbytery of Grand Canyon, in order to strengthen connections between our churches, overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:**

1. Invite every session to communicate with ~~[the session of]~~ at least one [other] racial ethnic Presbyterian congregation [or fellowship] in 2013 for the purposes of: learning more about that congregation's history and culture, increasing racial and cultural sensitivity in the whole church, engaging in mutual prayer for one another, and nurturing the connectional nature of our church.

2. Request that the [~~General Assembly Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns~~] [appropriate PC(USA) entities, including General Assembly Committee on Representation and Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women,] prepare information to facilitate these connections, including an invitation letter, a list of all the racial ethnic congregations in the PC(USA), and a list of suggestions to facilitate this connecting.

3. Request that the General Assembly's Office of Communication distribute this information electronically, where possible, in order to reduce the overall financial implications of this overture.

4. Request that the councils and leadership teams of the [176] presbyteries facilitate and reinforce this invitation to our sessions and report to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns a list of the sessions accepting this invitation and their activities in this regard, as a part of the annual presbytery year-end miscellaneous information form, and that the Office of General Assembly collect and transmit this information to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

#### *Rationale*

In response to our participation in the January 24–26 national Native American Consulting Committee Consultation, held in Phoenix, Arizona, we recognize that

- more than 90 percent of the PC(USA) congregations are predominantly of white European ancestry;
- the most recent U.S. Census indicates that 36 percent of the population is non-white;
- education, communication, and relationship-building are important to reduce racism in our country and increase understanding of our many-cultured life;
- there are 1,350 multicultural congregations in our church, 111 Native American, 600 African American/Immigrant, 340 Hispanic/Latino/a, 430 Korean, and 146 Asian (sources: Research Services and Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns); and we further recognize
- that the Presbytery of Grand Canyon has invited every one of its sessions to communicate with at least one racial ethnic Presbyterian congregation and directed its commission on ministry to include presentations on the cultural gifts our Grand Canyon racial ethnic congregations bring to our presbytery in new teaching elder orientations.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-04 from the Presbytery of de Cristo.**

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-04.

#### *Rationale*

The ACREC recommends approval of this overture but makes the following comments regarding implementation of the overture. The ACREC recognizes this overture as establishing a standard for measuring cultural proficiency *in our churches*. Cultural proficiency, as defined by the Climate for Change Task Force, and incorporated by ACREC in its 2012 Climate for Change Report, is:

The policies and practices of an organization, and the values and behaviors of individuals, that enables an organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency defines diversity as a strength, rather than a problem in organizations. It is a process for strategic, intentional organizational transformation that addresses culture, commitments, practices and skills.

This grass-roots overture advocates for “intentional organizational transformation” by encouraging predominantly white churches to interact with racial ethnic churches and congregations, with the goal of increasing racial and cultural sensitivity of the whole church. Identification of racial ethnic churches and congregations can be obtained from the racial ethnic caucuses and from various offices under the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/ Presbyterian Women. In addition, several presbyteries have instituted similar programs between sessions, such as National Capital Presbytery, and those presbyteries can be a resource for those church bodies that want to engage in a similar program. The overture recommends capturing this information by reporting this information on the annual presbytery year-end miscellaneous information form, and having the Office of the General Assembly forward this information to ACREC. The ACREC, if so directed, could monitor this cultural proficiency standard, for the purpose of reporting the results to the General Assembly.

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 11-04**

*Comment on Item 11-04—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that Item 11-04, Recommendations 1.-4., be approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and offers this comment:

The GACOR wants to commend the Presbytery of Grand Canyon for walking its talk in challenging its sessions to connect with session of racial ethnic congregations and to present it to the wider church as a model for cross-cultural connection. Committees on representation are mandated at all councils above session so we commend them as a partner in this important work. We might encourage there to be preparation work so that white congregations are not expecting racial ethnic congregations to teach them how to be sensitive, etc. There are resources, especially tools in cultural proficiency that are adaptable to any context. Perhaps it would be helpful to connect the response to this item with Item 10-20 on renewing the call to hear and sing new songs to God. While our colleagues in the advocacy committee are committed to important advocacy work, GACOR respectfully suggests that committees on representation, available at all councils above session, are an excellent resource and structure to assist councils in implementing these habits for the long haul weaving of these experiences into the communal life of the congregations and councils. We humbly suggest that connection and offer our networks as a way of supporting these efforts.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

**Item 11-05**

[The assembly approved Item 11-05 with amendment. See pp. 28, 30–31.]

*On Calling for an End to the Practice of Corporal Punishment in Homes, Schools, and Child Care Facilities—From the Presbytery of Grace.*

**The Presbytery of Grace respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the following recommendations, calling for an end to corporal punishment by parents and caretakers in homes, schools, and child-care facilities:**

**1. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

- a. encourages its members to adopt discipline methods **[at home, in schools, pediatric facilities, and institutions (e.g. hospitals, orphanages, clinics, state institutions) and child-care facilities]** that do not include corporal punishment of **[their]** children, and
- b. encourages congregations to offer opportunities for dialogue and education on effective discipline of children.

***Rationale for Recommendation 1.***

Corporal punishment models aggressive behavior as a solution to conflict. Numerous research studies have associated corporal punishment with increased aggression in children and adults, increased substance abuse, increased risk of crime and violence, low self-esteem, and chronic depression. It is difficult to imagine Jesus of Nazareth condoning any action that is intended to hurt children physically or psychologically. Time outs and deprivation of privileges are as effective as corporal punishment in stopping undesirable behavior. The effectiveness of corporal punishment decreases with subsequent use and therefore leads caretakers to hit children more severely. Children must eventually develop their own conscience and self-discipline, which are fostered by a home environment of love, respect, and trust.

**2. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls upon all states to enact [licensing] laws prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and day and residential childcare facilities.**

***Rationale for Recommendation 2.***

Schools and child-care facilities are the only institutions in America in which striking another person for the purpose of causing physical pain is legal. Corporal punishment is humiliating and degrading to children and sometimes causes physical injury. It is difficult to imagine Jesus of Nazareth condoning any action that is intended to hurt children physically or psychologically. Corporal punishment sends a message that hitting smaller and weaker people is acceptable. Corporal punishment is used most often on poor children, minorities, children with disabilities, and boys. There are effective alternatives to corporal punishment that teach children to be self-disciplined rather than to submit out of fear. Schools and child-care centers should

inspire children to enjoy learning and school and child-care personnel should be able to encourage positive behavior without hitting children.

**[3. Direct the appropriate General Assembly committees to provide limited bibliography of resources presenting alternative effective methods of discipline to corporal punishment.]**

**[4. That the following supporting documentation be posted online, hosted by the Child Advocacy or other appropriate office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):**

**[Selected Bibliographic documentation:**

**[Berlin, Lisa J., Patrick S. Malone, Catherine Ayoub, Jean M. Ispa, Mark A. Fine, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Christy Brady-Smith and Yu Bai. Correlates and Consequences of Spanking and Verbal Punishment for Low-Income White, African American, and Mexican American Toddlers. *Child Development*, Vol. 80, No. 5 (Sep.–Oct., 2009), pp. 1403–20.**

**[Ellison, Christopher G. and Darren E. Sherkat. Conservative Protestantism and Support for Corporal Punishment. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1993), pp. 131–44.**

**[Gregory, James F. The Crime of Punishment: Racial and Gender Disparities in the Use of Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 454–62.**

**[Gregory, Robert. Is Corporal Punishment Degrading? *The North American Review*, Vol. 153, No. 421 (Dec., 1891), pp. 693–703.**

**[Grogan-Kaylor, Andrew and Melanie D. Otis. The Predictors of Parental Use of Corporal Punishment. *Family Relations*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Jan., 2007), pp. 80–91.**

**[James P. Jewett. The Fight against Corporal Punishment in American Schools. *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Autumn, 1952), pp. 1–10.**

**“[Rodriguez, Christina M. Parental Discipline and Abuse Potential Affects on Child Depression, Anxiety, and Attributions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Nov., 2003), pp. 809–17.**

**[Simons, Ronald L., Kuei-Hsiu Lin, Leslie C. Gordon, Gene H. Brody and Rand D. Conger. Community Differences in the Association between Parenting Practices and Child Conduct Problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (May, 2002), pp. 331–45.**

**[Turner, Heather and David Finkelhor. Corporal Punishment as a Stressor among Youth. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1996), pp. 155–66.**

**[Vandenbosch, Sue. Political Culture and Corporal Punishment in Public Schools. *Publius*, Vol. 21, No. 2, State Political Subcultures: Further Research (Spring, 1991), pp. 117–21.**

**[Walsh, Wendy. Spankers and Nonspankers: Where They Get Information on Spanking. *Family Relations*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Jan., 2002), pp. 81–88.]**

***Overall Rationale***

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA) approved the *Social Creed for the 21st Century*. It states “we honor the dignity of every person” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 924) and calls on church members to work for the full rights of all people.

The *Social Creed*, while focusing on a broad array of social injustices, nevertheless affirms the fact that we are all created in the divine image and because of this alone, we are individuals of worth. It concludes, “we ... commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violence, nurtures character. ...” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 925).

Consistent with the goals and statements in the Social Creed, the recommendations calling for an end to the practice of corporal punishmentlikewise:

- Asserts the basic dignity of every human being as created in the image of God, including and especially those most vulnerable, the world’s children.
- Decries and rejects the use of any form of physical violence, for whatever reason, toward children and adolescents.
- Affirms the principle of seeking nonviolent solutions to human problems, be they interpersonal, behavioral, or social.

- Acknowledges the social sin of our participation in a system that not only condones, but encourages such violence toward children and that legally protects adults who choose to spank, slap, or hit their own children or the children of others.
- Declares the use of corporal punishment (CP) on children (e.g., spanking, slapping, hitting), both in the schools and homes, as outdated and ineffective, as evidenced by decades of psychological research.

The impetus for this resolution is driven by the spirit of compassion that is our gift from the Creator. It is also driven by the desire to change a sinful system that condones different standards of behavior based solely upon the age of the victim of physical hitting, slapping, or spanking. Further, to note:

- Corporal punishment was once common in prisons and the military—but it is now banned. It is also now outlawed in most daycare centers and foster-parent homes.
- There is a large body of research that indicates spanking is, in fact, associated with a number of negative, unintended consequences on children (e.g., increased aggression, depression, and anxiety) and adults (mental health problems, partner violence, and child abuse).
- The practice does not promote close, loving family relationships.
- Corporal punishment in homes and schools contributes to the intergenerational transmission of violence in our society.
- Let us join The United Methodist Church in voicing our objection to this practice. They passed two resolutions against the practice in 2004.

*Ending corporal punishment of children in our world is not only the sensible and humane thing to do, it is the faithful thing to do.*

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-05 calls for an end to corporal punishment in homes, schools and child care facilities.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-05 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

“a. encourages its members to adopt discipline methods [at home, in schools, pediatric facilities, and institutions (e.g. hospitals, orphanages, clinics, state institutions) and child care facilities] that do not include corporal punishment of ~~their~~ children, and

“b. encourages congregations to offer opportunities for dialogue and education on effective discipline of children.

“2. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls upon all states to enact [licensing] laws prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and day and residential childcare facilities.

“3. That the following supporting documentation be posted online, hosted by the Child Advocacy or other appropriate office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):

“[Selected Bibliographic documentation:

“[Berlin, Lisa J., Patrick S. Malone, Catherine Ayoub, Jean M. Ispa, Mark A. Fine, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Christy Brady-Smith and Yu Bai. Correlates and Consequences of Spanking and Verbal Punishment for Low-Income White, African American, and Mexican American Toddlers. *Child Development*, Vol. 80, No. 5 (Sep.–Oct., 2009), pp. 1403–20.

“[Ellison, Christopher G. and Darren E. Sherkat. Conservative Protestantism and Support for Corporal Punishment. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1993), pp. 131–44.

“[Gregory, James F. The Crime of Punishment: Racial and Gender Disparities in the Use of Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 454–62.

“[Gregory, Robert. Is Corporal Punishment Degrading? *The North American Review*, Vol. 153, No. 421 (Dec., 1891), pp. 693–703.

“[Grogan-Kaylor, Andrew and Melanie D. Otis. The Predictors of Parental Use of Corporal Punishment. *Family Relations*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Jan., 2007), pp. 80–91.]”

“[James P. Jewett. The Fight against Corporal Punishment in American Schools. *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Autumn, 1952), pp. 1–10.]”

“[Rodriguez, Christina M. Parental Discipline and Abuse Potential Affects on Child Depression, Anxiety, and Attributions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Nov., 2003), pp. 809–17.]”

“[Simons, Ronald L., Kuei-Hsiu Lin, Leslie C. Gordon, Gene H. Brody and Rand D. Conger. Community Differences in the Association between Parenting Practices and Child Conduct Problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (May, 2002), pp. 331–45.]”

“[Turner, Heather and David Finkelhor. Corporal Punishment as a Stressor among Youth. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb., 1996), pp. 155–66.]”

“[Vandenbosch, Sue. Political Culture and Corporal Punishment in Public Schools. *Publius*, Vol. 21, No. 2, State Political Subcultures: Further Research (Spring, 1991), pp. 117–21.]”

“[Walsh, Wendy. Spankers and Nonspankers: Where They Get Information on Spanking. *Family Relations*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Jan., 2002), pp. 81–88.]”

#### *Rationale*

The ACSWP concurs that corporal punishment of children is a serious and persisting issue warranting attention. The language change increases the inclusivity of child-related agencies, facilities, and institutions to be covered under this overture. The addition of the bibliographic citations provides documentation to support the rationale for the recommendations but as importantly provides sources for additional study of this issue. This listing is not intended to be exhaustive, and is meant to complement theological understandings of childhood (such as Osmer, Anderson/Johnson, Capps, Pitkin, Stine, Widmer) and legal statements such as the “Convention on the Rights of the Child,” (endorsed by past General Assemblies).

## Item 11-06

[The assembly approved Item 11-06 with amendment. See pp. 28, 31.]

*On Instructing MRTI to Report to GAMC on the Corporate Practices of Publicly Traded Corporations That Operate For-Profit Prisons—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.*

The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to

**[1.] [i] [I]nstruct the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to ~~[have MRTI report to the General Assembly Mission Council on]~~ [report on the feasibility of affecting] the corporate practices of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the GEO Group, and any other publicly traded corporation that directly manages or operates for-profit prisons and/or detention centers [in light of the General Assembly’s 2003 Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons. The findings of the MRTI report to the GAMC may include recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014) regarding the potential placement of specific corporations on the list of proscribed investments to be honored by Presbyterian agencies. The proscription list already includes areas of concern such as tobacco, alcohol, and gambling.] ~~[While PC(USA) funds are not currently invested in these companies, we encourage the General Assembly Mission Council to prevent future investment and, as it deems appropriate, encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies.]~~**

**[2. Encourage education within local congregations about for-profit prisons and the local and national implications of investment in these corporations, using existing materials and networks including, but not limited to, the General Assembly’s 2003 Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons.]**

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$1,330, (2014) \$665—GAMC—Unrestricted]

#### *Rationale*

The United States has more people in prison than any other country, according to a 2008 Pew Charitable Trust study (*One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008*). Not only is the absolute number the highest in the world, but the rate of incarceration (inmates per 100,000 people) also is the highest. The International Centre for Prison Studies at King’s College, London, calculates the U.S. incarceration rate at 743 per 100,000. (The rate in Russia is 568. In Canada, it is 117.)



The growth in the prison population over the last several decades is equally significant. According to the *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.* (2011), the total number of incarcerated persons grew 359 percent from 1980 to 2008.

While the overall prison population has grown dramatically, the growth of inmates being detained in private, for-profit prisons has grown much faster. Between 1990 and 2009, the total number of inmates in federal and state prisons doubled, while private prisons saw their business explode—growing seventeen times larger in those same twenty years.

The CCA and the GEO Group are the two largest (and the only two publicly traded) private prison companies in the U.S., operating and/or owning, respectively, 111 and 116 correctional, detention, and/or residential treatment facilities. In 2010, CCA earned nearly \$1.7 billion; the GEO Group, \$1.3 billion.

Proponents of private prisons may claim that these institutions fill a need in society by providing lower-cost incarceration of prisoners while bringing economic benefits to local communities. Proponents may also contend that private prisons offer greater efficiency, better services, and more innovative correctional practices.

Studies have shown, however, that private prison employees are lower paid and less experienced than their public counterparts, which leads to private prisons being more violent, experiencing more sexual abuse, and having more escapes than public prisons (from “Growth and Quality of U.S. Private Prisons,” a 2001 study for the Federal Bureau of Prisons). Furthermore, private prisons play a key role in lobbying for harsher and longer sentencing and for tougher policies on the detention of immigrants (“Unholy Alliance,” a paper by the PICO National Network and Public Campaign, 2011).

In a January 30, 2012, article in *The New Yorker*, writer Adam Gopnik confirms that a growing number of American prisons are now contracted out as for-profit businesses to for-profit companies. He writes,

The companies are paid by the state, and their profit depends on spending as little as possible on the prisoners and the prisons. It’s hard to imagine any greater disconnect between public good and private profit: the interest of private prisons lies not in the obvious social good of having the minimum necessary number of inmates but in having as many as possible, housed as cheaply as possible. No more chilling document exists in recent American life than the 2005 annual report of the biggest of these firms, the Corrections Corporation of America. Here the company (which spends millions lobbying legislators) is obliged to caution its investors about the risk that somehow, somewhere, someone might turn off the spigot of convicted men:

*Our growth is generally dependent upon our ability to obtain new contracts to develop and manage new correctional and detention facilities .... The demand for our facilities and services could be adversely affected by the relaxation of enforcement efforts, leniency in conviction and sentencing practices or through the decriminalization of certain activities that are currently proscribed by our criminal laws. For instance, any changes with respect to drugs and controlled substances or illegal immigration could affect the number of persons arrested, convicted, and sentenced, thereby potentially reducing demand for correctional facilities to house them.*

Not surprisingly, a number of religious denominations have spoken out against the private prison industry. In November 2000, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops questioned “whether private, for-profit corporations can effectively run prisons.” The profit motive may lead to reduced efforts to change behaviors, treat substance abuse, and offer skills necessary for reintegration into the community.

In the same year, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church called “for a moratorium on further prison construction and the use of private prisons. ...”

Also in 2000, in response to *Overture 99-35. On Opposing the Privatization of Prisons—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta*, the MRTI reviewed the investments of the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, and found no investments in the prison industry.

Declaring “private prisons are not an economic but a deep religious and ethical issue,” and affirming that “the ultimate goal of the criminal justice system, according to the policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is “restorative justice,” the 215th General Assembly (2003) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved the “Resolution on Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons,” developed by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. One paragraph in the Resolution’s rationale follows:

A major factor in the decision as to whether to release someone from prison is the reports on their behavior filed by the correctional employees who work with them. In at least one of the major for-profit private prison corporations, correctional employees receive stock in the corporation as their pension plan. It is therefore in those employees’ self-interest to make sure that the for-profit private prison corporation is as profitable as possible. If the corporation is having trouble filling its “beds” (a common situation in the for-profit private prison industry), that employee is in a serious conflict of interest position when being asked whether or not a prisoner should be paroled. While we hope and expect that many if not most correctional employees would act honorably under these circumstances, the very dynamic places them as well as the prisoner in an intolerable situation. (Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 444)

The conditions that brought about that resolution in 2003 have not improved.

The United Methodist Church also has questioned the role of the private prison in the United States. Resolution 4058, *Privatization*, first adopted in 2004, acknowledges “privatized prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, welfare programs and other social services have sometimes been less dedicated to service and rehabilitation than to cutting service and increasing profits. ... The public must be vigilant to regulate and control any privatization of public resources.” The resolution also calls upon

selected agencies of the church “to lead an effort to discern effects to society of privatization of services in the United States and globally and join in opposing detrimental privatization.”

In 2008, the UMC General Conference adopted Resolution 3281, *Welcoming the Migrant to the US*, which calls for the “elimination of privately-operated detention centers. ...”

In 2011, members of the United Methodist Interagency Task Force on Immigration (created in 2004) approached the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (GBPHB) with concerns about two private prison companies in the general board’s investment portfolio: Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and the GEO Group, Inc., with concerns that CCA and the GEO Group have been accused of human rights abuses of young people, immigrants, and people of color.

Finally, in January 2012, the board of directors of the GBPHB of The United Methodist Church announced the decision by the board’s Fiduciary and Executive Committees of the addition of an investment screen that would prohibit investment in companies that derive more than 10 percent of revenue from the management and operation of prison facilities. The GBPHB Statement of Administrative Investment Policy has been amended to include this screen.

#### *Context and History:*

##### *Biblical and Theological*

*From “Resolution on Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons,” 2003, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy:* In Luke’s gospel, Jesus voiced his concern for those who are incarcerated by reading Isaiah 61:1 in the synagogue one Sabbath and declared that “This passage has come true today, as you heard it being read” (Lk. 4:21, TEV). The text that he read included the statement: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. ... He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives” (Lk. 4:18, TEV). In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus rejected vengeance as the primary goal of the justice system and abolished the law of an “eye for an eye.” “You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you” (Mt. 5:38–39, TEV). In Matthew 25:31–46 he challenged his followers to visit those in prison. “I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me ... I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me” (Mt. 25:36, 40; TEV). He gave specific instructions regarding our responsibility to visit prisoners and to be concerned for their welfare.

Jesus announced that the “kingdom of God was near.” This kingdom would mean a transformation of all of life. Jesus himself was arrested at night, tried and convicted a short time later of blasphemy, and handed over in chains early the next morning to Pontius Pilate. The charge against him was changed from blasphemy to the King of the Jews, a political accusation on which Pilate based his decision to have Jesus crucified. Clearly his arrest, conviction, and sentencing were products of a corrupt justice system. We believe that we as Christians are called to care for individual prisoners by personal contacts, but that we are also called to examine and to change the current system of for-profit private prisons as part of our responsibility to love our neighbor.

We affirm that those who are behind prison walls are persons who have been created in God’s image and are fellow children of God. They are neighbors for whom Christ died and whom we are called to love. We are all sinners in need of forgiveness and a Savior. As we gratefully experience the grace and forgiveness of God in our own lives, we are convinced that no person is beyond the reach of God’s redeeming love in Christ.

The ultimate goal of incarceration should NOT be vengeance, retribution, or punishment for punishment’s sake. *Nor should the goal be making a profit.* In Matthew 5:38, Jesus refutes the idea of vengeance for Christians and overturns the law of “an eye for an eye.” Not only Scripture but also experiences have shown that a vengeful justice system is counterproductive. Such a system intensifies antisocial attitudes and behavior on the part not only of those who are imprisoned but also of all of us who participate in that process. Such a dynamic increases rather than diminishes threats to the peace and order of society. It supports those elected and appointed officials who argue for expanded spending on additional police, judges, courts, prisons, and correctional officers, rather than on such human and social needs as mediation, education, day care, child and maternal health, substance abuse counseling, and job training.

We are called to understand the present context in which our justice system is functioning. Christ calls us to address situations such as homelessness, joblessness, the welfare system, and poverty in order to “love our neighbors” and care for the whole community. Christ also calls us to partnership with all faith communities and even secular agencies to combat the unhealthy situations that lead to imprisonment, as well as to minister to those in prison. Through these partnerships, we pray that we can develop a society that moves toward both the Old Testament vision of Shalom and Jesus’ teaching about the Kingdom of God. Our vision is of a society where there is education and health care for all, drug treatment for all who require it, jobs for all who need them, and a sense of belonging to a community. With this vision of community, we can begin to develop a criminal justice system that is truly just and not simply another way to make money.

We reaffirm the 1910 and 1915 statements of prior General Assemblies, for we believe that Christ calls us to care for our neighbors who are in prison and never to abandon them. We affirm our solidarity with our sisters and brothers, fellow chil-

dren of God, who are behind prison walls. For we have all been created in God's image, but we have all fallen short of the glory of God. We are all sinners in need of a Savior. We can all be counted among those for whom Christ has died.

As we gratefully receive God's grace in our own lives, we proclaim our understanding that no person is beyond the reach of God's redeeming love in Christ. Further, we acknowledge that Jesus has called us to minister to each other in his name. We are to be concerned for all the oppressed and marginalized in our society. As followers of Christ who understand ourselves to be fellow sinners, we recognize our responsibility for the care, custody, and rehabilitation of those incarcerated rather than the profit of big business.

*From "Connecting to the Creed, A Guide for Understanding and Applying the Centennial Social Creed," 2008, adopted by ecumenical representatives of thirty-five Protestant and Orthodox Church Communions:*

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you." (Mt 5:38-42) Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount may well refer to a proactive "third way" (Walter Wink) between violent fight and fearful flight, an approach that reveals and builds on a shared humanity. However interpreted, these words point to an alternative to retribution that can be called "restorative justice."

Restorative justice addresses the humanity of both victim and perpetrator. It also seeks to restore the social fabric by acknowledging the full costs of a given crime and offering possibilities for transformation, through serious community service, fines, public repentance, restitution, and forgiveness as well as incarceration or probation. Naturally, the church seeks to reduce, if not eliminate, all forms of crime, but we resist demonizing even violent individuals when rates and patterns of criminal behavior can be predicted—and thus are partly preventable.

Of the more than 2 million U.S. citizens in prison at any given time, more than half are persons of color. States vary in their incarceration rates, from more than 1 in 100 to less than 1 in 500, but in all cases prisoners are disproportionately poor and poorly educated, from divided families, mentally ill and homeless. Rural communities, poor themselves, vie to attract prisons and count prisoners as part of their communities to increase their share of state and federal benefits, while prisoners are deprived of voting and other civil rights, often effectively for life. A large number of prisoners are imprisoned under mandatory sentences, sometimes under grossly inequitable provisions of the "war on drugs." Most prisons themselves do not offer drug rehabilitation, educational or training programs, feeding a high recidivism rate based in part on lack of opportunity and discrimination on the "outside." In terms of violence, prisons themselves intensify the brutality and hopelessness of harsh neighborhoods: prison rape and AIDS rates are high, gangs and corruption become ways of coping with overcrowding and enormous social tensions. All know the cliché that prisons are training grounds for crime rather than places for rehabilitation or repentance. Some call the system "racialized" for its disproportionate involvement of black and Hispanic young men (more than 25 percent of whom have been in prison or on probation). Despite all this, prison ministries and volunteer visitors do vital work within a broken system. The following policies follow from a restorative justice commitment:

1. Restitution and other alternatives to incarceration.
2. Review of "life terms" for long-serving prisoners.
3. Prison reform to end overcrowding, rape, other violence, and drug availability.
4. Rehabilitation, education, and addiction treatment programs to cut recidivism.
5. Programs to help maintain family connections.
6. End to for-profit prisons as improper commercialization of the justice system.
7. Decriminalization of low-level marijuana offenses, as in Massachusetts.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-06 as amended: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

"The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to

"[1.] [~~1.~~] instruct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report to the General Assembly Mission Council on the corporate practices of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the GEO Group, and any other publicly traded corporation that directly manages or operates for-profit prisons and/or detention centers. (While PC(USA) funds are not cur-

rently invested in these companies, we encourage the General Assembly Mission Council to prevent future investment and, as it deems appropriate, encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies.)

“[2. Direct MRTI to investigate the investments and holdings of Wells Fargo & Co. to ascertain the extent of holdings in Corrections Corporations of America and the GEO Group and to use MRTI’s customary corporate engagement process to effect change in such investments by Wells Fargo so that they no longer invest in these for-profit prisons. If Wells Fargo does not comply, MRTI should report back to the General Assembly regarding our investments in Wells Fargo so that the assembly can decide whether to continue investing in Wells Fargo.]”

#### *Rationale*

The incarceration growth rate in private prisons in the U.S. is dramatic. Incarceration has not only become a way to create business opportunities and to increase profits for companies, but it has also become a way of creating economic development in under-developed areas. In some areas of the country where industry has departed, prisons have been built and filled in the void. They are now considered development projects and seen as way of undergirding the economy and providing jobs.

Ironically, the increase in the prison population has been used politically to demonstrate a strong need for stability, law, and order in communities. The ability to create a safe and stable environment has been a selling point for expanding prisons, which then need to be filled with more and more people for more and more profits.

This movement to for-profit prisons as a way of social control, and societal investment in them, has diminished resources that could be directed to education, crime prevention, and offender rehabilitation. (Even for-profit prisons are not built for rehabilitation.)

For-profit prisons have become a way of warehousing people; they produce high profits for a few and provide low-wage jobs for many, thus tearing apart the fabric of the vey communities that they are presumably helping. A side effect is that they prevent other better-paying jobs from coming to the community.

The ACREC asks the General Assembly to direct MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment) to investigate the investments and holdings of Wells Fargo & Co. to ascertain the extent of their holdings in Corrections Corporations of America and the GEO Group, and report back to the General Assembly. The ACREC asks the General Assembly to direct MRTI to use its customary corporate engagement process to effect change in such investments by Wells Fargo, in accordance with socially responsible investing.

“The protesters called Wells Fargo hypocritical for targeting Latinos and immigrant customers while also giving money to causes that immigrants largely oppose, such as private immigrant detention centers and bills that make it difficult to migrate legally to the United States. Wells Fargo uses its mutual funds to invest in two of the largest for-profit detention companies: Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group, both of which spend millions each year lobbying for stricter immigration enforcement” (Immigrants To Wells Fargo: Stop Investing In For-Profit Detention – by Elise Foley, [Huffington Post 10/17/11](#)).

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Item 11-06 directs the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to compile information on the corporate practices of publically traded corporations that operate for-profit prisons and report these findings to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). Secondly the overture requests the GAMC to “prevent future investment” in these corporations and possibly encourage individuals and congregations to divest of shares in these corporations.

The ACSWP advises that Item 11-06 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

[The two parts of the overture be crafted as sequential activities; the second action based upon the findings of the report to GAMC. Re-wording of the overture would be:]

~~“[The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures [t] [T]he 220th General Assembly (2012) [te] instruct[s] the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to [have MRTI] report [to the General Assembly Mission Council] on [the feasibility of affecting] the corporate practices of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the GEO Group and any other publically traded corporation that directly manages or operates for-profit prisons and/or detention centers [in light of the General Assembly’s 2003 [Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons](#)]. [While PC(USA) funds are not currently invested in these companies, we encourage the General Assembly Mission Council to prevent future investment and as it deems appropriate, encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies.] [The findings of the MRTI report to the GAMC may include rec-~~

ommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014) regarding the potential placement of specific corporations on the list of proscribed investments to be honored by Presbyterian agencies.]”

*Rationale*

The Presbytery of Hudson River carefully describes the primary issues of policy and practice that have led church bodies and restorative justice organizations to oppose for-profit prisons. The presbytery further appreciates that decisions to proscribe or limit investments are not made without some engagement and analysis of salient factors, even when policy is quite clear.

While some data about corporate practices and organizational behavior are available and referenced in the overture rationale and in the 2003 *Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons*(<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-calling-abolition-profit-private-prison/>), a focused survey or report would provide more detailed descriptions of organizational behavioral that explain how profit is achieved and spent and comparative impacts on employees and persons incarcerated in for-profit prisons. Based upon such a review of corporate practices identified in existing policy, the 221st General Assembly (2014) would have in hand recent summary data, plus recommendations from MRTI upon which to make decisions regarding adding these corporations to the current list of corporations excluded from PC(USA) agencies’ investments.

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**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-06**

*Comment on Item 11-06—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

This overture instructs Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report to the General Assembly Mission Council on the corporate practices of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the GEO Group, and any other publicly traded corporation that directly manages or operates for-profit prisons and/or detention centers. While acknowledging that PC(USA) funds are not currently invested in CCA or GEO Group, the overture encourages the General Assembly Mission Council to prevent future investment and, as it deems appropriate, encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies.

The MRTI is capable of producing the requested report. However, with no stock owned in either of the two companies, the full range of corporate engagement tools will not be available to the committee. In addition, as the General Assembly in 2003 determined that for-profit prisons should be abolished, corporate involvement in this enterprise seems to compare more closely with tobacco, alcohol, and gambling companies where investments are avoided due to the nature of the product or service. Thus, the issue to be addressed may be more accurately whether the General Assembly desires to clarify its 2003 position by proscribing investment in publicly traded for-profit prison companies until such time as legislative action prohibits the practice.

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## Item 11-07

[The assembly approved Item 11-07 with amendment. See pp. 28, 31–32.]

*On Support of the United States Environmental Protection Agency—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Recognize the statements of the 183rd, 187th, 192nd, 193rd, 195th, 196th, 199th, 201st, 202nd, 204th, 205th, 206th, 208th, 210th, 211th, 213th, 215th, 216th, 218th, and 219th General Assemblies (1971, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008, and 2010) reflecting the determination of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that protection of the environment is ~~[an essential part of]~~ [vital to] the Christian faith.

2. Direct the ~~[Executive Director]~~ [Stated Clerk and appropriate offices] of the General Assembly Mission Council to support the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by affirming the agency’s ~~[authority to take action]~~ [mandates and goals] to protect public health and the environment and by advocating for adequate funding for EPA.

[3. Recognize the PC(USA)’s support of landmark environmental legislation such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act (whose 40th anniversary is in 2012), the Safe Drinking Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Endangered Species Act, which affirm the national mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).]

**4. Direct the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) and the Office of Public Witness to urge Congress to restore the EPA's full oversight authority under the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts (which are currently restricted) as they relate to the waters of the United States.**

**5. Direct the Office of Environmental Ministries of the General Assembly Mission Council to identify resources addressing legal and environmental issues with regard to extraction of natural gas in order to educate Presbyterians and protect the environments in which they live, worship and locate their camps and conference centers.**

### *Rationale*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established on December 2, 1970, during the administration of President Richard Nixon. Recently, funding for the EPA has been cut and amendments to various regulations have been proposed to restrict the EPA's authority to carry out its mandates. (See EPA news release 2/14/11 and *The Hill Newspaper* 4/07/11.)

As Christians we are charged with "... lov[ing] your neighbor as yourself" (Mk. 12:31). A tangible way to do this is to prevent sickness by reducing pollution in the air. Using authority and powers given to it by Congress and the 1990 Clean Air Amendments, the EPA predicted, in a 1999 report using statistical analysis that in 2010 it would help prevent approximately: (from *First Prospective Study*—Press Release, US EPA)

- 23,000 premature deaths,
- 67,000 incidences of chronic and acute bronchitis,
- 21,000 cases of heart disease,
- 91,000 occurrences of shortness of breath,
- avert 1,700,000 incidences of asthma attacks and aggravation of chronic asthma,
- 4,100,000 lost work days,
- 31,000,000 days of restricted activity due to air pollution related illness,
- 22,000 respiratory-related hospital admissions,
- 42,000 cardiovascular hospital admissions,
- 4,800 emergency room visits for asthma.

### *Historical References*

We in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a long history of supporting actions that would protect the environment.

In 1954, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America stated:

... We call upon the Christian conscience to recognize that our stewardship of the earth and water involves both a land-use program which recognizes the interdependence of soil, water, and man and the development of a responsible public policy which will resist the exploitation of land, water, and other natural resources, including forests, for selfish purposes and maintain intelligent conservation for the sustenance of all living creatures through future generations (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1954, Part I, p. 198).

1967 The Confession of 1967 stresses the justice of sharing resources and the interdependence of resources and living creatures.

1971 The 183rd General Assembly (1971) accepted the Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal statement that calls for a new order of values based on an "eco-ethic" and a Statement on Environmental Renewal. (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 578–83).

1975 A recommendation was made to the 187th General Assembly (1975) to "affirm advocacy of the protection of wildlife areas and parklands" (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1975, Part I, p.59).

1980 The 192nd General Assembly voted to (1) develop educational resources on the adverse impact that careless technology has on the environment and health of the unborn; (2) instruct the Board of Investment Committee to review corporate responsibility regarding manufacture of dioxins. (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 56).

1981 The 193rd General Assembly (1981) "pledges support ... of the United Nations Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981–1990," calling upon Presbyterians to "develop lifestyles that are consistent with the necessity to conserve water" (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, p. 254).

1983 The 195th General Assembly (1983) urged the “session of each congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to consider making a ‘Commitment to Peacemaking’ that included ‘making peace with the earth—involve the congregation in efforts to protect and restore the environment’” (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 438).

1984 The 196th General Assembly (1984) called upon “the Congress of the United States to ... reduce the emissions of sulfur dioxide and the oxides of nitrogen to a level [that will] protect the ... most sensitive environment” and stated that “human stewardship is not a dominion of mastery” and called us to exercise “respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption” (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p. 348–49).

1987 The 199th General Assembly (1987) voted to urge the United States government to assure acceptable disposal sites for high-level nuclear waste. It also voted to urge each presbytery and local church to encourage and support alternatives to pesticides and support the victims of pesticide poisoning (*Minutes*, 1987, Part I, p. 796).

1988 The Environmental Justice Office was created to study past environmental policies of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States to create a combined report of environmental concerns for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Environmental Justice Office is a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), lodged in the National Ministries Division, Social Justice Program Area, and is now actively involved in creation care and environmental justice issues.

1989 The 201st General Assembly (1989) called for governments “to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding [transportation] of oil and hazardous substances, in response to the Exxon-Valdez tanker spill in 1989” (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 642).

1990 The 202nd General Assembly (1990) passed “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” affirming “creation cries out in this time of ecological crises,” calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to respond to this cry and engage in an effort to make the 1990s the “turnaround decade,” providing the foundation for the work of the Environmental Justice Office. Also, the 202nd General Assembly calls attention to the problem of global warming and encourages the United States government to take steps toward incorporating environmental damage and depletion into “full-cost pricing” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, pp. 646–70).

The Affirmation of Faith from that General Assembly noted that “Restoring Creation is God’s own work in our time” and that “The love of neighbor, particularly ‘the least’ of Christ’s brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death. The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake. In this critical time of transition to a new era, God’s new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community” (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 647).

1992 The 204th General Assembly (1992) directed all future General Assemblies to “print all official reports on recycled and recyclable paper” and directed “all related bodies ... to use recycled and recyclable paper” for all reports and publications (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 846).

1993 The 205th General Assembly (1993) reaffirmed the “Call to Restore Creation,” received the document “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity” as a prophetic word to the church, urged President Clinton to follow new policies from the Earth Summit, and directed the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit to advocate for policies that will reduce carbon dioxide emissions (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, pp. 896–97).

1994 The 206th General Assembly (1994), within the context of its “Resolution on the United States in Its Asia-Pacific Relations,” listed five basic principles by which past General Assemblies have been guided related to international affairs. One of the principles, and the resolution that follow it, relates specifically to the environment. “The General Assembly has advocated new understanding of the relationship among human life, institutions, and the total stewardship and care for the planet, which is the common heritage of all peoples. ...” (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 310)

1996 The 208th General Assembly (1996) adopted the paper, “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development,” as policy for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). “Just and sustainable human development is the comprehensive enhancement of the quality of life for all, present and future; it necessarily involves the integration of economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual dimensions of being” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 525–26).

1998 The 210th General Assembly (1998) called upon the United States to “ratify the protocol negotiated in Kyoto” and urged “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and institutions to pursue energy efficiency and conservation in their buildings and property” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 740).

1999 The 211th General Assembly (1999) again called upon the U.S. to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, urged the United States to go beyond Kyoto targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions, directed the Presbyterian Center in Louisville and all other properties of the General Assembly to minimize fossil fuel energy (along with urging local congregations to do the same), and directed the General Assembly to promote education regarding global warming and other environmental concerns (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, pp. 669–70).

2001 The 213th General Assembly (2001) called to issue and disseminate the Call to Halt Mass Extinction. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls Presbyterians, other citizens, governments, and societal institutions to face the severity of this threat and to take steps to prevent mass extinction and preserve the biodiversity essential to the flourishing of life. (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, pp. 473–75)

2003 The 215th General Assembly (2003) called on “the United States government to join the world effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to develop and enact a national emergency response, underwritten by law, with adequate financial support, and economic enforcement mechanisms, to be fully functioning by 2005, with targeted reductions by that time” (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 617).

2006 The 217th General Assembly (2006) asked its members to “make a bold witness by aspiring to ... carbon neutral [lives].” It was noted that “without significant changes in public policy and corporate behavior to complement actions of personal discipleship, massive and irreversible climate changes will only accelerate over the next century” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 896; see also Memorandum; Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy Dec 4, 2006).

2008 The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the study and recommendations of “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming” along with urging individuals and families in the PC(USA) to conserve energy and promote energy efficiency through changes in behavior (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 934ff).

2010 The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved an overture from the Presbytery of Charlotte entitled “On Lifting Up the ‘Call to Restore’ Creation,” reaffirming the Call to Restore Creation from the 1990 policy “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice”; commended churches that are working to care for God’s earth; and encouraged churches, members, and institutions to “adopt institutional and individual lifestyles reflecting greater stewardship of resources, particularly in energy consumption.” The overture was amended to include the affirmation that “concern for God’s creation is, for every Christian, an essential way of living faithfully”; to affirm that the best available science should shape the direction of environmental programming and policy; and that access to potable water is a human right (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 331–32 of the printed version, pp. 805–806 of the electronic version).

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Item 11-07 from the Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to (1) recognize prior statements of the PC(USA) reflecting that protection of the environment is an essential part of the Christian faith; and (2) to direct the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to support the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by affirming its authority to take action that will protect public health and the environment and by advocating for adequate funding to assure the EPA’s ability to take action.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises Item 11-07 be approved as amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

“1. [Text remains unchanged.]

“2. Direct the [~~Executive Director~~] [Stated Clerk and appropriate offices] of the General Assembly Mission Council to support the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by affirming the agency’s authority to take action to protect public health and the environment and by advocating for adequate funding for EPA.

“[3. Recognize the PC(USA)’s support of landmark environmental legislation such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act (whose 40th anniversary is in 2012), the Safe Drinking Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Endangered Species Act, which affirm the national mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

“[4. Direct the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) and the Office of Public Witness to urge Congress to restore the EPA’s full oversight authority under the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts (which are currently restricted) as they relate to the waters of the United States.

“[5. Direct the Office of Environmental Ministries of the General Assembly Mission Council to identify and develop resources addressing legal and environmental issues with regard to extraction of natural gas in order to educate Presbyterians and protect the environments in which they live, worship and locate their camps and conference centers.]



*Rationale*

Providing general support for the work of the EPA and its authority to take action to protect public health and the environment clearly follows from the cited PC(USA) policies. The reaffirmation of support for *specific* legislation makes explicit areas of environment stewardship and authority of particular import to both the work of the EPA (e.g., clean air, clean water and endangered species), and PC(USA) policies.

Because waters of the U.S.A. often flow across state boundaries, it is especially important that authority for the protection of clean water is placed into a federal regulatory agency. Unfortunately, in the area of clean water, the EPA's authority to take action to protect public health has been restricted by the 2005 energy bill. Critical to successful stewardship is the restoration of the authority of EPA to monitor activities that might generate water pollution.

The fifth recommendation adds the important role of PC(USA) equipping congregations with information useful to their mission of stewardship of the local environments of churches, camps and conference centers and their communities.

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**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-07**

*Comment on Item 11-07—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The Office of Public Witness supports the authority of the EPA, both regulatory and budgetary, when relevant legislation is under consideration in Congress, based on General Assembly statements approved in 1990, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008. These policy statements call for responsible care of God's creation, with varying levels of specificity. At the federal level, a strong EPA is by far the most likely authority that responds to such policy statements as those mentioned above, which include protecting air, water, and land; reducing toxic pollution from power plants; protecting endangered species; putting an end to destructive extraction techniques such as Mountaintop Removal coal mining; and ensuring the U.S. shoulders its responsibility to the rest of the world with regard to global climate change.

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**Item 11-08**

[The assembly approved Item 11-08 with amendment. See pp. 28, 32.]

*A Resolution on Racism, Incarceration, and Restoration—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

In order to begin to restore our communities, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Affirm the need for and receive "Crime and Justice," the ACSWP Introduction, (<http://index.pcusa.org/NXT/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=pcdocs:10.1048/Enu>, type in Crime and Justice in the search function), and "Resolution on Restorative Justice," approved by the 214th General Assembly (2002) (*Minutes*, 2002, Part I, pp. 576ff).

2. Direct that a study be prepared and shared with the church for action at every level [~~showing~~] [investigating whether there is] the connection between 'the war on drugs' and incarceration as a way of social management.

3. Develop a working group to work with our ecumenical partners in creating coalitions or networks to support strategies to aid reentry of former prisoners into our communities.

4. Collaborate with mid councils and churches working with prisoners reentering our communities and gather models that can be shared across the church.

5. Direct the Office of Public Witness to advocate to Congress for fair application of existing laws and [~~the reduction or elimination of penalties for~~] [reasonable sentencing of] drug possession and nonviolent offenses that [~~clearly~~] have a disproportionate and adverse impact on the racial ethnic community[~~s~~] [and] families[~~, and individuals~~].

6. Direct that the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to develop a [web page and] paper on God and compassion for prisoners and ex-offenders that addresses our role in helping implement God's community as a place that is open for all and embraces all with forgiveness and love. [The web page and paper should list recommended resources from Presbyterians engaged in such ministry to be available to the whole church.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$5,010, (2014) \$5,010—GAMC—Unrestricted; (2013) \$1,500 (2014) \$500 Per Capita—GAMC]

***Rationale***

“One can indeed come out of prison to reign, even though born poor in the kingdom” (Eccl. 4:14).

How do we live into this? What does it mean for us to be a community of forgiveness in the context of the industrial prison system? Today, when it is a large for-profit industry, how do we show compassion to hundreds of thousands of persons who have been caught up in the criminal justice system and mass incarceration?

African Americans, Native Americans, and Latino Americans have been caught up in the criminal justice system and released into our communities having lost access to health services, employment, education, and housing. Many end up on the streets or minimally employed or returned to prison.

We in the United States have reason to be hopeful about the state of racism in this nation. We are increasingly diverse and the leadership of our country is beginning to represent that diversity.

Our church demonstrates how much racism has evolved and yet remains in many ways in place. With leadership of color in the church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) still remains 94 percent white.

African American and Latino men are disproportionately part of the prison population. Immigration is a continuing vehicle for cultural racism.

The more things change, the more they remain the same.

In each generation new tactics have been used for achieving the same goals—goals shared by the Founding Fathers.

Denying African Americans citizenship deemed essential to the formation of the original union. Hundreds of years later, America is still not an egalitarian democracy. Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow, Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, argues that the “war on drugs” has become a new Jim Crow, i.e. a permanent way of trapping African Americans as non-citizens.

Discussions, theories, arguments, and rationalizations have been used in support of racial exclusion. Discrimination in its many forms have evolved and changed but essentially they have remained the same.

The last legal obstacles to full citizenship for African Americans were eliminated with the 1965 Voting Rights Act. When you are a citizen, that implies that you have the right to full participation in society, including voting. This right is not available for people who have been convicted of felonies. Laws criminalizing drug use and sentencing patterns emerged with a disproportionate impact on African Americans. Almost 25 percent of all African American men in their thirties have been in prison by 2003. More than 13 percent are ineligible to vote due to felony convictions.

Some would argue that those who commit a crime need to be punished. Others argue that rehabilitation would be more effective. The U.S. judicial system tends toward punitive measures rather than restorative and often sentencing varies based on the ways in which people of different races are charged. For example, crimes for minor drug offenses are treated differently by law enforcement and the courts, depending on the racial ethnic profile of the offender. Justice has to be blind and impartial by race and gender.

The article “A History of Racism in the United States,” from the Racism Study Pack of The Thoughtful Christian shares this insight:

“The criminal justice system impacts the way African Americans in particular experience citizenship. Convicted felons who have served their time in prison and completed probation remain ineligible to vote in most states. Only Maine and Vermont allow prison inmates the right to vote. Thirty-five states prohibit felons on parole from voting. Several states do not allow felons who have completed their sentences to vote, while others require felons go through a waiting time and a process before being able to vote again. Given the disproportionate numbers of African American and Latino men in prison, and the disproportionate sentences given to people of color, we might say the result of these laws is the restriction of citizenship based on race.”<sup>1</sup>

## Endnote

1. Laura Mariko Cheifetz and Jessica Vasquez Torres, “A History of Racism in the United States, 4” in The Racism Study Pack, *The Thoughtful Christian* ([www.TheThoughtfulChristian.com](http://www.TheThoughtfulChristian.com)): 2009, p.2.

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-08**

*Comment on Item 11-08—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Recommendations 3 and 4 direct that a working group be formed to work ecumenically, and that a collaborative effort with mid councils be formed.

In response to the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA) convened a Criminal Justice Consultation at Stony Point Center, February 17–19, 2012. Per this General Assembly action, those attending this consultation “considered and proposed the creation of a Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) network on criminal justice for education and advocacy ministries.” An interim leadership team (the Reverend Dr. Donald Shriver [New York], the Reverend Steve Werth [Pennsylvania], the Reverend Deborah Haffner Hubbard [Arizona], Elder Gail Tyree [Tennessee], and the Reverend Annie Rawlings [New York]) was selected from consultation participants for the new Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network (PCJN) and on March 7, 2012, the PHEWA Board of Directors voted to accept the PCJN as a network of PHEWA.

Since its establishment, PCJN has developed ecumenical partnerships (including the United Methodist Church, the Society of Friends, and the United Church of Christ) to address a range of criminal justice issues including restorative justice, reentry strategies, and mandatory sentencing. Its first action as a network involved direct communication with the governors of forty-eight states with a faith response to prison privatization. The PCJN has already begun resourcing local congregations engaged in or wishing to engage in criminal justice ministries.

Recommendation 5 directs the Office on Public Witness to advocate for fair application of existing laws and the reduction or elimination of penalties for drug possession and nonviolent offenses. The GAMC, through OPW, advocates for restorative justice policies, including the elimination of mandatory minimum sentences, when relevant legislation is under consideration in Congress, based primarily on a General Assembly statement, “Resolution on Restorative Justice,” from 2002.

Recommendation 6 directs the Theology Worship and Education office to develop a paper on God and compassion for prisoners and ex-offenders. However, the GAMC suggests that rather than producing a “paper on God and compassion for prisoners and ex-offenders,” that a web page be created to list recommended resources from Presbyterians engaged in such ministry to be available to the whole church.

## Item 11-09

[The assembly approved Item 11-09. See pp. 28, 32.]

*World of Hurt, Word of Life: “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction”—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), grounded in its communion with the Giver of all good gifts and with one another, and acting in response to severe economic and moral disorder, do the following:

1. Approve the following framework of principles and actions for faithful response to the economic crisis, including
  - a. a call to repentance and renewal, corresponding to the depth and danger of the economic crisis;
  - b. a theological and ethical affirmation of communion principles for economic redirection; and
  - c. a set of practical actions for individual, congregational, and church-wide public engagement.
2. Receive the attached supporting analysis, which documents the economic dangers we face to jobs, families, neighbors, and long-term sustainability, and probes the moral significance of these challenges based on our church’s biblical and Reformed heritage.
3. Affirm these recommendations as our church’s call for “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction.”

### CALL TO RENEWAL

In the current severe economic recession and faltering recovery, we see the consequences of a long developing moral crisis in our culture. A distorted value system has taken hold, spreading reckless consumerism, deep insecurity, and extreme inequalities across America. These are not the values of Christianity or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but they have infiltrated the practice of Christianity in America along with other social life. These values subvert faithful observance; they weaken our communion with family, neighbor, workers, and a world in need. Too often, we behave as children of Mammon rather than as children of God.

Yet, we cannot serve two masters. If we are to confront this moral crisis we must recover the biblical values of justice, compassion, and covenant community. We must seek nothing less than to place God—not the economy, wealth, or competition—at the center of our lives. In doing so, we will empower our church, our society, and our government to look out for the poor and the sick, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger in the land, to safeguard God’s

gift of creation, and to promote and protect the common good. The depth and scale of these challenges force us to respond, not only to the obvious distress of many we know and love, but to the many more God commands us to love. This challenge is more than a call for a new ethical compass in our personal behavior. The work of economic reconstruction today requires something like a new national covenant, a new public framework derived from authentic religious values, to reorient the way wealth is produced and shared and to reclaim the role of government in securing the common good.

In the Wall Street collapse and the four difficult years since, we see the impact of four decades of growing captivity to the values of excessive individualism and a destructive antigovernment ideology. The resulting loss of wealth and stable employment for many and the spreading pain of poverty, insecurity, and extreme inequality mark this period as a turning point not only for the church's witness in society, but for the very beliefs that define our common faith. Standing against this tide and echoing the social awakening of our predecessors in the last Gilded Age, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) opposes the market fundamentalism that has diminished Christian values in our economy and political culture—values of common sacrifice and shared prosperity, care and uplift for the most vulnerable, and responsibility for future generations.

These values are at the core of our common life as Christians. In the practice of communion, Jesus' sacrifice and sharing became the model for all human flourishing. Jesus overturned the tables of those who would commercialize the sacred, but he shared tables with rich and poor, righteous and outcast, embodying God's welcome and pointing to a realm where justice and peace embrace. This world has never been that realm, but at Christ's table we are renewed in our vision of that world where everyone has enough. In the principles and recommendations below, we seek to make this vision practical for our congregations, our communities, and our nation.

Guided by the Christian tradition, we seek a sustainable stewardship society shaped for the common good, contrasted with a short-sighted consumer society ruled by economic assumptions too often accepted as unalterable truths. Guided as well by our Reformed tradition, we specifically lift up the role of government, which is ordained by God to restrain the power of sin, to correct the injustice of sinful systems, and, in wise governance, to help build a just economy. We value the market and individual initiative within a framework of democratic governance, shared prosperity, and sufficient public investment for common need. And we believe that the church can, and should, use its voice responsibly on complex matters of public importance.

## COMMUNION PRINCIPLES

An economy proves its worth by the benefits it offers to all the members of a society. Christian ethicists have often used the principles of community and the common good to evaluate economic systems. While still using those norms, we take the further step of adopting the practice of communion as an interpretive lens for viewing community and the common good. Communion elevates loyalty to God as the unifying center without which community cohesion can become idolatrous, and it also strengthens the human solidarity with neighbors and the earth without which community ties can become merely contractual. With respect to the common good, communion prevents the defining of the common good from becoming the prerogative of the powerful at the expense of the vulnerable. It also refutes the claim that concern for the common good can be set aside out of trust in market forces to produce maximum benefits if all of us single-mindedly pursue our individual and group interests.

The Christian community's practice of communion embodies an economy of grace rather than gain, the remembering of a broken body, the healing of a world of hurt. It does so because it fosters regular renewal of the community's connections to God in Jesus Christ, to neighbors, and to the earth, but it also often mirrors the fracture and dismemberment of those connections. The apostle Paul took the Corinthian Christians to task for allowing the divisions and prejudices of Greco-Roman society to infect their practice of the Lord's Supper. The table fellowship at Corinth was imitating the class divisions of local dinner parties. When the rich ate and drank early and some got drunk and the poor went hungry, Paul could not call such meals the Lord's Supper. He writes that they are not "discerning the body," meaning the community of believers as the very body of Christ. He moves immediately to describe this new social body with its many members—each with its "manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7). No one is to be dishonored; the so-called inferior members are even to receive greater honor that the members may have the same care for one another and dissension may be avoided. Beyond their local numbers, the prosperous should supply the want of the poor in Jerusalem as a matter of equality (2 Cor. 8:14).

Our preeminent sacramental words of life remember the world of hurt experienced by Jesus on the cross. Christians are not only to partake of the body of Christ in communion; they are to be the body of Christ in the world, pouring themselves out for others as Jesus did. Five sets of principles follow from this model of affirming others and sharing with them. These five sets of ethical principles concern the stewardship of creation, Christian vocation, civil governance, the church, and Providence for a New Creation. Each will be explored in turn.

**1. *Stewardship of Creation***

“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps. 24:1).

a. We affirm that the whole of creation belongs to God; all things have intrinsic value, as interconnected gifts of God. In a communion or sacramental vision, stewardship is not only management but servanthood within creation, redirecting growth and restoring Sabbath-keeping.

b. We affirm that we are called to care for God’s gifts in ways that sustain the whole of creation, contribute to the flourishing of all God’s creatures, and provide these same gifts to the generations that follow us.

c. We reject, as incompatible with Christian understanding of the material world, any social ordering that reduces creation and humanity merely to an economic or instrumental value.

d. We reject, as incompatible with Christian stewardship, that self-interested pursuit of profit and limitless consumption are foundations of a good economy; rather, all economic arrangements must be judged by their contribution to the common good and the health of creation.

**2. *Community and Vocation***

“Have regard for your covenant, for the dark places of the land are full of the haunts of violence” (Ps. 74:20).

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit ... and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor.12:4–7).

a. We affirm a life in covenant with our neighbors, fellow citizens, and all who live among us, and that this is a life of responsibility for the common good, before private freedom, and one that is judged by higher law.

b. We affirm the priority of human labor and individual callings in a covenant order of responsibility, with talents and character given to us not simply for the sake of our individual well-being, but for the common good of all.

c. We affirm that the talents of all should be welcomed lest the common good be compromised, the integrity of the body weakened, and the enjoyment of God’s love by individual members be impaired. Each contributor to a common enterprise deserves both a fair share in the benefits obtained and a say in the community of production.

d. We reject, as incompatible with Christian vocation, any economic system that tolerates the marginalization or exploitation of any of its members through unemployment and underemployment, insufficient wages, or extreme inequality in access to social goods.

**3. *Governance for the Common Good***

“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God” (Rom.13:1).

a. We affirm that government is good, ordained by God for the maintenance of God’s commonwealth, accountable to God in drawing fairly on the capacities and resources of its members and protecting their dignity and safety.

b. We affirm that government has as its trust the furthering of the common good, in concert with the activities of private citizens and organizations. The freedom of personal creativity benefits from the social creativity enabled by wise governance, which includes independent judicial review of government itself.

c. We affirm that all citizens have the right to basic economic goods and to meaningful work, and that government, representing the whole community, is ultimately responsible for seeing to the provision and protection of these rights from unjust concentrations of market or political power.

d. We reject, as incompatible with God’s gift of government, any construal of individual liberty that denies our corporate responsibilities to neighbors near and far, for the protection of their equal liberty and opportunity to flourish.

**4. *Church as a Living Sign of God’s Coming Realm***

“... [To] make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for [the] ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God ... might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph. 3:8–10).

- a. We affirm the church as a community and as an institution, a good ordained by God for the mission and sustenance of God's people over time.
- b. We affirm that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and that the church must be ever reformed to embody the gracious purposes of God rather than any deterministic economic necessity or cultural force.
- c. We affirm that the church is called to speak in a prophetic voice, demanding of government, citizens, and economic institutions alike, repentance from value systems that demean and marginalize people and erode the common good.
- d. We reject the view that the church is an end in itself, but rather maintain that among its Great Ends are the promotion of social righteousness and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

#### 5. *Providence for a New Creation*

“But strive first for the Kingdom of God and [God’s] righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Mt. 6:33).

- a. We affirm that no power in the world, including economic forces, is ultimate, because God, as source and sustainer, is the true sovereign over all things.
- b. We affirm that peace is a chief characteristic of God’s reign, and that economic reconstruction is part of embodying that peace in the just provision of goods for current and future generations.
- c. We reject, as incompatible with our understanding of God’s Providence, that any human institution that furthers injustice is normative; rather, God’s order is always aligned to justice with special attention to the most vulnerable.

#### THE CHURCH’S WORK IN TODAY’S FALLEN ECONOMY

Practical actions for individual, congregational, and church-wide public engagement follow from the Communion Principles. These actions are proposed in three areas of the church’s work: within congregations and councils; in the public square; and in support of local, state, or federal policies that address economic behavior.

##### 1. *Embracing the Spirit of Repentance and Renewal in Congregations and Councils*

In order to help renew the full sense of calling in the economic lives of Presbyterians, the 220th General Assembly (2012):

- a. Invites congregations and councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to view their practices of hospitality, fellowship, compensation, mission, and evangelism through the lens of communion. This is to see each church as a body in which everyone has an equal place of service and honor, where no one is abandoned or reduced to second-class status, where inequality in compensation is tempered, and where God’s grace is the center of community life. These are not matters subject to economic audit, but which may have economic effects. The goal is to strengthen each congregation as it seeks to live out Christ’s distinctive values, and thereby to help each member resist the forces of class and the culture of consumption that weaken our sharing and our witness.
- b. Invites congregations to develop special opportunities for reflection and education on the sacrament of communion and its economic meaning. From this reflective work, new or renewed congregational efforts are encouraged to realize a fuller Christian communion in our neighborhoods and our local and regional economies, through such means as: practices of hospitality with needful neighbors; direct service for community needs; energy conservation and other environmental efforts in our churches and neighborhoods; engagement in faith-based community organizing and advocacy; redevelopment of church properties to serve new community needs; and investment in community development enterprises, among other ways for congregations to participate in the work of economic recovery and redirection.
- c. Invites mid councils to view their practices of membership, mutual accountability, mission, and evangelism through the lens of communion. This is to see presbyteries as bodies where teaching and ruling elders face directly the socioeconomic differences in their regions and develop or strengthen mission strategies to build solidarity and shared witness across those differences. Presbyteries and other regional bodies are encouraged to use *Neither Poverty Nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 324ff [print version], pp. 742ff [electronic version]), a policy study approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) to help address compensation differences and their influence on mid council life.

d. Encourages mid councils—presbyteries and synods—to organize at least one gathering on the theme of “communion renewal and economic reconstruction,” designed for education and dialogue among teaching and ruling elders, deacons, members, and others. Theological educators, economists, and other resource persons are encouraged to contribute insights on the influence of faith in the shaping of economic values, specifically with regard to the relation of communion and the common good. From these gatherings, councils and congregations are encouraged to consider new efforts to work more actively together to meet or advocate for the needs of members and neighbors impacted by today’s economic challenges.

e. Requests the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in cooperation with appropriate ministries of the General Assembly Mission Council (Presbyterian Mission Agency), provide relevant and accessible resources for such gatherings and study groups, including summaries drawn from and resources based on this report.

f. Directs the Office of the General Assembly to publish this report in its entirety on the PC(USA) website, to oversee the printing of a limited quantity of copies, and to see that copies are distributed to interested congregations and individual members, mid councils, resource centers, educational institutions related to the PC(USA), and to ecumenical partners.

## 2. *Voicing Our Beliefs in the Public Square*

In order to present a public voice for Reformed Christian values in economic reconstruction, the 220th General Assembly (2012):

a. Urges the Stated Clerk, the Office of Public Witness, and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, as well as presbytery, synod, and congregational leaders, to take opportunities to express the church’s views on the economy in the media, at public events, and in other forums (including nonpartisan events related to the 2012 election season), to endorse or participate in ecumenical and interfaith statements or acts of witness consistent with policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

b. Directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Advocacy Committees for Racial Ethnic and Women’s Concerns, to provide resources to support the witness described above, for presenting the church’s views on economic and civic responsibility, sustainable economic development, strong public ethics, and policies for the common good, with special attention to those most vulnerable.

## 3. *Supporting Public Policy Actions on the Economy*

In accordance with the belief that “truth is in order to goodness,” (F-3.0104), that education and action go together, and in order to contribute a Christian ethical perspective based on communion, covenant, and the common good to public understanding and advocacy by Presbyterians and PC(USA), the 220th General Assembly (2012) encourages its members and directs its appropriate agencies to support the following directions for reform addressing four main areas of God’s concern in our economy, as outlined in the attached study: (1) the crisis of work, (2) family insecurity and children’s well-being, (3) the plight of our neighbors in marginalized communities, (4) sustainable growth for our environment and future generations:

While previous assemblies have affirmed both public and private responsibility for effective solutions in seeking a sustainable prosperity for all, the 220th General Assembly (2012) urges the church to support a renewed emphasis on the proper role of government in society and the economy, as taught in biblical and Reformed tradition. The church does not govern or command in society but reserves its right, and duty, to counsel political leaders from the high place of conscience and our long Reformed heritage of social witness and policy application.

### a. *On the Crisis of Work*

To renew our communion with the working-age population, and all workers within our borders, we encourage the church’s support for policies aimed at reducing unemployment, creating quality jobs, strengthening the safety net and training programs for unemployed workers, and empowering workers in the labor marketplace. In addition to affirming the church’s existing policies on vocation, fairer compensation, and full employment, as referenced in the attached study, the 220th General Assembly (2012) supports:

(1) Stronger job-creation policies, such as tax reforms that encourage job-creation within our borders; increased public investment in new infrastructure, environmental restoration, and other public goods; direct public job creation on appropriate infrastructure projects and maintenance in areas and periods of high unemployment; and measures to maintain employment in recessions and restructurings through on-the-job retraining, work-share policies, and coordinated efforts to preserve networks of innovation and suppliers in given industries.

(2) Greater empowerment of workers, such as by indexing the federal minimum wage to an accurate inflation measure with realistic adjustments for health, education, and housing costs; by tax and other measures to

decrease the enormous disproportions between top executive and line employee salaries—sharing productivity gains more fairly; by creating a more level playing field for workers who wish to organize for collective bargaining; and by alternative institutional arrangements, such as employee ownership, cooperatives, and other wealth-building and wage-improving strategies for workers.

*b. On the Crisis of Family*

To renew our communion with families and children, the 220th General Assembly (2012) encourages the church's support for policies that strengthen families, support children's development, provide comfort to the elderly, and help to insulate decisions about family formation and child-bearing from undue economic stress. Concerned with the impact of the current crisis on families, especially low-income families, the 220th General Assembly (2012) supports policies that:

(1) Protect a healthy work-family balance. These include such policies as paid parental leave; universal high-quality childcare and early childhood education; mandatory sick-pay; and mandatory flex-time alternatives to meet family care responsibilities.

(2) Strengthen families through life-cycle needs. These include such policies as “baby bonds” available to average investors; public school programs to increase healthy nutrition and physical education, as well as after-school enrichment; and policies that support affordable access to post-secondary education.

(3) Support families in retirement and times of serious illness. These policies include strengthening Social Security and Medicare without additional burdens on middle- and lower-income families; providing greater consumer protection and transparency in retirement savings programs; and considering ways to count the value of unpaid work by family child- and elder-caregivers.

(4) Improve the accuracy of official measurements of household economic wellbeing. These include revising poverty thresholds, unemployment figures, and eligibility criteria for family-supporting programs.

*c. On the Plight of Our Neighbors*

To renew our communion with marginalized neighbors and the least affluent among us, we encourage the church's support for policies that equalize opportunities for education, work, and political participation across racial and other social divides, including the divide between citizens and noncitizens. Recognizing significant historical differences in wealth accumulation, vulnerability to imprisonment, and patterns of segregation among those who are unemployed, and a nationwide poverty rate of approximately 20 percent and growing among the young, the 220th General Assembly (2012) supports:

(1) A stronger social safety net for poor and low-income families, through measures such as adjustment of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and related income support programs to extend time limits or reactivate expired eligibility in times of high unemployment, and protection of Food Stamps, WIC, SSI, Medicaid, and other programs for the most vulnerable, from across-the-board budget cuts.

(2) Increased social investment in poorer communities, through measures such as expanded and enriched public schooling (longer school days and/or school years, incorporating high-quality enrichment programs), policies that improve transit equity in under-served cities and rural areas (including mass transit and rail upgrades), measures to restore healthy housing markets and well-managed public housing, and policies and funding to help cities and states develop and expand community-based crime prevention programs and alternatives to prison.

(3) Increased social inclusion and community empowerment, through measures such as an earned and fairly applied path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, fairer and consistently enforced agricultural labor laws, increased regulation of financial services in low-income communities, ensuring equal opportunity for affordable credit, and democratic reforms that reduce barriers to voting in low-income communities, including election-day registration policies and expansion of voter registration in public agencies.

*d. On the Stewardship of Creation*

To renew our communion with God's creation and future generations, we encourage the church's support for policies that transform our energy supply, restore and protect vital ecosystems, and reorient community planning and public capital investments around energy efficiency goals and other environmental benefits. Recognizing the significant scientific consensus underlying climate change warnings, the 220th General Assembly (2012) supports:

(1) “Green infrastructure” planning and investment, through such means as increases in federal research and development (R&D) investment and other public support for renewable energy development; the



expansion and improvement of mass transit within and between metropolitan areas; the promotion of new economic development approaches that integrate conservation, cogeneration, and renewable energy systems into residential and commercial development, with a focus on preserving and limiting pressure on ecosystems that provide important services, such as drainage and sink capacities, and the elimination of public subsidies for unsustainable sectors of our economy, including highly profitable fossil fuel and large-scale agribusiness industries.

(2) “Green shift” changes in consumption and investment incentives for citizens, through measures such as tax reforms that encourage work and saving and discourage pollution and over-consumption; higher automobile fuel efficiency standards, with public support for industry R&D; expanded recycling coverage and monitoring at the state and local level; and improvements in national statistics to better account for environmental costs and benefits in economic activity.

#### e. *Reforming System-wide Governance*

Renewing Christian communion in the work of economic reconstruction requires a systematic recovery of the proper role and functions of government, as ordained by God to serve the common good. The 220th General Assembly (2012) supports four main priorities in restoring proper governance for the common good:

(1) A strong political reform agenda to reduce big money influence in campaigns and policy-making, through such legislative and constitutional changes as necessary to preserve access to equal vote and voice of all citizens;

(2) A fiscal redesign that is balanced between cutting waste, progressive tax increases, and needed investments in health, education, and other key assets for future generations;

(3) Financial sector reconstruction, through such measures as small “Robin Hood” financial transaction taxes to reduce unproductive and risky financial speculation; public banks and endowment funds for infrastructure development, local business development, and community wealth-building; restoring regulatory firewalls between investment and retail banking to minimize public risk; integration of sustainability criteria into sovereign debt analysis and credit ratings; and

(4) Improve and expand our national accounting systems, by supplementing Gross Domestic Product and related market indicators with measures of human, social, and natural wealth.

#### 4. *Authorization of a New Study of Tax Reform*

Because taxation is considered a legitimate function of government in the Christian tradition and, today, lies at the heart of debates over the role of government and the responsibilities of citizens, and because tax policy reflects the nature of social trust and mutual obligation, pushing our focus beyond the idea of “contract” to the implicit “covenant” in our society, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is directed to appoint a seven-volunteer study team to assess the values implicit in tax policy, focusing on the areas of personal income, wealth, giving, and consumption, and considering a spectrum of reform proposals. With input from a wide range of experts and policy leaders in the field, and with necessary grounding in existing church teaching on the subject and our church’s communion principles for economic reconstruction, articulated above, the study team will report its findings and recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$20,635, (2014) 12,015 Per Capita—GAMC]

#### *Rationale*

Responding to the deepening economic crisis of our times, the 219th General Assembly (2010) recognized a preliminary statement of concern, *Living Through Economic Crisis: The Church’s Witness in Troubled Times* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 733ff of electronic copy; pp.323–24 of the print copy), and proceeded to authorize further study of the problem with recommendations for faithful action by the church. Specifically, the General Assembly asked for a study that “assesses the long-term implications of our current economic trends and practices, including their impact on the church itself, and provides appropriate recommendations for consideration by members, congregations, presbyteries, and local, state, and federal government” (Ibid., p. 733 of the electronic copy, p. 323 of the print copy).

In consultation with a broad range of experts and practitioners who work on economic policy and development, a study team appointed by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy carried out this work. In addition to this report, the study team prepared supplemental discussion essays and other related materials, which will be made available on line before the 220th General Assembly (2012). A number of resources can already be found in the October 2011 issue of *Unbound* ([www.justiceUnbound.org](http://www.justiceUnbound.org)), titled “The Dark Night of the American Economy” (<http://justiceunbound.org/journal/table-of-contents-2/>). *Unbound* is an interactive, online journal and the official successor to *Church & Society* magazine.

The title, *World of Hurt, Word of Life*, points to the words of institution at communion, or the Lord's Supper. That sacrament of re-membering the body of the church includes the most foundational words of life that give life to the church as a community. Using this Christian model is not intended to suggest that all U.S. citizens must become Christians, but that the equal, mutual concern of communion is our measure for economic values and practices. We do not live "by bread alone," or secular economics alone, of whatever school or ideology, but by the Word who is ultimately God with us, seeking incarnation in our personal and social life.

The foundational, theologically grounded values of concern to the church in our assessment of the economic crisis were listed in the 2010 assembly's action: the values of human rights, covenant community, public responsibility, vocation-affirming work, and sustainability. In applying these values, it should be clear that the Reformed approach always connects personal and social transformation, individual conscience, and the common good. In gospel language, we remember Jesus' preaching of both the inner conversion from fear and greed to selfless faith, and the outer, institutional conversion of worldly rule into the reign of God. We remember our responsibility to the word in light of Jesus' very example, which practiced the healing and feeding of multitudes from the ethos of the Beatitudes and his love for the least among us.

In our recommendations for the church, we find the necessary grounding in the central liturgical place and meaning of Communion in the Reformed tradition and in the lives of all Presbyterian congregations. Across the entire spectrum of its impacts and causes, the economic crisis, we submit, is fed by a common condition of weakened or broken communion. Our recommendations flow from this recognition and build on a core set of principles that define a life of communion with God and one another in contrast to the economic life that now prevails in the world and threatens our children's future. In resetting the priorities of economic life around the practice and principles of communion, the church should not only provide for its own renewal, in relevant actions designed for congregations and other church bodies, but for a more robust Christian witness in the public square as well, including faith-based recommendations for significant changes in public policy.

The background study included in this report provides a closer examination of the manifold impacts and causes of our economic distress, in light of Scripture and Reformed tradition. The study is divided into three parts. Part One establishes the liturgical frame for reflection on the economic crisis, and sketches the broad economic trends that have brought us to this point. We then outline the contrasting principles of God's economy, which the church is asked to affirm.

Part Two sharpens and differentiates the empirical focus to emphasize specific societal structures at risk—five key domains of God's love that are embattled in our economy:

1. The jobs crisis and the degradation of work—because God wills that we all be productive and respected in our need to provide and take part in the continuing (or great) work of creation.
2. The family in crisis, including children and elders—because our family ties are designed to reflect God's image and serve human flourishing.
3. The plight of our neighbors—because we remember that we were once strangers, enslaved, "and the Lord redeemed us."
4. The stewardship of creation for future generations—because the land is God's, "for you are strangers and live as foreigners with me."
5. The wounded church—because the Body of Christ cannot heal if it is captive to the world.

On many issues in these areas, the General Assembly has already spoken with clear recommendations for policy. But even as we rely on the church's extensive policy tradition for guidance, today we seek new inspiration and authority for action. The depth of this crisis combined with the glaring failures of our elected leaders has motivated us to respond anew, not only for the sake of our neighbors and communities, as we are taught, but for the very honor of a church that proclaims God's sovereignty over all.

Finally, in Part Three of the study, we draw particular attention to a common and inter-related source of disempowerment in the embattled domains of God's love: the ascendancy of an extreme individualist ideology and culture, and a no less radical campaign of weakening and denigrating government. We ask the church to reject these ideological assaults on the common good and on the proper role of government. The church can respond with a Reformed view of the role of governance in society and the economy. Applied today, this tradition clearly justifies a "mixed economy," valuing the market and individual initiative within a framework of shared and sustainable prosperity, as well as public responsibility for unmet human needs.

## PART ONE: WORLD OF HURT, WORD OF LIFE

### A. *Broken Communion*

Throughout the ages, Sunday to Sunday, Christians have gathered to participate in Holy Communion. This Christian practice re-presents to the faithful, God's *oikos*, God's divine household, and its economy of grace.<sup>1</sup> In this sacramental act, the fundamental character of our existence before God is revealed and renewed. As John Calvin wrote, "We call it either 'the

Lord's Supper' or 'the Eucharist' because in it we are both spiritually fed by the liberality of the Lord and also give him thanks for his kindness. ... In this sacrament ... the Lord recalls the great bounty of his goodness to our memory and stirs us up to acknowledge it."<sup>2</sup>

As the body of Christ is broken before us, we remember the parable of the sheep and goats: whatever we do to "the least of these" brothers and sisters of mine, we also do to Jesus himself (Mt. 25:40). We bring "a world of hurt" to the table, the hurt of "the least of these" and our own hurt. As the bread is broken, we remember the crucified Jesus, but we must also remember the hungry, naked, homeless body of Christ when he was alive in the flesh. In our world of hurt, the poor and the unemployed, the immigrant and the economically distressed, whose numbers grow, are dis-membered from the body of Christ. In remembering Jesus' sacrifice for us, the task of "re-membering" the least among us, in the body of Christ, is both our individual promise and our shared responsibility. We recognize today the economic conditions that weaken our communion, dividing God's *oikos* from within.

When Jesus announced to his followers, "This is my body that is [broken] for you" (1 Cor. 11:24), hindsight sees him assuring his disciples that he was wounded for them and that they were healed by his bruises (Isa. 53:5). When the apostle Paul called the Corinthian believers "the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Cor. 12:27), he was naming them as the re-membered and inspired embodiment of the risen Christ. Therefore, their gatherings for the Lord's Supper ought to be times of re-membering for their brokenness and resurrection to be the embodiment of Christ in the world. Instead they brought their social stratification and disconnection to the communion meal; and, failing to "discern the body" in the poor among them, they further fractured it instead of being re-membered. Paul charged that their meals were a sacrilege and not the Lord's Supper.

At the communion table, there should be no stratification. Each member of the body is an affirmed participant in a community in quest of the common good out of gratitude for God's gifts. When we begin to see all of our tables and all of our community connections and disconnections through the interpretive lens of communion practice, the economy of grace that is embodied there should bring critical scrutiny to our economies of gain and all of our tables where the means of sustenance are distributed and access to power is brokered.

The contrast between God's *oikos* of grace and gratitude and our economic life today is visible everywhere. Over the last decade, an epidemic of reckless mortgage lending and trading fueled a massive housing bubble, precipitating a dangerous financial meltdown in 2008 and plunging the nation into recession—the biggest economic crisis in the United States since the Great Depression. \$16 trillion in wealth was wiped out, and 7.5 million jobs were lost, yet a quick response by the federal government may have prevented even worse disaster by shoring up the banks, expanding the money supply, and injecting substantial stimulus spending to spur economic recovery. Now, three years later, the financial sector has recovered and business corporations are raking in impressive profits once again. Between two and three million jobs were also provided by the stimulus, which also helped offset state cutbacks in public employment. Banks and corporations today hold massive cash reserves. But ordinary people continue to suffer the effects of high unemployment, home foreclosures, stagnant wages, and anemic economic growth.

The immediate crisis was contained, but most Americans know that our problems go beyond the last several years. Over the last three decades, America has been transformed by extreme inequalities that have weakened the middle class, squeezed average workers, and further marginalized our poorest communities. At the root of this, we see a striking divergence between economic productivity and average wages. From the 1940s through the 1970s, rising productivity and rising wages followed the same upward trajectory, together. The prosperity our economy produced was widely shared among the people who created it, giving rise to a broad middle class. Since then, productivity has continued to rise, but average wages have been stagnant. During the same period, the income of the top 1 percent of the population has skyrocketed from 8 percent of total national income to more than 23 percent of total income in 2007—the highest it has been since 1928.<sup>3</sup> Wealth is even more unequal: in 2007, the richest 10 percent controlled two-thirds of total household net worth; the wealth gap has probably grown since the housing crash, as most middle- and working-class wealth is in the form of home equity.<sup>4</sup>

The broad middle class has managed to maintain a veneer of prosperity by working more and going deeper into debt. Compared to its counterpart in the 1970s, the average household today works approximately five hundred more hours annually. Average household debt now stands at 114 percent of income, after taxes, compared to approximately 65 percent in the 1970s.<sup>5</sup> These long-term trends, compounded by the sharp loss of wealth and the unemployment crisis since 2008, have spread anxiety, frustration, and anger across the country. From the young, who long for decent work, to the old, whose retirement security is threatened, from children, whose educational prospects are undermined, to parents, whose homes are in danger of foreclosure, from the poor who feel the safety net fraying even further, to the middle classes who sense their living standards crumbling away, all sorts of Americans continue to suffer the prolonged effects of our weakened and divided economy.

As economic pressures absorb more energy and household budgets tighten, other facets of human life are squeezed. Family life, religious communities, civic organizations, and political engagement suffer as people have less time, energy, and resources to commit to them. The richness of human social and personal existence is threatened as the imbalances within the economic system spill over into these other realms of life, further diminishing human flourishing. Symptomatically, people's trust in public

institutions and the democratic process has been dramatically eroded amid the growing inequalities of this period, and our capacity for cooperation and compromise in facing common challenges is likewise weakened by this loss of trust.

In addition to these human crises, people are also increasingly concerned about an impending ecological crisis. Rapid climate change, natural resource depletion, and loss of biodiversity reveal the extent to which human economic activity is spending down the natural resources on which life itself depends. The United States is the epicenter of global environmental impacts, consuming about 26 percent of the world's oil and 27 percent of its natural gas—for just 4.5 percent of the world's population, and generating an estimated 25 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>6</sup> The potential costs of such reckless consumption are nearly incalculable by normal risk models, but a more significant failure of leadership cannot be imagined. By diminishing what we have received from previous generations and originally from God, we are abdicating our responsibility for the well-being of future generations. There may be no greater sin than such a squandering of God's gifts at the cost of future life.

#### B. *God's Economy*

As Christians, we know that times of crisis carry the marks of God's judgment, but also the promise of God's salvation. Jesus Christ came into the world, saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." His words and deeds, his very existence, provoked an inversion of power and values that continues to challenge every social order.

The shadow of his cross falls across America and the world today, awakening us to judgment. Through Jesus Christ, we know that God does not judge in order to destroy, but in order to save, renew, redeem, and reconcile. Therefore, we can face our current crisis not only with sorrow and repentance, but also with expectancy and hope, knowing that God is preparing us, and the whole world, for new life.

As those whose hearts and minds and lives revolve around the nourishment we share in communion at the Lord's Table, we are empowered to resist the economic materialism that bombards us from every direction. We can no longer submit ourselves to the frantic and soulless accumulation of things or be content with the shallow, yet seductive, satisfaction excess provides. The personal and social costs of this relentless materialism—over-work, deepening indebtedness, and environmental degradation—have distorted our lives almost beyond recognition of who we really are in God's eyes.

The Christian practice of the Lord's Supper can renew a hopeful and life-giving vision of Christian materialism. The physical elements of bread and wine reveal that God's gracious presence is mediated to us through the mundane material of our daily life. Christians profess that God created the material world and proclaimed it good. The incarnation bears witness to God's profound desire to sanctify and redeem our material existence. From God's blessing of the creation—that it might be fruitful and multiply—to Jesus' mighty deeds of power on behalf of the sick and the lame, the hungry and thirsty, God's intention that "we might have life and have it abundantly" was revealed. This wholeness of life certainly includes our material existence. Therefore, with the psalmist we must joyously profess that the heavens—and everything under them—are declaring the glory of God.

In turn, we do not seek God apart from our material lives but in the midst of them. The economic activity of producing goods and services that contribute to material flourishing are worthy and serve God's gracious purposes in the world. But when one part of our society accumulates to great excess even as millions around us are materially and socially deprived of basic needs, the very goodness of God's creation is harmed and cries out for justice, according to the prophets.

To rectify great inequalities, we must resist the prevailing sense that we have earned what we possess and have a right to dispose of it however we wish. America often holds out the ideal of an "ownership society." In Communion, however, we see that we are the recipients of gifts that we did not earn; we do not earn anything except by the grace of God and therefore we have no right, in God's eyes, to withhold our resources from others in need. At creation, God proclaimed everything good and blessed it. When the people of Israel came into the Promised Land, God declared that "the land is mine, with me you are but aliens and tenants" (Lev. 25:23). A robust Christian vision, shaped by the Christian practice of Communion, offers the idea of a stewardship society.

A steward is someone who cares for something that belongs to another. Just as Adam was placed in the garden to till it and keep it, just as Israel recognized that God was the true owner of the land, just as Jesus told stories of servants who cared, well or poorly, for the property of their master, so we ought to think of ourselves as stewards rather than owners of the things we possess. We must consider not only their value to us but their possibly much greater worth to people in need. As John Calvin writes, "all the gifts we possess have been bestowed by God and entrusted to us on condition that they be distributed to our neighbors' benefit" (*Institutes* III.vii.5).

Our economy is one in which we feel less and less connected to one another and less and less mutually responsible. To the extent that we are bound to other people, it is through the voluntary contracts we enter for the sake of mutual self-interest. The Christian practice of the Lord's Supper offers a fundamentally different vision of human existence in the world, a vision of covenant community. Covenant community begins with the fact of creation. Surveying the creation on the final day of its making, God declared it, altogether, "very good." Each creature is valuable, in and of itself, but together they are something

more, something better. All God's creatures are united in a web of life-giving and life-sustaining relationships that mark them as participants in a single project and purpose—the creation. On this foundation, Christians rely on God's grace and are bound together in the body of Christ. We are not autonomous individuals, pursuing our individual well-being; we are persons in relationship, depending on one another and ultimately on God for our common good.

The goodness of our common creation and interdependence was first codified in the Hebrew law tradition of covenant community. God liberated the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. But they were not set free in order to become autonomous individuals. At Mount Sinai, they bound themselves to God and one another through promises of mutual responsibility. In the people of Israel God established a new social order that reflected God's intentions for the whole creation, including legal provisions for social and economic justice—affordable credit and debt relief, widespread access to productive resources, the release of slaves, and Sabbatical respite from the burdens of work and production.<sup>7</sup>

The biblical prophets called the people back to this covenantal order when they strayed, upholding their treatment of the poor and vulnerable as the chief measure of their righteousness. Jesus of Nazareth, who declared that his ministry would be the fulfillment of this prophetic vision of social justice, summarized the requirements of God's law, saying "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Lk. 10:27). He proclaimed and embodied God's coming kingdom by including the outcasts and lifting up the downtrodden, saying "the last will be first, and the first will be last" (Mt. 20:16).

From Genesis forward, work has been central to our identity as human beings, to our honored place in the created order, and to the rise and fall of many social orders. Understood biblically, a significant part of who we are is captured in what we do, in the roles we play in contributing to and maintaining God's creation. Thus, we have understood work as vocation, a calling connected to God's purposes, and always worthy, in turn, of sufficient recompense according to a principle of equal human dignity. When he prophesies about God's new creation, Isaiah writes, "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well" (Isa. 65: 21–23). Our well-being is connected to our work, and in God's economy that work will not be in vain. It will be honored and justly rewarded. An economy that leaves its workers behind, discounting their needs and contributions, falls short of this expectation in the most obvious way.

In the Reformed tradition, so too, the biblical order of work and reward is further oriented toward the common good. Writing on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Calvin asserts, "... he [Paul] orders every one to bring what he has to the common heap, and not to keep back gifts of God in the way of enjoying every one his own, apart from others, but aim unitedly at the edification of all in common."<sup>8</sup> Our commitment to each other is a central tenet of Reformed ethics, an idea that underlies any Reformed definition of work. While other philosophies of work may include, in place of the common good, exhortations to industriousness, thrift, or personal benefit, the Reformed understanding of work always obligates us to understand our labor in the context of the community in which we live and the general flourishing of each community.

Through our work and other fruitful activities, each of us assumes an individual responsibility for supporting the common good. But the common good cannot be secured by individual action alone, both for reasons of efficiency (i.e. collective goods such as public safety and commercial infrastructure cannot be provided by individuals), and, more expansively, because sinful greed and unequal power in the marketplace often prevent our neighbors and many who live among us from enjoying their share of human dignity in a common life with all the children of God. In our tradition, as in others, proper governance for the common good is not only honored, it is divinely ordained. There has never been a question about the need for a higher ordering power and a system of governance to provide essential goods and services that individuals cannot provide, and to ensure an adequate sharing of resources according to the principle of equal human dignity. With Calvin, we understand that "it is perfect barbarism to think of exterminating [civil government], its use among men being not less than that of bread and water, light and air, while its dignity is much more excellent."<sup>9</sup> While hardly an egalitarian utopia, Calvin's Geneva was unusual in its time for supporting extensive public services and social reform efforts, including free education, poor relief, prison reform, consumer protections, and support for refugees. Drawing from this heritage, the question of what our Reformed principles of government mean for today is challenging, and we examine these issues more closely in Part Three.

God provides us help to right economic wrongs, but in America today there is a profound sense, even a certain kind of fundamentalist belief, that our current social and economic patterns are the result of unyielding economic laws that cannot be resisted. Such acquiescence to the "will" of the market is, without exaggeration, a form of idolatry, of disobedience to God. In the face of the economic determinism that tells us there is nothing we can do to change things, Christians profess faith in divine providence, which is the true power of change in our broken world. To those eaten up with anxiety about their material well-being, Jesus said, "strive first for the Kingdom of God and ... all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt. 6:33). Acceptance of God's love, not the illusion of rational self-interest, must be the ordering principle of a justly prosperous society, abundant for one and all. "Ask, and it will be given to you," Jesus taught. "Search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened" (Lk. 11:9). In this perspective, if it were not for the self-regarding designs of those who wish to author their own destiny, life would be a gift that provides of itself for God's creatures, for one and all in proportion to their need.

Throughout the ages, Christians have attempted to remain faithful followers of Christ in all aspects of life, including their economic lives. Martin Luther eloquently captured the attitude that shapes a Christian life: “as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christ’s to one another and Christ might be the same in all, that is, that we might be truly Christians” (*The Freedom of a Christian*, 303). To nurture this reciprocity, we have gathered in worship since the beginning, and we have developed an extensive ecclesial life to signify our faith and nurture our witness to the world. We understand that our churches, together, comprise the Body of Christ on this earth, and in any given community, the churches should stand as a sign of the coming kingdom, prefiguring God’s reign on earth by words and deeds that disrupt the status quo and prepare God’s way.

Classic Reformed definitions of economic morality come from the Westminster Larger Catechism:

Question 141. What are the duties required in the Eighth Commandment? (Thou shalt not steal)

Answer: The duties required in the Eighth Commandment are: truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce ...; rendering to every one [their] due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections, concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose of those things which are necessary and convenient for the sustenance of our nature...; a lawful calling, and a diligence in it; frugality; avoiding unnecessary lawsuits...; and an endeavor by all just and lawful means to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.

Question 142. What are the sins forbidden in the Eighth Commandment?

Answer: ...besides the neglect of duties required...: theft, robbery, man-stealing, and receiving anything that is stolen; fraudulent dealing, false weights and measures, removing landmarks, injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts... or in matters of trust; oppression, extortion, usury, bribery, vexatious lawsuits, unjust enclosures and depopulations; engrossing commodities to enhance the price, unlawful callings, and all other ... ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor what belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves; covetousness, inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods...; envying at the prosperity of others; as likewise idleness, prodigality, wasteful gaming, and all other ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate; and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God hath given us.”

These detailed lists embody the Reformed tradition’s high regard for careful regulation, based on Calvin’s understanding of the positive role of law as a guide to the elect, as we seek a life consistent with our values.

Yet more and more, our churches are infected with the values of the world, rejecting Christ and standing apart from God, without heeding God’s word in any serious or consistent way. Too often, instead of comforting the afflicted and welcoming those rejected by society, our churches operate as self-serving enclaves of spiritual uplift for the already well-off. Yet from Jesus’s example, and certainly from the meaning of his sacrifice on the cross, the church should have much more to give in such a broken world. The quiet rectitude we find in many of our churches is not sufficient even for the spiritual needs of today, let alone the material needs.

To put this vision of stewardship and communion into practice, we must apply the principles of God’s economy in a reconstructive way, uplifting the key societal domains in which God’s love for humanity is especially rooted: work and family, the plight of neighbors, the natural world and future generations, and the wounded church itself. Before we act to heal our broken communion, however, we must understand how these key domains of God’s love are embattled in our economy.

## PART TWO: EMBATTLED DOMAINS OF GOD’S LOVE

### A. *The Crisis of Work*

#### 1. *Work in God’s Economy*

We must remember that in God’s economy, “my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain...” (Isa. 65: 22–23). For our economy, this is a question not just of the availability of jobs but of their quality. If many workers find that their compensation is not enough to support their households in dignity, then the economy must be judged as morally deficient. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can bring meaningful resources to bear on the current crisis if we pay attention to our traditions. As Reformed Christians, we must acknowledge that the well-being of individuals, families, and our country is threatened by long-term unemployment and underemployment. Calvin, after averring that human work is ordained by God, writes, “But what if work is removed? That would throw human life into ruin.”<sup>10</sup> When we acknowledge that work is crucial to our human identity we must realize that being without work is damaging not only economically but psychologically and spiritually as well. And if we claim that every person’s work is important to the well-being of our community, we must realize that the loss of any person’s contributions is damaging to the whole.

#### 2. *Work in Today’s Economy*

##### a. *Employment and Wages*

Of all the issues prompting dissatisfaction with current economic policy, none looms so large as the loss of jobs. While some economic indicators have begun to rebound from the depths of several years ago, the unemployment rate has remained frustratingly high. Understandably, for many, such a “jobless recovery” is no recovery at all.

Across the 2000s, there was no net job creation in the United States, and by the fall of 2011 we had approximately 4.5 unemployed workers for every available job.<sup>11</sup> At the beginning of 2012, between those looking for jobs (12.8 million), those working part time involuntarily (8.2 million), and those working-age people who have dropped out of the workforce all together (2.8 million), our “total” unemployment rate was approximately 15.6 percent.<sup>12</sup> Disturbingly, more than 40 percent of the unemployed have been jobless for twenty-seven weeks or more, many at high risk of never working regularly again.<sup>13</sup> Even more troubling, youth unemployment, among those between 16 and 24 years old, reached 17.3 percent in 2011, a thirty-year high. For African Americans, the rate is twice as high. For all young people, the employment-population ratio (meaning the percentage of young people with jobs) fell to 49 percent in the summer of 2011, the lowest rate on record.<sup>14</sup> It is no coincidence that many young people of all races choose underground economic activity, and a significant share end up in prison, including approximately 10 percent of young black men.<sup>15</sup>

Financial hardship and lost output are not the only costs of unemployment on this scale. Unemployment has massive social costs as well, taking its toll, most obviously, on public resources, but also on the well-being of families and communities, and on the deeper fabric of society. Marital problems, deferred child-bearing, declining physical and mental health, loss of trust in communities and institutions, and declining civic engagement—all are common byproducts of unemployment. This is not to mention the patterns of social unrest particularly associated with youth unemployment, visible not only in the Middle East but, increasingly, in Europe. It should be noted that when the riots broke out in England in the summer of 2011, the youth unemployment rate was 19.6 percent, not much higher than in the United States today.<sup>16</sup>

While the spike in unemployment seems to be a recent phenomenon, we’ve had a crisis in job quality unfolding for decades. Over the last thirty-five years, average wages have stagnated for many Americans and declined for a significant minority. Real average hourly wages rose only 0.5 percent between 1973 and 2006, and for those with only a high school diploma, real earnings have actually fallen.<sup>17</sup> Even median household income, despite a large spike in total household work hours, has not improved very much. Adjusted for inflation, it was approximately \$44,000 in 1980, and \$50,000 in 2008.<sup>18</sup> Job quality should also be measured in terms of health and retirement benefits. But because of their major impact on household living standards, we consider these trends in the next section, on the crisis of the family.

#### b. *Causes of the Jobs Crisis, and Alternative Approaches*

The reasons for the national decline in both job availability and job quality are multiple and complex. Certainly outsourcing and automation have eliminated many jobs. Consensus numbers on outsourcing have been elusive. The estimates for outsourced jobs to date range from 300,000 to nearly a million; the most cited estimate for projected losses, from 2002, is 3.3 million service jobs over 15 years.<sup>19</sup> But it is increasingly clear that automation may be the bigger factor in declining job availability. To take just one example, in 1955, General Motors produced eight cars for every employee; in 2009, it produced twenty-seven cars per employee (while it’s overall output declined by more than half).<sup>20</sup> Amid such competitive pressures from technological productivity and low-wage workers overseas, we now have more than four job-seekers for every available job, as noted above. Even the much touted “education premium” in our economy—which led many to focus on educational access as our new “jobs policy” in the 1990s—may now be fading. After rising sharply in the 1980s and 1990s, the wage gap between college-educated and high school-educated workers was more or less flat across the 2000s.<sup>21</sup> As outsourcing and automation (and the two in combination, through information networks) begin to reach further into white collar sectors, amid potentially very slow growth in the overall economy, the average college graduate (without highly specialized knowledge) may even end up more vulnerable than high-school-educated workers (or those with some college) employed in non-exportable domestic sectors that could continue to grow, such as health care, security, energy, transportation, construction, and maintenance.

While our primary focus must be unemployment and job quality, we should also continue to affirm (as we have in the past) that not all meaningful labor takes place within the confines of what is commonly understood as economic activity. Many varieties of labor, including care for our families and our neighbors, are undervalued in our dominant economic rubric based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Some estimates find that the non-market “care economy,” including the human wealth created by child development in our homes, congregations, and other community settings, is potentially half as large as GDP itself and more important for future well-being than many other, more celebrated economic activities such as financial trading.<sup>22</sup> We should be creative in thinking about ways to compensate those whose most productive labor comes in unpaid positions, including provision for basic needs they often cannot access without paid employment, such as health care and retirement benefits.

We can provide creative thinking about job creation as well. When so much attention has been devoted to jobs in the private sector, we should be vocal in our contention that the primary function of work is to provide for the common good, not only for the marketplace. As such, public jobs programs for green renovation, repairing infrastructure, and building schools and other public facilities, may be the type of jobs policy that is most consistent with our theological commitments.

And finally, we must use our collective theological wisdom to refute some fundamental notions about the American economy. As Christians, we must privately and publicly challenge the idea that profit is the pre-eminent value of human economic activity. Economic life cannot be separated from our duties and responsibilities to God and to our neighbors, and a person’s labor is finally judged, Calvin writes, by “whether it is good and profitable for the common good, and whether his neighbors

may fare the better by it.”<sup>23</sup> So too, a society may be judged by the availability of work for its people, and the sufficiency of those jobs for human flourishing. Over decades and now with particularly severe consequences, we have failed in these responsibilities in our governance and as a people, and this must change.

### 3. *Church Policy and the Meaning of Work*

The witness of the Presbyterian church has remained consistent with these emphases on work as part of our identity and as necessarily contributive to the common good. And such witness has been clear in stating that unemployment necessarily undermines these theological convictions. The 1985 report *Toward a Just, Caring and Dynamic Political Economy* states, “...unemployment robs its victims not only of income but also of one of the principal sources of meaning in his or her life. After all, the Calvinist sense of Christian vocation and worth is tied tightly to work.”<sup>24</sup> The report goes on to note how widespread unemployment acutely damages the common good by wasting human potential.

In *God’s Work in Our Hands* (1996) the church supported the following principles on job quality:

—The foundation upon which all just employment policies are built is access to employment at a level of compensation that allows people to live in dignity and security . . . .

—All conditions of paid employment, including compensation and working conditions, should sustain and nurture the dignity of individuals, the well-being of households and families, the social cohesiveness of communities, and the integrity of the global environment.<sup>25</sup>

Echoing the prophetic *Social Creed of 1908*, which called for full and safe employment with social protections, twenty-five years before the New Deal, *A Social Creed for the 21st Century* (approved by the 2008 General Assembly) reaffirms a commitment to “employment for all, at a family-sustaining, living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.”<sup>14</sup>

We have set a theological mandate for ourselves. If we take seriously our theological commitment to work, we have to understand widespread unemployment as a significant theological challenge. When our tradition places such a high value on work, because it contributes significantly both to our individual well-being and the well-being of our communities, we cannot ignore the ethical challenges posed by the increasing possibility that our neighbors may be unable to find meaningful jobs.

## B. *Families in Need*

### 1. *Families in God’s Economy*

The importance of family life in God’s ordering of community underlies the entirety of scripture. We see the importance of family life, for example, in the creation stories in Genesis (Gen. 2:18), the celebration of family heritage through long lists of “begats” (Gen. 11), in the stories of family love and loyalty under conditions of deep distress (Ruth 1:16), and in the stories of disruption and betrayal in family clans, leading to social unraveling (Gen. 27:18). The New Testament delights us with stories of Jesus’ birth and childhood (Matthew 2, Lk. 2:41) and engages us with scenes of his mother’s concern for him (Mt. 12:46). Jesus himself warns against those who would despise and harm children (Mt. 18:5–10) and challenges us with his expansion of the term “family” beyond biological ties (Mt. 12:48–50). While we no longer accept slavery or the patriarchal ordering of families assumed in biblical cultures, we understand that families are still the original human community and the one best suited for compassionate care and nurture of the person, through all the stages of life. As in the days of large extended households and interconnected clans, it is still true that families’ ability to do these things requires the support of both public and private social institutions.

### 2. *Families in Today’s Economy*

The recent recession has greatly expanded the number of families hit by economic pressures that threaten and distort family life. Reduced wages and benefits, increased job insecurity, and job loss are the primary predictors of health problems, higher mortality rates, sleep disturbances, depression, and family conflict. Every recession brings increases in domestic violence.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, a slowing economy weakens the capacity of social institutions to respond. Businesses react by cutting labor costs and governments react by cutting public benefits. Workers and their families bear most of the losses and most of the risk in a volatile economy, with devastating consequences for many, especially for the poor.

#### a. *Families Lose Income*

Long term trends, as well as the recent recession, have caused household income to stagnate or fall, except at the top. Between 1979 and 2009, the poorest 20 percent of families lost real income (-7.4 percent); the middle 20 percent saw an increase of only 11.3 percent; while the wealthiest 20 percent, in contrast, saw significant gains, averaging 49 percent.<sup>28</sup> We have noted that most families responded to lost or stagnant income by adding work hours, taking on debt, or (most often) a combination of both.

Yet, despite these prevalent (if unsustainable) income maintenance strategies, it is estimated that 30 percent of working families with children (and over 50 percent of Black and Hispanic families) do not earn enough to reliably provide the basic necessities for a moderate standard of living.<sup>29</sup> The result is that families live with both greater time stress, including less time



for family life, and greater economic insecurity. Shockingly, most middle-income families do not have financial assets sufficient to pay for even 75 percent of basic essentials should their income stop for three months.<sup>30</sup> Many of us are one illness, job loss, or unexpected family crisis away from serious economic trouble.

b. *Risking Our Children's Futures*

After dropping to a low of 39 percent by 2000, the percent of children living in low-income families rose to 42 percent (more than 31 million children) in 2009.<sup>31</sup> Twenty-five percent of very young children (under six) are now living in poverty, an alarming fact given that the greatest threat to the healthy development of children is poverty and its long-lasting, negative consequences: inadequate amounts and quality of food, exposure to violence, underfunded schools and lack of early childhood educational opportunities, frequent housing mobility, exposure to pollution and other health risks.<sup>32</sup> Most low-income families have at least one adult in the workforce. As they tighten their own budgets, public funding for early childhood education, public schools, childcare support, after-school programs, and summer activities that support children's development dry up causing children to lose ground developmentally as families lose ground economically. According to the Foundation for Child Development, the recession and slow recovery we are facing today could jeopardize "virtually all progress made for children in the Family Economic Well-being Domain since 1975," bringing declines in every variable measured in that domain.<sup>33</sup>

Among family types, single mother families have, by far, the highest rate of poverty. Women, in general, are more likely than men to be poor because women earn about 77 cents for each dollar earned by a male worker.<sup>34</sup> Women tend to be segregated into lower-paid, "pink-collar" occupations, and women bear a much larger share of responsibility for children than do men.<sup>35</sup> As always, race/ethnicity makes a difference. Hispanic women have the lowest earnings, \$509 per week, which is 59.8 percent of the median weekly earnings of White men. African American women's median weekly wage is \$592, 69.6 percent of that of White men.<sup>36</sup> While more White children live in poverty than do children of other races, the highest rates of child poverty are among young children and among Black, Hispanic and Native American families.<sup>37</sup>

c. *Marriage Delayed or Out of Reach*

In the last decade households headed by single mothers increased by 18 percent, while those headed by married couples declined to 48 percent of American households.<sup>38</sup> Part of the decline in married couple families can be explained by the postponement of marriage. Seeking more education and economic stability, the age of first marriage has risen to 28 for men and 26 for women.<sup>39</sup> But unmarried child-bearing is more likely among economically disadvantaged couples who also equate readiness to marry with one or both partners having a good job. Few impoverished couples are able to meet this criterion, but of those who do, a large majority marries. As one study of unmarried couples with children concludes, "... the inability to get decent paying jobs is a real constraint to marriage among low income unmarried parents."<sup>40</sup>

d. *Work and Family Conflict*

American workers, both women and men, report much higher levels of work-family conflict than do workers of other modern nations.<sup>41</sup> Major causes of this conflict are longer work hours and balancing the schedules of two working parents. At the same time, the United States lacks the network of family-supporting public policies typically found in other modern nations. For example, we are the only advanced nation without a federally mandated paid parental leave policy. The Family and Medical Leave Act (1993) provides twelve weeks of unpaid leave and covers only 50 percent of U.S. workers.<sup>42</sup> Yet, 70 percent of children live in families in which all adults are employed; 25 percent of adult children care for a dependent elder.<sup>43</sup> The care needs of children and elders clearly exceed the minimal public support employed family caregivers get from public policy. In the mismatch between family needs and work demands, employers expect more than forty hours of work from higher-wage and managerial workers. They expect lower-wage workers to work only when they are needed and whenever they are needed, including mandatory overtime, or risk losing their jobs. Family time and care for dependents suffer as a result, with heavy personal and social costs.

e. *Rising Health-Care Costs Shifted onto Workers*

In 1979, most non-elderly Americans (over 70 percent) were covered by employer-sponsored health insurance. Today that share has shrunk to 58.9 percent, leaving more families to the mercy of the health-care marketplace where medical costs and insurance premiums have rapidly increased even as wages stagnated. In 2010, 49.1 million people under 65 were uninsured, an increase of 12.9 million since 2000.<sup>44</sup> The loss of employer-provided health insurance falls most heavily on the families of low-wage workers, especially Black and Hispanic families and families headed by single mothers. About 10 percent of children remain uninsured nationwide, but these numbers are likely to grow as public health programs are targeted for budget cuts under one or another fiscal austerity plan.<sup>45</sup>

f. *Retirement Insecurity*

The expectation that a worker should stop working in old age and enjoy a few years of leisure before death is supported in Christian ethics and by our culture. A combination of Social Security, pension income, and savings would support this deserved ease. Today, retirement security is dangerously at risk.

The first pillar of retirement, savings, has almost completely eroded. Decades of stagnant wages, reduced benefits, and unemployment have brought the personal savings rate below 5 percent and family debt is at an all-time high. The second pillar, employment pensions, is also crumbling. Pension coverage through employer-provided plans has been on a steady decline for three decades (from 50.6 percent of workers in 1979 to 42.8 percent today).<sup>46</sup> And for most workers with pension coverage, there has been a shift from defined-benefit plans (contractually guaranteed by employers) to defined-contribution plans, such as 401(k)s. This transformation has shifted the burden of retirement security from government and employers to families and individuals: retirement now depends on families' abilities to save while working, invest successfully, and retire in a bull market—a much riskier proposition for all but the most affluent. The recent deep recession exposed families' vulnerability to a retirement dependent on a volatile stock market.<sup>47</sup> As a result, retirement, like any other investment, is now exposed to market risk. In a recent poll, 61 percent of people aged 44–75 said that they feared depleting all their assets more than they feared dying.<sup>48</sup> The *Wall Street Journal* reported that the median household headed by someone aged 60–62, with a 401K plan, had less than a quarter of what was needed to sustain its standard of living in retirement.<sup>49</sup> The Center for Retirement Research estimates that less than half of American workers will have enough retirement income to support an adequate standard of living.<sup>50</sup>

Social Security, the third pillar of retirement, is the one source of retirement income working families can count on. It is not in crisis. Social Security has the capacity to pay all benefits in full through 2036. After that it will still be able to pay 75–78 percent of scheduled benefits, and there are equitable ways of closing this gap—most feasibly, raising or eliminating the cap on wages subject to the Social Security tax. However, strengthening Social Security for the future is not a panacea for retirement insecurity. On average, Social Security benefits replace only 39 percent of pre-retirement income (an average of \$14,000 annually)<sup>51</sup>; and high unemployment during this recession, as well as the long-term trends of stagnant wages and low-wage work, have only further weakened Social Security benefits, particularly among racial/ethnic groups and women.

### 3. *Church Policies for Strengthening the Family*

*Transforming Families*, approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), expressed the conviction that families, supported by both religious and social institutions, have the primary responsibility to care for their members, “building up one another within their families,” and to promote “virtues and habits that make for healthy and stable families and communities.”<sup>52</sup> The church understands healthy families to be essential to the well-being of society. It also recognized that families do not exist as autonomous, independent units; rather, “... government and corporate policies and programs have profound effects on family life, for good and for ill, intended and unintended. ...”<sup>53</sup>

Recognizing that economic stress and deprivation have serious negative effects on the development of children and on family stability, the church called for support of “public policies that encourage strong family life and remove impediments that families face in living out their full vocation.”<sup>54</sup> Specifically, *Transforming Families* called for jobs with family sustaining wages, adequate and affordable child-care, paid-leave for the care of dependents, flexible work hours, and other family supporting policies.<sup>55</sup> Clearly, the PC(USA) places the support of strong and healthy families as one of the essential goals of economic life and public policies.

## C. *The Plight of Neighbors*

### 1. *Neighbors in God's Economy*

Who are our neighbors? A Jewish lawyer once asked Jesus a similar question. Jesus replied by telling him the story of a Jewish man who was robbed, stripped, and left for dead while traveling on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Another man came to the assistance of the traveler, as he would have with a neighbor. Notably, he was not a fellow Jew, but a Samaritan (Lk 10:25–37). The parable answers the interlocutor's question by suggesting that our neighbors are those around us who are in need.

In these difficult economic times, it follows from biblical tradition that our neighbors are those who are hardest hit. In the United States today, racial and ethnic minority communities are the hardest hit, and racial and ethnic differences tend to magnify the negative effects of economic downturns. For the church, love of neighbors means crossing a number of deep racial divides.

### 2. *The Plight of our Neighbors Today*

#### a. *Poverty and Wealth: the Racial Divide*

Racial/ethnic minority populations are the poorest in our nation. In 2009, the poverty rate for Blacks was 25.8 percent and for Hispanics 25.3 percent, compared to 9.4 percent for non-Hispanic Whites and 12.5 percent for Asians. Poverty rates are also higher for those who are foreign-born versus those who are native-born. In 2009, the poverty rate among foreign born was 19.0 percent, compared to 12.6 percent for native born. The poverty rate was highest for those who are foreign born non-citizens: 25.1 percent.

We have noted the wage gap for racial minorities, especially women, but the racial wealth gap is even larger and more debilitating. By any measure, people of color possess much less wealth than Whites. In 2007, the median family net worth for all groups was \$120,300. Like median income measures, this number masks considerable variation among subgroups. The median net worth for White families was \$170,400 while for non-white Hispanics families it was \$27,800, less than 17 percent of what White families had.<sup>56</sup> In the wake of the Great Recession, 25 percent of households, overall, now have zero or negative net worth, compared to 35 percent of Black households and 31 percent of Hispanic households (as of 2009). Home ownership, often the only source of wealth in minority communities, is also skewed along racial/ethnic lines. In 2000, nearly three-quarters of Whites owned their home while just 46 percent of Blacks and also 46 percent of Hispanics were homeowners.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, between 2005 and 2009, while White household wealth fell by about 16 percent, black household wealth fell by 53 percent and Hispanic households lost 66 percent of their wealth.<sup>58</sup>

#### b. *Financial Segregation*

These racial divides in income and wealth are created, in part, by exploitative lending and financial services in minority communities. Lack of access to credit on favorable terms hinders the ability of low-income and minority communities to achieve financial stability. Assets act as an anchor that enables households to weather short-term job loss and unexpected expenses, such as those related to health. They can also serve as capital for starting or expanding small businesses. Minority communities, however, are generally blocked from participating in wealth-building activities on favorable terms.

Take personal savings as an example. Personal savings are a gateway to building wealth. Yet, an estimated 56 million individuals in the U.S., primarily from minority and low-income families, do not have a bank account, much less a savings account.<sup>46</sup> The checks received by these families include government checks for Social Security benefits, welfare benefits under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Supplemental Security Income. Consumer groups report that among the reasons these families do not have bank accounts are high service charges, minimum balance requirements, and a mistrust of financial institutions. These families are forced to use high-cost cash-checking services to meet their basic needs, diminishing their ability to save and build assets.<sup>48</sup>

Without access to traditional financial lenders, minority and low-income communities often turn to predatory lenders. Predatory lending occurs when the terms of the loan harms borrowers and creates a negative net social benefit. Examples of predatory lending practices include making loans without regard for the borrower's ability to repay; frequent refinancing that allows lenders to accumulate costly refinancing fees; loan approvals dependent on more borrowing than the customer needs or desires; and steering prime-eligible customers into high-cost loans.<sup>49</sup> Sub-prime loans, one example of predatory lending, were designed for borrowers who could not obtain "prime" loans because of poverty, credit blemishes, or irregular incomes.<sup>50</sup> While they can work to the benefit of borrower and lender, they are often structured to inflict disproportional harm on borrowers. Low-income borrowers often forsake necessities such as heat in the winter, health insurance, or home repairs to avoid default and foreclosure. Moreover, many of these homeowners are often left without legal recourse. The result of such predatory lending practices is a surge in bankruptcies, foreclosures, and abandoned houses in neighborhoods that were once stable. Thus, predatory lenders, which disproportionately target minority communities, extract borrower equity, plunder city investments, and leave abandoned and deteriorated neighborhoods in their wake.

#### c. *The Black Unemployment Crisis*

Our racial and ethnic minority neighbors also face higher unemployment than the rest of the population. In July 2011, the unemployment rate for Whites was 8.2 percent, while for Blacks it was 16.8 percent and for Hispanics it was 11.3 percent.<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, the falling unemployment rate beginning in 2011 masks a racial gap. The unemployment rate for Whites decreased from 8.8 percent in January 2011. But for Blacks it rose from 16.5 to 16.8 percent. While there have long been disparities between White and minority employment, the 2011 unemployment trends reveal that economic downturns often make these existing inequalities even worse.

#### d. *Strangers in a Divided Land*

Immigrants are also our neighbors, and yet current immigration policies and popular attitudes make life difficult for immigrants. Several prevalent myths about the impact of immigration prevent solidarity with foreign-born neighbors.

While we often hear that "immigrants take good jobs from Americans," in fact, immigrants tend to be concentrated in high and low skilled work that complements rather than competes with jobs held by native workers. A more educated and aging U.S. population means that citizens are unwilling or unable to take low-paying jobs often filled by immigrants. Employers hire immigrants to fill the void. This makes it easier, of course, for U.S. employers to exploit workers, and U.S. citizens generally benefit from low prices on food and other goods and services produced by immigrants working in exploitative conditions. On the other side of the spectrum, immigrant entrepreneurs create businesses and jobs for U.S. and foreign workers. High-tech companies founded by Indian and Chinese immigrants have generated billions in sales and created thousands of jobs in the United States.

We also hear that “immigrants are a burden to taxpayers and the system.” In fact, most immigrants pay sales, income, property, and other forms of taxes, as do many undocumented immigrants. In 2010, it is estimated that undocumented immigrant households paid \$11.2 billion in state and local taxes.<sup>64</sup> Other studies show a substantial net surplus in federal taxes paid, compared to benefits received, by undocumented immigrant households (native-born children included in many cases).<sup>64</sup> Moreover, because of low fertility rates and the increasing number of retiring baby boomers, immigrant workers are likely to be of increasing importance not only for our economy but for our social insurance system. Younger immigrant workers already are and will continue to support retired baby boomers through their Social Security taxes.

In a pluralistic society like ours, racial disparities in employment, income, and wealth reflect a failure of democracy and a state of broken communion with our neighbors. Being a good neighbor, in the biblical sense, means challenging the ways in which our current economic system perpetuates inequalities along racial/ethnic lines, and exploits our immigrant neighbors as if God never told us to welcome strangers in our land. For the churches of the one God, there is no surer sign of our broken communion than this.

### 3. *Church Policies for Helping our Neighbors*

Our church has previously addressed the plight of neighbors with an emphasis on racial, class, and gender barriers, and how these barriers marginalize people and communities. Here, we emphasize how the recent and widespread economic crisis disproportionately affected such communities, but it is important to understand the historic patterns, which reflect a more permanent state of crisis in many communities, now further compounded.

On race and inequality, the 2011th General Assembly (1999) left an important mark with two major reports: *Building Community Among Strangers* is the church’s most detailed and richly grounded study of racial and cultural conflict, contrasted with the goodness of social diversity in God’s eyes and the Christian necessity of welcoming strangers. A second report, *Fighting Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, is a fine-grained study of the more structural rather than personal forms of racism in contemporary America. An ambitious plan for educating ourselves and for action by the church accompanied the study, calling for efforts to acknowledge and uproot continuing racism, particularly in its institutional forms.

Both of these reports provide important, still relevant background for our analysis of the plight of neighbors in the contemporary economic crisis. Racial disadvantage in particular is clearly a compounding factor in this economic downturn and a barrier to normal recovery in many communities. Although the economic problems we focus on here are notable for their widespread impact, reaching far into the middle class, racial division and differences remain acutely in force among a substantial minority of our population, inflicting deeper and more prolonged economic distress. In these distressing facts we can see that there are degrees of broken communion, which should shape our priorities in response.

## D. *Future Generations*

### 1. *Future Generations in God’s Economy*

“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). As Christians, we are called to be stewards of the earth both for ourselves and for future generations. Understanding the earth not as our property but as a trust from God, we can consider sustainability from the standpoint of creation.

As Christians, our ethic of environmental sustainability is derived from Scripture, beginning with Genesis 1:31, when at the end of the sixth day of creation “God saw everything that he had made and indeed, it was very good.” Then God created the first man and woman and the human race, making us stewards of creation to “till and keep” it for ourselves and for future generations. The emergence of monotheism, which provides a central ordering principle for natural phenomena, is sometimes seen to support a gradual “disenchantment” of nature, intensifying in the rise of science, modernity, and the industrialization that massively impacts the earth’s “carrying capacity.” Early Mosaic law attempted to restrain both human and natural exploitation, leaving some of each harvest for gleaners and calling for periodic debt forgiveness. An awareness of sustainability issues can even be seen in the Torah’s rules of war, including prohibitions against tactical deforestation and against using food trees to build siege-works (Deut. 20:19–20). Repeated prophetic assertions of injustice’s consequences for future generations (such as Isa. 24: 5–7, 10–11) reflect an understanding of systemic impacts over time, or social sustainability.

In addition to the Sabbath and Jubilee traditions of the Old Testament, the New Testament language of “God so loved the world”—“cosmos” in the Greek—points to a vision of salvation capped by Revelation’s “new heaven and new earth,” where the new Jerusalem is part city and part garden, Eden restored, to match the “new creation” redeemed in Christ. The groaning of creation in Romans 8 is answered by the unity of creation of Colossians 1, seen by some as a vision of a Cosmic Christ.<sup>66</sup>

Ethicist Larry Rasmussen surveys the ecumenical debates over stewardship and sustainability in response to the complex interactions of natural and human systems, such as the impact of sea level change on migration patterns and social conflict. He writes:

Sustainability means thinking sideways and around corners, not just up and down in hierarchies or forward and back in our usual sense of time and history. ... Thinking inside multiple connections does not mean we cannot act, only that the subject of thought is the entanglement of relevant wholes rather than pieces and parts.... Sustainability thinking means latitude for both error and adaptability. ...<sup>67</sup>

Rasmussen reviews data on how natural balances are in fact more dynamic than static; catastrophe comes when apparent equilibria become overloaded, but this overloading takes place incrementally. Traditional economic models may leave out “externalities,” or natural endowments of air, water, or land that are undervalued or excluded from market calculations and often polluted unless regulation or taxation require these values to be “internalized” in prices.

Economist Herman Daly presents the alternative to conventional growth most starkly, calling for a “steady state economy” that would be dynamic yet focused on minimizing “throughput” and recovering all waste products.<sup>68</sup> On this model we borrow resources from the natural stock and return them on various schedules, using new forms of measurement that lift up social and environmental health rather than aggregate production or consumption.

Rasmussen and others look toward a vision of earth partnership as much as stewardship, and in line with this report’s vision of communion, a wide range of Christian thinkers—from eco-feminists to Eastern Orthodox—seek to recover a relational and sacramental approach to life in harmony with nature. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda goes precisely toward a concept of “sacramental cosmic communio” going back to Luther’s understanding of the Spirit of Christ indwelling in nature.<sup>69</sup> Greek Orthodox Metropolitan John D. Zizioulas applies a traditional understanding of humans as “priests of creation,” not to worship creation, but to help it reflect God’s glory and to help heal its wounds.<sup>70</sup>

In these uncertain times, Presbyterians emphasize that God is sovereign and it is God’s peace (“shalom”) that the church should seek to embody. This is a distinctive hope for the future, but not an otherworldly one. Biblical symbols of the economy of Shalom are the Garden of Eden and the coming of God’s kingdom or reign, which is prefigured by observance of the Sabbath.<sup>71</sup> In an economy of Shalom, God’s grace surrounds creation and ensures that there is enough to share. Sabbath-keeping reclaims time for worship and enjoyment of nature rather than consumption and rivalry, thereby modeling social sustainability.

The modern definition of sustainable development comes from the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, named the “Brundtland Commission” after its Norwegian chairperson. The commission defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.” This definition was well-intended but inadequate because it defines sustainability strictly in terms of human needs, and can sometimes seem a contradiction in terms.<sup>72</sup> We recognize, instead, that environmental limits set the boundaries for sustainable development along with human needs, and for wealthy countries, in particular, environmental limits require a rethinking of how we define human needs and how success and happiness in our culture are too often defined by unsustainable levels of consumption.

## 2. *Today’s Unsustainable Economy*

If “needs” are defined by current U.S. standards of consumption, meeting such needs worldwide today would require resources and sink capacities equal to five planet Earths, according to the widely used “ecological footprint” methodology.<sup>73</sup> The average American consumes 500 more calories per day in 2008 compared to 1970. More than 73 percent of Americans are overweight or obese; at the same time, 26 percent of food is wasted at the consumer level. In 2000, per capita U.S. consumption of all materials was 52 percent higher than the European average; in 2009 only 1.1 lbs of municipal solid waste was recycled for every 4.3 lbs generated daily by the average American. Between 1950 and 2000, average home size increased by 120 percent, while average occupancy decreased by 22 percent. Closely related, energy use per capita increased by one-third between 1950 and 1980, and remains 25 percent higher in 2010 compared to 1950—a slight moderation for the better, mostly due to improved efficiency, but still a large-order shift given our reliance (mainly) on nonrenewable energy sources.<sup>74</sup>

Excessive consumption in wealthy societies and rapid economic development in Asia and other parts of the world are pushing our planet into ecological crisis. We are facing staggering biodiversity loss, with approximately “21 percent of all known mammals, 30 percent of all known amphibians, 12 percent of all known birds, 35 percent of conifers and cycads, 17 percent of sharks, and 27 percent of reef-building corals” now threatened with extinction, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.<sup>75</sup> Global fish populations are in steep, rapid decline, with a potentially “catastrophic” collapse of 100 percent of currently fished species by 2048.<sup>76</sup> Scientists now count more than 400 coastal “dead zones” caused by fertilizer run-off and other pollutants—including one extending 7,500 square miles from the mouth of the Mississippi River. While we have seen improvements in air and water quality in the United States in recent decades, due to aggressive environmental regulation, many of our ecosystems are in deep trouble. We have severe pressure on freshwater systems and soil quality in drier regions of the United States—40 percent of U.S. land is categorized as vulnerable to desertification by the Bureau of Land Management. Global warming poses the biggest, potentially catastrophic problems, as heat-trapping gases threaten environmental changes ranging from severe, unpredictable weather patterns, to rising sea levels, to acidification, desertification, and other life-threatening changes in our ecosystems.

The United States has been the driver of global consumption and has set an unsustainable standard in its fixation on limitless consumption. We have 4 percent of the world's population but consume roughly 25 percent of the world's resources, while also producing roughly 25 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Our "ecological footprint"—the amount of resources and sink capacity we use to support our per capita consumption—is among the highest in the world and significantly higher than many countries with similar standards of living. For example, Dutch living standards are roughly similar to ours, but with an ecological footprint more than 40 percent smaller.

Our ecological debts are compounded by mounting social liabilities in our population and communities, even as our federal revenue has remained essentially frozen at mid-twentieth century levels. Under these constraints, particularly given the added pressure of military buildup in the 1980s and the rising costs of entitlements, our nondefense discretionary spending (our social spending) fell by 36 percent between 1980 and 2000. On this trend, large-scale declines in social well-being are likely, because we are weakening our ability to invest in knowledge and technological innovation, early childhood development and education, improved infrastructure for commercial and social needs, and other key forms of human, social, and public capital for our future prosperity and solvency as a nation. Disturbingly, based on previous failures of austerity-based policies, the current dominant prescription for our emerging fiscal problems—lower taxes and massive spending cuts—seems only likely to further weaken our ability to invest in future productivity, wealth-creation, and well-being.

### 3. *Church Policies for Sustainability*

The church's most recent statement on sustainability issues, "The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming," approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), recommended specific practices and policies to support a major "green transition" toward renewable energy use. Fossil fuels, primary sources of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, were to be used as frugally as possible with advocacy for incentives and taxes to shift public investment and recover clean-up and public health costs. Given the still-unsolved problem of waste disposal and its capital and insurance costs, nuclear power was not seen as a solution. Major shifts in transportation of food as well as people, and in power generation, agriculture, industry, and urban planning were seen as vital to slowing the increase in earth's temperature.

As we turn now to the threats to the church's own life, we recognize in the current recession that few congregations have been able to retrofit, re-equip, or even redevelop their buildings with the newest energy-efficient technologies. Further, some congregations, camps, and conference centers have been approached by companies seeking to "frack" or use hydraulic fracturing technology to extract natural gas from their properties, a tempting option in this economy, despite growing documentation of serious groundwater risks.<sup>77</sup>

## E. *Wounded Church*

### 1. *The Church in God's Economy*

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul reminds us that we, like they, are called into the church as fellow "citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone" (Eph. 2:19–20). In Christ the walls of our divisions have been broken down. In Christ Jesus, we find our common purpose, as "the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord," (Eph. 2:21) and we too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit (Eph. 2:19–22). To the Corinthians Paul writes: "the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. . . . God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member . . . [that] the members may have the same care for one another" (1 Cor. 12: 22–25) This God-designed community that we work to establish within our church walls is a community we are called to replicate in the world at large, preparing a way, and preparing ourselves, for the coming reign of God. As Calvin writes, "... it appears that the name of neighbor is not confined to our kindred or people who live near us, or with whom we have connections, but extends to the whole human race."<sup>78</sup>

### 2. *The Church in Economic Crisis*

#### a. *Economic Impacts on the Church*

The Great Recession hit the Presbyterian church just like it did other American institutions. The crisis affects church budgets and church relationships. Although church giving is motivated by faith, the amount of giving is based partly on income. When income falls during a recession, church giving falls, even without faith wavering. But cyclical ups and downs of giving only tell part of the story of the church's embattlement in our economy. Other longer trends are more troubling: church closings and mergers, large inequalities among congregations and in pastoral compensation, loss of racial diversity, radically reduced funding for global mission, service ministries, and national church agencies, and the use of secular practices in employment and compensation. We must consider the possibility that these trends manifest an even deeper, if hidden, wounding—injuries brought on ourselves by an unrecognized captivity to cultural and economic norms.

Statistically, on average, Presbyterians may be the wealthiest U.S. Christians—largely due to our older age and high levels of education. And yet we have deep divisions among our congregations, with 44 percent unable to afford "full-time, installed" ministers with full benefits, even as some of our churches use private recruiting firms and pay six-figure salaries to

head pastors.<sup>79</sup> How does such inequality illustrate the biblical vision of one body, one holy temple in the Lord? This is a question the church has found hard to address honestly. Meaningful revenue-sharing or revolving fund models to share congregational wealth across social divides, as Paul suggested to the Corinthians, are not widely practiced among us. Yet it is churches in lower-income neighborhoods, ministering to those with the least economic resources, which suffer most from economic stress and the broader trends of denominational decline, as decreasing national giving reduces the congregational subsidies and services that could be provided by the wider church.

Amid the stark divides between our rich and poor churches, we see that the wider “middle” of the church is struggling, too. Current data from Presbyterian Research Services point to a striking indicator: in 2010, median church membership was only 95. Attendance numbers are smaller, meaning that critical mass and ability to sustain a full-time, installed pastor is lacking in perhaps as many as 50 percent of congregations.<sup>80</sup> Not surprisingly, a recent survey suggests that the financial crisis was another shock to the system, with approximately 20 percent of responding congregations reporting being very hard hit.<sup>81</sup> As families have struggled to maintain themselves, sending most wives and mothers into the workforce, church members have lost the time to volunteer their skills and talents. The Barna Institute shows a 9 percent decline in church volunteering generally from 1991 to 2011, with only 19 percent of the population volunteering at local congregations.<sup>82</sup> Undoubtedly, as we write, literally thousands of our churches are barely hanging on.

Other trends are worrisome. Both Presbyterian and ecumenical data<sup>83</sup> confirm that congregational receipts for general mission giving and special offerings sent to denominational offices have been decreasing. Presbyterian giving on average, as a percentage of income, stood at 1.2 percent of gross household income in 2004 and stands to have declined since that time.<sup>84</sup> Pastoral salaries and social status have declined and this is often felt as a wound, even as ministry involves more sacrificial levels of service. Denominations (and other nonprofit organizations) have sought to compensate by promoting “designated” giving to specific programs. As money stays increasingly at local levels, however, the work of denominational ministries becomes less effective and less understood and congregations themselves become consumers.<sup>85</sup> Economic downturns, in fact, may correspond with higher likelihood of splits within denominations.<sup>86</sup>

Denominations are no longer vertically integrated providers of resources for diverse communities and the whole life-cycle: from Christian education, to camps and conferences, to campus ministries, family ministries, and retirement homes. As the experience of “church” narrows and communal memories are lost, more insular, para-church, and spiritual self-help movements have grown, led by innovators more in tune with consumer culture. Smaller, self-help groups may grow, but larger scale civic involvement has declined (as in Robert Putnam’s *Bowling Alone* study); a vision of the whole church’s mission is reduced.<sup>87</sup> Compounding the cultural drift, unemployment patterns for young adults will continue to push the mainline and Presbyterian age profile toward future irrelevance. As educated, middle-class children move back home, put off marriage, connect through cyberspace, struggle with debt, and see a decline in their future prospects even if employed, they are less likely to be sustaining members of traditional congregations. The wounding of the church, then, includes a loss of hope of connection and an erosion in its particular forms of social capital.

#### b. *Captive to the World?*

By any material measure we are less than we were before. But the losses may go deeper in many ways. Have we lost a faithful vision of what the church must be and what the church can do? In *The Institutes*, Calvin worries about the church losing its direction: “The communion of the Church was not instituted to be a chain to bind us in idolatry, impiety, ignorance of God and other kinds of evil, but rather to retain us in the fear of the Lord and obedience of the truth.”<sup>88</sup> If we see that the biblical and Reformed values we confess are failing to shape our relationships in this one Body, have we allowed, unwittingly, economic values to determine the value of what we do and who we are? Have we responded to the economic threats we face, as families, congregations, and a denomination, by mimicking the common sense of the world? In times of crisis and chaos, it is easy to slip into behaviors seen as reasonable, even necessary, by worldly economic standards. And in this way, the Body becomes dis-membered; the poor of Jerusalem are on their own. Calvin was worried about other types of idols, but his warning is still applicable. If the economic values of our society become so much a part of our minds and hearts that we are unable to see them in ourselves, we too are in danger from the power of idols.

#### c. *More Than Sanctuary*

Wounded as we may be, the church has not ceased to be the church. Many congregations continue to welcome and nurture all God’s children. Many provide a haven, material assistance, and other kinds of support, for those who suffer. Many open their doors to refugees and displaced families. The comfort of sanctuary, spiritual and material, is known in our churches.

But a sanctuary is not a hideout, as the Dobbs Ferry, New York, church proclaims on its sign. There is a danger in viewing ourselves as a place of refuge in times of crisis. There is danger in the tempting idea that the world around us can be kept out and ignored, as we take care of our own. The church of the Reformers was never a place to escape from the world. Their vision was much bolder; indeed their mission was to actively participate in bringing about the Kingdom of God—and that included a prophetic witness to the economic order in which they lived. André Biéler, writing on Calvin’s vision of the church, noted the Gospel example: “Jesus Christ restores among Christians, the members of his church, a fair redistribution

of the goods intended for all; that sharing act prefigures the re-establishment of economic order throughout society.”<sup>89</sup> Indeed, we are about “the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.”<sup>90</sup>

d. *The Power of Communion*

Communion, the centerpiece of our liturgical practice, stands as a vital reminder of what the Reformed Christian believes. The meaning of communion was central to the theological debates of the Reformation, and Calvin considered it essential to Christian worship. Calvin’s words on communion are lyrical, teaching us that in communion “Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow.” It is in this sacrament that we truly meet the Reformation, for in the Lord’s Supper we are re-formed and re-membered.

We do not claim that we are the body of Christ in an attitude of privilege. We must not move from reverence into self-righteousness. Being the body of Christ to the world is not an honor, but a profound responsibility. When we remember how Christ viewed his own mission, when we remember that Christ came not to be served but rather to serve, then we understand what we are called to be in this sacrament. We are called not merely to partake of the Eucharist, but to become Eucharist, pouring ourselves out gratefully for others as Jesus did. The love we find in communion is not a love that can be idle in the face of oppression. It is a love that leads this God-designed community to embrace ever wider practices of caring inclusion and justice-oriented outreach. Calvin, for us, gave the proper perspective:

We shall have profited admirably in the sacrament, if the thought shall have been impressed and engraven on our minds, that none of our brethren is hurt, despised, rejected, injured, or in any way offended, without our, at the same time, hurting, despising, and injuring Christ; that we cannot have dissension within our brethren without at the same time dissenting from Christ; that we cannot love Christ without loving our brethren; that the same care we take of our own body we ought to take of that of our brethren, who are members of our body; that as no part of our body suffers without pain extending to other parts, so every evil which our brother suffers ought to excite our compassion.<sup>91</sup>

### PART THREE: EXTREME INDIVIDUALISM AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The crisis described in this report is tearing at the very fabric of life in the United States—in the workplace (or on the unemployment line), in our homes, among our neighbors, in our churches, and on the face of the earth itself. It threatens the health and well-being of body, mind, and spirit, household, community, and nation. Why, then, do we—certainly our leaders—seem so incapable of cooperating and compromising to meet our economic challenges? What is holding us back?

The failure of common action is rooted in a number of significant changes, from the polarization of party politics to broader demographic “sorting” according to lifestyle, education, and class. But the primary reason is ideological: the triumph of an extremely individualistic worldview in our politics and culture, inherited from economic theory and nurtured in powerful populist forms by ideological think tanks and media networks, over several decades.<sup>92</sup>

Most fundamentally, the ideology of radical individualism draws a bright moral line between individual deservingness and the actions of government. On one side, it places the natural distribution of the market, where individuals are said to be rewarded according to their contributions, nothing more or less; on the other side, it places an intrusive, illegitimate government, which uses taxation to “socialize” market-produced wealth, in order to serve other moral concerns or simply to grab power. But in the highly advanced society we live in today, this extreme individualism has limited factual truth and thus makes little moral sense. For the large majority of Americans who work for large companies and institutions, or who sell their products or labor to a very few bulk producers, franchisers, or distributors in a given industry, individual rights require protections from vastly disproportionate employer or monopoly power—protections that markets, on their own, do not provide.<sup>93</sup>

Of course, individuals, particularly entrepreneurs, contribute a lot to our economy. But the fact is, wealth creation also substantially depends on collective sources of productivity: cooperation and other forms of social capital, public goods such as education and research, and collective assets such as ecosystem services. For example, one major study found that 15 to 20 percent of productivity growth (and corresponding income gains) in the twentieth century was attributable to investments in public education that improved the quality of the labor force.<sup>94</sup> Add to this the value of commercial infrastructure, public investments in scientific research and technological development, public health programs, and government contracting in many emerging fields (among many other public investments, services, and goods), and it’s clear that market income is as much if not more a product of societal development than of individual effort, intelligence, or any other unique contribution that would warrant strict claims of deservingness against other (social) claims, based on, say, essential human dignity or the priority of the common good. In Christian tradition, social contributions to income are readily understood from the logic of creation, where life is a gift, the land is God’s, and redemption is only possible through the grace of God. In America, however, extreme individualism issues in a thoroughgoing blindness to such dependencies, and attacks on government get much of their force from this blindness.

Following Saint Paul, the Reformers always claimed that civil authority is ordained by God and has a vital role in the public order. As Calvin writes, “. . . the powers that be are from God, not as pestilence, and famine, and wars, and other visitations from sin; but because he has appointed them for the legitimate and just government of the world.”<sup>95</sup> We cannot join in the chorus of those demonizing government solutions for societal problems, because we understand the role of government to



be a divinely sanctioned one. Earlier assembly reports have lifted up more of Calvin's proactive view of government's role, such as the initiation of a silk-weaving industry in Geneva to help with unemployed refugees,<sup>96</sup> and during the Great Depression years of 1932 and 1934, the General Assembly called for more democratic accountability of capital in addition to direct provision of employment,<sup>97</sup> as in the Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration. The General Assembly also adopted thorough studies of church & state relations in 1953 and in 1988.<sup>98</sup>

Today we understand that government must often provide what markets, intrinsically, cannot provide. The classic example is national defense. Since the benefits of national defense cannot be packaged and sold, and those who avoid payment still enjoy the benefits, markets will not provide such a good, and thus government must use its taxing and organizing abilities to ensure that defense is produced. Other goods such as education exhibit both private benefits and social benefits. If left to the private sector alone the response is inefficient—not enough resources are devoted to education. Our nation's productivity suffers and our standards of fairness would collapse as some young people are outbid by others in an unregulated competition for educational advantage. Basic research, too, is not efficiently provided by markets, because the diffuse flow of benefits from such knowledge is too risky for private investment. Thus, if anti-government fervor continues to control our politics, and public investment in these and other areas is reduced, market failures from which we were previously fairly well-insulated could seriously imperil our national productivity and future well-being.

To be sure, we cannot counter uncritical rejection of government with equally uncritical support for all forms of government action. Governments, while ordained by God, are human institutions and subject to errors like all such institutions. We must be clear that when we defend the role of government, we also claim the right to critique government as well and to demand that civil authorities act in ways that are consonant with their special vocation. “[T]hey are not to rule for their own interest, but for the public good; nor are they endowed with unbridled power, it is restricted to the wellbeing of their subjects.”<sup>99</sup> So, as a church, we speak a nuanced message about governance. We are committed to the role of government in ordering our civil society and assisting in human flourishing. At the same time, we are vigilant about the power of government, that it will serve the common good and not simply the interests of the few.

A particular challenge in the maintenance of legitimate government is the influence of money in the political process. The concentration of extreme wealth in the hands of a tiny minority in this country has brought a corresponding shift in the power of government, from serving the many to protecting the few. If the church is to present a plausible defense of the role of government, we must also challenge the increasing role that moneyed interests play in the creation of our economic policy.

Much as the church has a valuable role to play in upholding the proper role of government, the church can also provide valuable counsel regarding taxation. Perhaps no other issue arouses such vehement opposition. Indeed, a large segment of our political leadership has made opposition to taxation the primary issue in their campaigning. It should be clear, however, that the Reformed tradition has always maintained the legitimacy of taxation, that taxation is not “theft,” and that it is crucial for the maintenance of the common good. Solutions to the current economic crisis that depend solely on spending cuts, without any new revenue from taxation, must be rejected by people of faith, especially as the impacts of such spending cuts often fall most heavily on the poor and dispossessed in our society. Taxation does carry with it a high responsibility, of course. As Calvin writes, “... whatever [the princes] receive from the people is as it were public property, and not to be spent in the gratification of private indulgence.”<sup>66</sup>

We must also remember that, as citizens of a democracy, the success of our country is our responsibility. We have a voice in the system, and our voice should be informed by our theological convictions. It should also be heard. For people of faith, voting should not be seen as a privilege, but rather as a moral duty. But that is just the beginning of our public responsibility. We must understand that the practice of governance demands courage of the people we elect and may force them, in service to the common good, to take actions that may be politically unpopular. In many cases, our most effective means of steeling their courage is to speak to their own personal faith. If we, and all Christians, attest to the higher power and assert the moral imperatives from our tradition—boldly, in public life—the people may finally be heard; the economy could be healed.

## CONCLUSION

From our liturgy, we have the image and practice of communion, the work of “re-membering” the body of Christ. From Jesus' example and teachings, we have our model for changing the world in communion with others. With Jesus, we see our future in the vision of Isaiah, who foretold of a new heaven and a new earth, where the fruits of the earth reward the laborer who brought them forth, and each has enough to live peaceably one next to another, like brothers.

From our own church heritage, we confess that God is sovereign, and we hope that God reigns in our love, turning every action toward the common good. From our century-old tradition of social witness, the church has authority to address the economic crisis at hand, but now the urgency is greater than before. We hold these truths in common and they prepare a new way for us to live.

For those we love, and for all we should love, who are suffering in our economy, we must open the way. May God's grace empower our work of communion in these times of real testing for our faith, yet even greater opportunity in our hope.

*Study Team:*

This study has drawn on the generous volunteer contributions of the following study team members: Gloria Albrecht (co-chair), professor of Christian ethics, University of Detroit-Mercy; Timothy Beach-Verhey, an ethicist serving as co-pastor, Faison (N.C.) Presbyterian Church; Scott Brunger, professor of economics at Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.; R.J. Hernandez, a recent Ph.D. graduate in ethics from Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colo.; Linda McCaw, senior staff person in the Social Security Administration, Washington, D.C.; Elisa Owen, former business executive and pastor, Louisville, Ky.; Cynthia Reggio, corporate communications consultant and seminary student, New York, N.Y.; William Saint, consultant and retired development specialist, World Bank; Charlene Sinclair, Ph.D. student and poverty initiative leader, Union Theological Seminary, N.Y.; Robert C. Trawick, professor of religious studies at St. Thomas Aquinas College, Blauvelt, N.Y.; John Winfrey, professor of economics, emeritus, Washington & Lee University, Lexington, Va.; Lewis C. Daly, a research scholar in his private capacity, served as consultant editor/writer, and Christian Iosso, coordinator of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, provided staff services.

The study team met three times: in Louisville, Washington, D.C., and New York City. It heard from a range of experts on job creation, retirement security, children in poverty, social protections, international competitiveness, and tax policy. It drew on the expertise of its members for theology, ethics, economics, analysis of economic impacts on the church and its work of synthesis and new application.

## Endnotes

1. The roots of the word “economy” are traced back to the Greek words “oikos,” which means “household,” and “nomos,” which means “law” or “rule.” Economy, therefore, means “the rules of the household.” In Christian tradition, the classical understanding of economy has continued to persist in ideas of a “moral economy,” subject to human and social needs.
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3. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/26/income-inequality\\_n\\_1032632.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/26/income-inequality_n_1032632.html). This article summarizes a Congressional Budget Office study.
4. Stock market declines affected the wealth of the top 1 percent in 2009–2010, but overall inequality continued to increase due to unemployment, home foreclosures, etc.: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/13/one-percent-wealth-gap\\_n\\_1145937.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/13/one-percent-wealth-gap_n_1145937.html).
5. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304392704576375532111391562.html> See <http://www.frb.org/publications/economics/letter/2011/el2011-02.html> for longer term trends.
6. [www.worldwatch.org/node/810](http://www.worldwatch.org/node/810).
7. See Enrique Nardoni’s comprehensive discussion in *Rise Up, O Judge: A Study of Justice in the Biblical World* (Peabody, Maine: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), ch. 4.
8. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*, trans. John Pringle (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1948) 410.
9. Calvin, *Institutes*, op. cit., “Of Civil Government” (Book 4, Ch. 20).
10. John Calvin cited in André Biéler, *Calvin’s Social and Economic Thought*, trans. James Grieg (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005) 362.
11. Neil Irwin, “Aughts were a lost decade for U.S. economy, workers,” *Washington Post*, January 2, 2010, online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/01/AR2010010101196.html?hpid=topnews>; Catherine Rampell, “For Each U.S. Job Opening, 4.6 Unemployed,” *New York Times*, at <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/for-each-u-s-job-opening-4-6-unemployed/>
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13. Derek Thompson, “Everything we Know about the Long Term Unemployed,” *The Atlantic*, February 3, 2012, at <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/02/everything-we-know-about-the-long-term-unemployed/252551/>. Among “discouraged workers,” we would note that anyone with a disability label faces a particularly hard situation, even if the difference in ability is unrelated to the work sought.
14. “Employment and Unemployment Among Youth Summary,” Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 24, 2011, at <http://bls.gov/news.release/youth.nr0.htm>.
15. “Race, Ethnicity, and Health Care Fact Sheet,” Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, July 2006, at <http://www.kff.org/minorityhealth/upload/7541.pdf>.

16. “Flash Points Across the Continent,” *Spiegel Online*, August 12, 2011, at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,779906,00.html>.
17. Dean Baker, “The Productivity to Paycheck Gap,” Center for Economic and Policy Research, April 2007, at [http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/growth\\_failure\\_04\\_2007.pdf](http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/growth_failure_04_2007.pdf), 9-10; Gary Burtless and Adam Looney, Growth Through Innovation,” Brookings Institution, at [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2012/0113\\_gti\\_jobs\\_burtless\\_looney/0113\\_gti\\_jobs\\_burtless\\_looney.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2012/0113_gti_jobs_burtless_looney/0113_gti_jobs_burtless_looney.pdf), Fig. 9.
18. “Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010,” Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p60-239.pdf>, Table A2.
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28. The Program on Inequality and the Common Good, “Inequality by the Numbers,” at <http://inequality.org/income-inequality/> and <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acsbr10-02.pdf> A comprehensive later Census Bureau report dated September 2011 contains further updated numbers, including the widely publicized figure of 15 percent overall of the U.S. population in poverty: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p60-239.pdf>.
29. <http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/bp224/> The Economic Policy Institute calculated a “family budget” to determine how much pre-tax income a family would need, based on its composition and geographic location. The budget includes rented housing, the USDA’s low-cost food budget, child-care, transportation, health insurance, taxes and other essential expenses, such as clothing. As a national average, a two-parent, two-child family would need an income of \$48,778 to provide these basic needs.
30. <http://archive.demos.org/pub1514.cfm> With regard to the adequacy of official measures of poverty, we note the comments of an “Interagency Technical Working Group” posted on the Census Bureau website dated March 2010: [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/SPM\\_TWGObservations.pdf](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/SPM_TWGObservations.pdf).
31. Annie E. Casey Foundation, “2011 Kids Count Data Book: Promoting Opportunity for the Next Generation,” 7.
32. See the Human Development Report for America at <http://www.measureofamerica.org/>.
33. Foundation for Child Development at <http://fcd-us.org/our-work/child-well-being-index-cwi/national-cwi-findings>. The index measures economic well-being, health, educational attainment, risky behavior, community engagement, social relationships, and emotional and spiritual well-being.
34. The median earnings of full time, year round workers in 2009 was \$47,127 for men and \$36,278 for women, 77 percent that of men. See <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>, p.7.
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41. Williams and Boushey, “The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict” at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/pdf/threefaces.pdf>
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43. “The MetLife Study of Caregiving Costs to Working Caregivers,” (June 2011), 1 at <http://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/mmi-caregiving-costs-working-caregivers.pdf>.
44. <http://www.epi.org/publication/2010-marks-year-decline-employer-sponsored/>.
45. <http://www.childrensdefense.org/policy-priorities/childrens-health/uninsured-children/uninsured-children-state.html>.
46. *State of Working America 2008/2009*, 148–49.
47. For a analysis of loss for different age groups, see <http://money.usnews.com/money/retirement/articles/2009/02/12/how-did-your-401k-really-stack-up-in-2008>.
48. Eisenbrey, “The Wobbly Stool: Retirement (In)Security in America,” (10/7/2010) at [http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/the\\_wobbly\\_stool\\_retirement\\_insecurity\\_in\\_america/](http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/the_wobbly_stool_retirement_insecurity_in_america/).
49. “Retiring Boomers Find 401(K) Plans Fall Short,” *Wall Street Journal* (2/19/11).
50. [http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the\\_collapse\\_of\\_secure\\_retirement](http://prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_collapse_of_secure_retirement).
51. Institute for Women’s Policy Research, “Ten Talking Points on Social Security,” at <http://www.iwpr.org/initiatives/social-security/ten-talking-points-on-social-security>.
52. *Transforming Families* (Office of the General Assembly), 2.
53. *Ibid.*, (1.II.F.2).
54. *Ibid.*, (1.II.F.3.j.4).
55. *Transforming Families*, 13. Among the recommendations in section C. 2. B, public policies addressing the crisis of family, “baby bonds” is a term sometimes used for Child Trust Funds in Britain (other names in other countries) and described as follows: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ChildBenefitandChildTrustFund/ChildTrustFund/index.htm>. In early 2011, these funds were replaced by Individual Savings Accounts for Children, or Junior ISA’s, which cannot be touched until the young person is 18 years of age: [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ManagingMoney/SavingsAndInvestments/ISAsandJuniorISAs/DG\\_199672](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ManagingMoney/SavingsAndInvestments/ISAsandJuniorISAs/DG_199672). Wikipedia illustrates the use of the term in both finance (for bonds of small amounts) and dedicated child savings: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baby\\_bond](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baby_bond).
56. U.S. Census Bureau, Table 720, Income, Expenditures, Poverty, and Wealth, in *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2011*.
57. Homeownership Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2000. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/census/historic/ownershipbyrace.html>, accessed August 10, 2011. These numbers should be understood as vastly overestimating home ownership rates, which have undoubtedly decreased since the housing market crash of 2007. Moreover, home ownership is defined simply as having a mortgage, which is hardly a sign of wealth when so many homes are underwater—worth less than their mortgages.
58. RakeshKochhar, Richard Fry and Paul Taylor, “Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks, Hispanics,” Pew Research Center’s Social & Demographic Trends, July 26, 2011, <http://pewsocialtrends.org/2011/07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics/>, accessed August 10, 2011.
59. General Accounting Office, 2002. “Electronic Transfers: Use by Federal Payment Recipients Has Increased but Obstacles to Greater Participation Remain.” Report to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives (GAO-02-913).
60. In 1985, according to the most recent date conducted by the Bureau of the Census national Survey of Income and Program Participation, cited in GAO/GGD-89-12, *Banking: Government Check-Cashing Issues*, October 1988. Julia Sass Rubin, *Financial low-income communities, models, obstacles, and future directions*, “introduction,” 5.
61. Kathleen C. Engel and Patricia A. McCoy, “Predatory Lending and Community Development at Loggerheads” in *Financing low-income communities*, 229.
62. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency et al., 2001, 2; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Department of Treasury 2000, 28.
63. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, “Table A-2. Employment status of the civilian population by race, sex, and age”; “Table A-3. Employment status of the Hispanic or Latino population by sex and age.”

64. The estimate is based on a model developed by the Institute for Taxation and Economic policy, summarized at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/unauthorized-immigrants-pay-taxes-too>.
65. ShikhaDalmia, “Illegal Immigrants are Paying a Lot More Taxes Than You Think,” Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service, May 1, 2006, at <http://reason.org/news/show/122411.html>.
66. Catholic thinkers Matthew Fox (now Episcopalian), Thomas Berry, and Richard Rohr would be notable here.
67. Larry L. Rasmussen, *Earth Community, Earth Ethics* (New York: Orbis, 1996), p. 168.
68. Daly, Herman, ed. *Toward a Steady-State Economy* (San Francisco: WH Freeman & Co., 1973), particularly chapter seven; many later studies have debated issues raised in this fine essay collection.
69. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda *Healing A Broken World: Globalization and God* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), p. 101.
70. John D. Zizioulas and Luke Ben Tallon, *The Eucharistic Communion and the World* (London/N.Y.: Continuum/T&T Clark, 2011), pp. 133–41.
71. Zizioulas, *ibid.*, p. 42 points out that the Orthodox communion ceremony is influenced by the book of Revelation and, like the Reformed, points forward to Christ’s reign as much as back to the Last Supper; a communion economy, in sacramental language, might be a transfigured one.
72. Rasmussen, p. 134.
73. See Martin Hickman’s summary of 2006 findings, “Earth’s Ecological Debt Crisis: Mankind’s ‘Borrowing’ from Nature Hits New Record,” available online at <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines06/1009-03.htm>.
74. See the Center for Sustainable Systems’ U.S. Environmental Footprint fact sheet, drawing mainly on government data, available online at [http://css.snre.umich.edu/css\\_doc/CSS08-08.pdf](http://css.snre.umich.edu/css_doc/CSS08-08.pdf).
75. “Biodiversity Loss Accelerates as Ecosystems Approach Tipping Points,” Environmental News Service, May 11, 2010, available online at <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/may2010/2010-05-11-01.html>.
76. This according to findings published in the journal *Science*; for a summary see Cornelia Dean, “Study Sees Global Collapse of Fish Species,” *The New York Times*, November 3, 2006.
77. Essayist, activist (and Methodist) Bill McKibben summarizes these developments: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/mar/08/why-not-frack/>). For some, this will be a major test of Christian values as well as institutional survival.
78. John Calvin cited in André Biéler, *Calvin’s Social and Economic Thought*, trans. James Grieg (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005) 223.
79. “2010 Comparative Statistics, Table 15. Denominational statistics do not indicate whether installed pastors are full-time or part-time.
80. See [http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2010\\_table\\_1.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2010_table_1.pdf).
81. See [http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/fact\\_2010\\_pc\(usa\)\\_sqar\\_&\\_summary.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/fact_2010_pc(usa)_sqar_&_summary.pdf).
82. <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/508-20-years-of-surveys-show-key-dif>.
83. *Yearbook of U.S. and Canadian Churches*, Eileen Lindner, ed. National Council of Churches of Christ.
84. “To Tithe or Not to Tithe,” *New York Times*, Jan 29, 2012; note that Presbyterian giving percentages are among the lowest among U.S. religious groups.
85. Jack Marcum, “Go Figure,” *Presbyterians Today*. April 2011.
86. This is a conclusion drawn by economist Scott Brunger in his survey of data survey in Milton S. Coalter, John M. Mulder and Louis B. Weeks, eds. *The Organizational Revolution: Presbyterians and American Denominationalism*. (Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992).
87. Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, Brookings Institution Press, 1999. On small groups. See also Robert Wuthnow’s work, *Acts of Compassion* (1993) and *Sharing the Journey* (1996).
88. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) ii, 305.
89. André Biéler, *Calvin’s Social and Economic Thought*, trans. James Grieg (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005) 224.
90. *Book of Order*, The Great Ends of the Church, F-1.0304.
91. Calvin, *Institutes*, ii. 595–6.

92. To benchmark this, see a clear identification of issues received by the 1981 General Assembly, *Re-Making of America? Minutes, Minutes*, 1981, Part I, pp. 306–08.
93. On effective monopoly power, see: Barry C. Lynn In the Cockpit, *Harpers*, February 2012: <http://harpers.org/archive/2012/01/hbc-90008429> provides an excerpt for non-subscribers with book information). The “Robin Hood Tax,” or financial transactions tax, is debated but has gained recent acceptance in Europe and the Far East: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/07/business/global/micro-tax-on-financial-trades-gains-advocates.html?pagewanted=all>. In itself, this kind of tax would not be a major force for income equalization but could restrain speculation, manipulation, and volatility, particularly in secondary or derivatives markets. In terms of impact, it would fall most on those most able to pay: In 2007, for example, the wealthiest one percent of the U.S. population held 43 percent of securities, and the top ten percent held 83 percent: <http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html>. The Capital Institute provides pro-market arguments for Financial Transactions taxes and information on methods employed to collect the tax: <http://ourfinancialsecurity.org/blogs/wp-content/ourfinancialsecurity.org/uploads/2011/11/Fullerton-Capital-Institute-FTT.pdf>.
94. Claudia Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, *The Race Between Education and Technology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).
95. Calvin, cited in André Biéler, *Calvin’s Economic and Social Thought*, trans. James Grieg (Geneva: WCC, 2005) 249.
96. Report of the Task Force on the Presbyterian Church and Transnational Corporations, *Minutes*, 1983, Part I, pp. 227–36; see also *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, p. 162).
97. <http://justiceunbound.org/journal/current-issue/past-and-present-the-church-speaks-on-economic-matters-and-new-challenges/2/>.
98. *Minutes* of the General Assembly, PCUSA, 1953, Part I, p.185, and *Minutes* of the General Assembly, 1988, Part I, pp. 555–72 also available in booklet form from ACSWP as “God Alone is Lord of the Conscience.”
99. Calvin, cited in André Biéler, *Calvin’s Economic and Social Thought*, trans. James Grieg (Geneva: WCC, 2005) 249.
100. *Ibid*, 341.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-09

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-09.

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## Item 11-10

[The assembly approved Item 11-10. See pp. 28, 32.]

*A Resolution on Workers’ Rights and Income Inequality—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns requests that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Recognize its historic support for the just compensation, pension, and benefits that offer life and health to people and speak loudly and clearly on behalf of these rights.
2. Renew the PC(USA)’s commitment to a living wage for all people and support for minimum wage campaigns at the state level.
3. Recognize the PC(USA)’s historic support of collective bargaining rights regarding wages, benefits, and unemployment.
4. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations about the plight of the working poor and the reality of the cycle of poverty in which people are entrapped, calling congregations to support and advocate for collective bargaining rights for all people.
5. Direct the Office of Public Witness to engage in advocacy for collective bargaining rights for all workers as part of a comprehensive strategy to preserve the middle class in the United States, who have a crucial role in the economic recovery.

#### *Rationale*

- “You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning” (Lev. 19:13).

- “Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages ...” (Jer. 22:13).
- “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me,” says the Lord of hosts” (Mal. 3:5).
- “The disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition is the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.” ~Adam Smith, Scottish political economist (1723–1790)
- “No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable.” ~ Adam Smith, Scottish political economist (1723–1790)
- “Inequality, then, is not just unattractive in itself; it clearly corresponds to pathological social problems that we cannot hope to address unless we attend to their underlying cause. There is a reason why infant mortality, life expectancy, criminality, the prison population, mental illness, unemployment, obesity, malnutrition, teenage pregnancy, illegal drug use, economic insecurity, personal indebtedness, and anxiety are so much more marked in the U.S. and U.K. than they are in continental Europe. The wider the spread between the wealthy few and the impoverished many, the worse the social problems: a statement, which appears to be true for rich and poor countries alike. What matters is not how affluent a country is, but how unequal it is.”<sup>1</sup>

#### A. *Introduction*

Income inequality, long a problem in our society, has been exacerbated in recent years during the current economic crisis. While the damage done by extreme income inequity and the loss of worker rights has been disproportionately borne by racial ethnic persons, families, and communities, losses have been experienced by a majority of U.S. residents across the society. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns calls the General Assembly to commit to helping reverse the trends of the last thirty years that have contributed to the erosion of the middle class, the rapid rise of inequality, and the increase of injustice and economic oppression for racial ethnic persons, families and communities.

Three strategies have been identified as crucial to ending and reversing extreme inequity and supporting the rights of workers:

1. Ending wage theft, payroll fraud, and low-wage standards;
2. Ending the erosion of collective bargaining rights that lead to greater inequality, the deterioration of the middle class, and more economically segregated communities; and
3. Ending cutbacks of benefits (pensions, medical insurance, unemployment, and disability benefits) that cause a further waning of people’s ability to participate fully in community life.

#### B. *Income Inequity, Employment, Collective Bargaining Rights, and Race in the U.S.*

Many families and communities continue to struggle in the aftermath of the economic crisis, but evidence shows that the struggle is comparatively deeper and more difficult for African Americans and Hispanics. A Pew Research Center study published in July 2011 showed a significant gap between the median wealth of white households and that of African American and Hispanic households, with white households holding a net worth of 18–20 times that of Hispanic and African American, respectively. Much of the gap, which grew significantly between 2005 and the end of the last decade, was shown to be due to losses in the collapse of the housing market, which hit African American and Hispanic families harder than white residents.<sup>2</sup> The vast increase in foreclosures has been directly related to these communities being targeted for subprime loans. Research shows that in some communities, nearly half of all loans offered to racial ethnic homebuyers over the last decade were high-risk and financially exploitative.<sup>3</sup> When the recession produced greater rates of unemployment in these communities, the concentration of subprime lending greatly increased the profound depth of financial disaster and has made recovery all the more difficult.

Employment trends in racial ethnic communities do not hold hope for a turnaround in inequities in wealth across racial lines. Public sector job losses, which began in the early days of the economic crisis and which continue as cities, states, and the federal government continue to seek ways to cut costs, weigh more heavily on racial ethnic communities and families. The public sector has long been a primary source of employment for African Americans and Hispanics, as compliance with employment law in government has long offered greater opportunity to them than private business.<sup>4</sup>

The loss of collective bargaining rights, particularly for public sector employees, has thus increased the difficulty for African American and Hispanic families and communities and increased income inequities along racial and ethnic lines. Racial ethnic persons are more likely to join unions because of the greater risk to employment and income instability that are part of

the experience for many persons of color in the U.S. Regaining these rights makes for justice for all workers and will have a particularly positive impact on racial ethnic families and communities.

#### Endnotes

1. Tony Judt, *All Fares the Land* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2010), 18.
2. RakeshKochhar, Richard Fry, and Paul Taylor, “Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks, Hispanics,” July 25, 2011 (<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics/>) [accessed Jan. 2012].
3. Jim Campen, “Update on Mortgage Lending Discrimination,” Nov. 2010 (<http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2010/1110campen.html>) [accessed Jan. 2010]
4. Timothy Williams, “As Public Sector Sheds Jobs Black Americans Are Hit Hard,” Nov. 28, 2011 ([http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/us/as-public-sector-sheds-jobs-black-americans-are-hit-hard.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/us/as-public-sector-sheds-jobs-black-americans-are-hit-hard.html?_r=2)) [accessed Jan. 2012]

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-10

#### *Comment on Item 11-10—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The GAMC, through the Office of Public Witness (OPW), advocates for collective bargaining rights when relevant legislation is under consideration in Congress, based on General Assembly statements from 1952, 1959, 1969, 1980, and 1995. Most notably, the General Assembly statement from 1980 addressed these issues:

In view of our theological understanding of liberation, justice, community, and the reality of sin, we affirm the right of all workers, except those on whom national or community security depends, to join labor organizations and participate in collective bargaining ...

In view of our theological understanding of life of Christian servanthood we affirm the necessity for the Church to view economic issues from the side of the lowly and oppressed and for Christians active in our economic system to be concerned for serving the needs of the world.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S., which is disproportionately represented in its membership by managers and professionals will need to engage in a conscious effort to view labor-management issues from the perspective of the unskilled, uneducated, and underpaid ... The style of servanthood means that economic activity needs to be viewed as serving the needs of the world. Decisions should not be based solely on the self-interest of corporations, workers or social interest groups. Servanthood also means that a stronger emphasis needs to be placed on a mutual sharing of burdens instead of the shifting of risks to other people, groups, or societies in a time of growing economic uncertainty.

In view of our theological understanding of grace beyond justice we affirm the need for new approaches to labor-management relations. The point of the Parable of the Laborers and the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16) is that while all workers receive a just wage, God's grace reaches beyond the demands of justice. The Church affirms the rights of labor organization and collective bargaining as minimum demands of justice but also points beyond the current adversary system in urging exploration of new methods of labor-management relations, seeking arrangements which offer opportunities for workers through their efforts and productivity to share greater economic rewards.” (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p. 229.)

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## Item 11-11

[The assembly approved Item 11-11. See pp. 28, 32.]

#### *A Resolution to Recognize the Call to Prophetic Witness in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. **Recognize with joy and thanks to God the historic stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in pursuit of justice as a central mandate of our church, a mandate that calls us to uphold the need to be faithfully partisan in situations of injustice and to speak truth to power, wherever necessary as we pursue justice, without fear of retribution or the delay of deflection.**
2. **Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this joyful recognition through a pastoral letter to congregations and mid councils.**

#### *Rationale*

In order to fulfill our call to live out The Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304), the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommends a recognition of our call to engage the work of justice in church and society. This call is based in part on the last three of the Great Ends: “the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.”



All of these call us to justice work. Our Great Ends parallel biblical teachings (including Deut. 16:20: “Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue.”) and the statements of faith of our church, including this section from A Brief Statement of Faith:

We trust in Jesus Christ,  
 fully human, fully God.  
 Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
 preaching good news to the poor  
 and release to the captives,  
 teaching by word and deed  
 and blessing the children,  
 healing the sick  
 and binding up the brokenhearted,  
 eating with outcasts,  
 forgiving sinners,  
 and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.2, Lines 7–18)

In sovereign love God created the world good  
 and makes everyone equally in God’s image  
 male and female, of every race and people,  
 to live as one community. (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.3, Lines 29–32)

In a broken and fearful world  
 the Spirit gives us courage  
 to pray without ceasing,  
 to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
 to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
 to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
 and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.  
 In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,  
 we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
 and to live holy and joyful lives,  
 even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth,  
 praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–76)

In a time of great transition in our church and the general society, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns calls the church to recognize justice as central to the understanding we hold of Christ’s call to the church.

## Item 11-12

[The assembly approved Item 11-12 with amendment. See pp. 28, 32–33.]

*A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Direct that the ~~[coordinator of Women’s Leadership Development in the]~~ Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area of the General Assembly Mission Council continue ~~[her]~~ [its] work with the program, Deborah’s Daughters, for the next two years and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

2. Direct that the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, after receiving the 2014 report from the review done through the Deborah’s Daughters program, make recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) that contribute to a proactive, health-giving ministry to and relationship with our clergywomen.

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$6,380, (2014) \$8,065—GAMC—Unrestricted]

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2004 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Request the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, Following Review of Resources Currently Available to Meet the Needs of Clergywomen in the Call Process and in Pastorates, to Make Recommendations That Contribute to a Proactive, Health-giving, Ministry to and Relationship with Our Clergywomen—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 77, 389–90).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns continues to determine whether any entity within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has done a thorough review of resources specifically designed to meet the particular needs of clergywomen. Since this referral was assigned, the Office of Committee on Ministry (to which this referral was originally directed) was dissolved in the last restructure of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). The work of this office has been incorporated into the Office of Vocation, leaving no single staff person with the responsibility for resourcing committees on ministry.

Inquiries to presbyteries regarding what resources they have available have gone unanswered. Contact with the Board of Pensions and Research Services concerning the possibility of discovering resources available to clergywomen has been initiated by ACWC, but responses have not been received in time for this report.

In the time that ACWC has been seeking out whether a real review of resources has been done, the coordinator of Women's Leadership Development in Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/PW has initiated a new program called Deborah's Daughters. This staff person, the Reverend Dr. Nancy Young, in leading this program is discovering what issues clergywomen face in their ministries and what resources they need to be sustained in their work. She is essentially doing the review, live and direct with the clergywomen.

One of the top priorities for the coordinator of Women's Leadership Development is to implement processes in order to assess the leadership development needs of women clergy and to develop programs and ministries to meet those needs. Deborah's Daughters was created as a response to this priority. It is a program of conversation with clergywomen, commissioned lay pastors, and other women leaders in the church, based on the story of Deborah in Judges 4–5 and drawing upon four roles that Deborah holds in her story: judge, prophetess, strategist, and mother of Israel. Although these four roles and the accompanying gifts are found in men as well, for the purpose of this work, the roles and gifts are examined in context of women in leadership.

For the program Deborah's Daughters, the coordinator of Women's Leadership Development began by sending out an informational e-mail to all the presbyteries of the PC(USA). The e-mail explained the goal of meeting with clergywomen and commissioned lay pastors for the purpose of assessing leadership development needs. She was willing to come to the presbyteries to meet with the women but needed a place to meet, some publicity, and the presence of women. In the beginning, she expected to get five or six invitations. To date, she has received more than forty invitations, clearly portraying the need for such a program. In 2011, Deborah's Daughters has made it to women in more than twenty presbyteries.

While Deborah's Daughters was started with the intention of being an assessment tool, it has become much more than that. Women are talking to one another, planning strategies for making sure their voices are heard in the church, and looking at their ministries with renewed hope and energy. The face-to-face meetings are invaluable. Deborah's Daughters brings women together and provides a venue for women to speak and be heard. The gifts women bring to ministry will have a great influence on the future of the church. These gifts—and these women—deserve respect, honor, and support. Through these sessions, the coordinator of Women's Leadership Development is learning what helpful resources are available to clergywomen throughout the denomination as well as what kinds of resources are still needed to fully support them in their calls to ministry.

Given the overlap that this work has with the incomplete review to which ACWC was to respond and the fact that this is a program already in place, ACWC believes the continuation of Deborah's Daughters to be a natural response to this unfulfilled referral. The information ACWC will receive from two years of listening and assessing need via Deborah's Daughters will be a sound basis for making meaningful recommendations “that contribute to a proactive, health-giving, ministry to and relationship with our clergywomen” to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

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#### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-12**

*Comment on Item 11-12—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW is happy to work with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns to assess the needs of clergywomen in the PC(USA) through its listening visits in presbyteries and synods. While these listening visits, designed as an assessment tool to begin to determine programs and ministries to facilitate with women in the church, could certainly continue, we are prepared to share with you now our discoveries. Please see below the Deborah's Daughters Listening Visits Assessment Report. We share this report with the General Assembly as well as the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, who are welcome to use the information gathered in this report to respond to its General Assembly referral.

#### **Deborah's Daughters Listening Visits Assessment Report**

Deborah's Daughters is primarily conversations with clergywomen throughout the church, although commissioned ruling elders and other women leaders have also been a part of these conversations. The name Deborah's Daughters is based upon the story of Deborah in Judges 4–5 and draws upon roles that Deborah held and the gifts of women for leadership in the church.

One of the goals of the Women's Leadership Development Office the last two years was to implement processes in order to assess the leadership development needs of women clergy and members and develop programs and ministries to meet these needs, in consultation with other GAMC offices, mid councils, congregations and other appropriate groups. And, the staff person in Women's Leadership Development was to engage in conversation and determine strategies for addressing issues facing women in the larger church.

Initially, invitations were sent to presbytery staff requesting meetings with clergywomen and commissioned ruling elders, primarily in order to assess leadership development needs of women in the church. The only requirements for these meetings were a place to meet, some publicity, and the presence of women. In 2011, Women's Leadership Development staff visited more than twenty presbyteries to hold listening visits. A Deborah's Daughters group was also formed on the "All Women in the Church" website of the PC(USA), and a Deborah's Daughters Facebook page was created.

### 1. *Discoveries for Women's Leadership Development*

Besides the anecdotal stories that were shared in conversations with clergywomen and commissioned ruling elders, the following issues and concerns were raised.

#### a. *Issues and Concerns Raised*

##### (1) *Family Leave Policies*

There is no consistency in regards to family leave policies. Some presbyteries have them for presbytery staff but not for congregations, for instance. Women have taken calls as single women, gotten married, become pregnant, and been told they have two weeks of sick leave. Some congregations rejoice with their pastor and are incredibly supportive, providing paid leave and a willingness to accommodate flexible schedules. However, this is not simply about maternity leave. There is a need for family leave policies for all church workers, as any illness of a family member may require leave time.

##### (2) *Pay Equity*

The Vocation ministry area has made available a pay equity tool. However, presbyteries have not responded to a request for information from their use of it. There were stories of women accepting a call as pastor and later discovering that their pay was as much as \$10,000 less than the previous male pastor. Many women are working below presbytery minimum pay scales, due to the limited ministry budgets of their congregations. And, very few women have been willing to challenge congregations to pay them more.

##### (3) *Attitudes*

Most of the women engaged in the listening visits expressed dealing with misogynistic attitudes from both men and women. This is especially true of young women pastors; they are often treated as though they are not pastors, but apprentices. There were also stories of sexual harassment. Some of the stories were from 20–30 years old and were as recent as last year. Sexual harassment and abuse stories ranged from comments made to women about clothing, hair, and body type to rape.

##### (4) *Practical Ministry Training*

There was a need for practical ministry training sessions for effective parish ministry, i.e. how to run a session meeting, manage a budget, manage a staff, put together an agenda, engage in conflict management, and mediation with church leadership. The Reverend Dana Fearon, who was the pastor of Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church in Lawrenceville, N.J., for more than thirty years, used to run a one-day workshop for graduating seniors at Princeton Seminary called "ARC," Actually Running the Church. It was a valuable workshop for pastors going into their first parish.

##### (5) *Negotiating, Pension Plan, and Retirement*

Many women talked about the difficulty of negotiating a package as they were moving into a new call or negotiating a raise beyond the cost-of-living increase. A related topic was the amount of the congregation's contribution to the Board of Pension plan, as many small congregation pastors felt this expense was a hardship for their congregations. Retirement planning is also an issue, as many women are anxious that they will not be able to retire with any sense of security.

##### (6) *Loneliness*

This is a recurring issue for women clergy. They often feel that they are not welcomed at ministerial associations in their communities. Some are the only women clergy for miles around and have no women colleagues within close driving distance. Very few presbyteries have clergywomen who gather together, even in presbyteries that are geographically small enough for monthly gatherings. Communities of women from seminaries and other shared experiences sustain clergywomen over long distances and time. Most clergywomen—not all—desire the community of other women.

##### (7) *Spiritual Nurture*

Some of the women who participated in Deborah's Daughters conversations made a point to seek out spiritual directors or continuing education opportunities to deepen and enliven their spiritual lives. Some felt ill-equipped to take care of their own spiritual needs. The majority of women engaged in the listening visits expressed a desire to have some kind of spiritual care. Most also felt that they were often spiritually depleted by the demands of caring for their congregations.

b. *Ministries That Emerged, Which Could Be Facilitated for the Leadership Development of Women*(1) *Models of Covenant Community*

There are communities of women in our presbyteries and in other denominations that are effective. These range from monthly lunch meetings, to once-a-year retreats, to virtual internet communities. Many women would participate if offered different models of covenanting communities, which specifically reflect upon and respond to the needs of women and nurture the women who participate.

(2) *Mentorship Programs*

There are several models of mentorship programs. Several young clergywomen in the listening visits would point to older, more experienced women in the room and say, “I wouldn’t know what to do without her.” As the experiences of women are different than the experiences of men, it would be beneficial to pair up newly ordained clergywomen with other women who have had some experience in ministry. This would be a source of empowerment and encouragement.

(3) *Regional Gatherings for Leadership Development*

Most clergywomen do not have the financial resources to attend national gatherings and when they use their continuing education funds, they want to be sure that they will gain something significantly beneficial in return for the funds they expend. Regional events that include training, conversation, and workshops on some of the issues raised above would be welcomed by many clergywomen. Some have said that they want more intellectual stimulation with theologians. Others want communion and community with others. Some want practical ministry training in order to gain skills. Regional gatherings for leadership development with a variety of foci are an option for meeting some of the expressed needs as a result of the listening visits.

(4) *Online Connectivity*

The Deborah’s Daughter’s group on the All Women in the Church website could be used more effectively. It would be helpful to discover more ways for women to connect and gather online.

(5) *Addressing Pay Equity and Family Leave*

Pay equity and family leave policies are issues best addressed at the mid council level, and specifically in presbyteries. Conversation on these and similar issues are best addressed by committees on ministry, committees on preparation for ministry, and mid council executives. The Office of Women’s Leadership Development is hopeful that with the number of mid council executives who responded favorably to invitations for Deborah’s Daughter’s Listening Visits, that mid councils may be willing to take the next steps to facilitate ministries specifically with women and begin to address some of the issues and concerns that women in their mid councils have raised.

2. *Conclusion*

Deborah’s Daughters listening visits began as a means to assess the needs of women in the church, starting specifically with clergywomen. The next step is to begin to facilitate ministries with women across the church based on the discoveries gleaned from this assessment. These listening visits have become more than an assessment tool, in that women are talking to one another, planning strategies for making sure that their voices are heard in the church, and looking at their ministries with renewed hope and energy. The face-to-face meetings held with women in the church have been invaluable. These listening visits brought women together and provided venues for women to speak and to be heard.

The gifts that women bring to ministry already have greatly impacted the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Church of Jesus Christ. These gifts—and these women—deserve respect, honor, and support.

**Item 11-13**

[Item 11-13 became Item 10-20. There is no Item 11-13.]

**Item 11-14**

[The assembly approved Item 11-14. See pp. 28, 33.]

*A Resolution Commending Study of the 2011–2012 Horizons Bible Study and the Accra Confession—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

**The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) commend the 2011–2012 *Horizons Bible Study on Confessing the Beatitudes* and the World Communion of Reformed Churches’ *Accra Confession* (included in the study) to the whole church for prayer and study.**

*Rationale*

The 2011–2012 *Horizons* Bible Study on *Confessing the Beatitudes* includes a detailed study of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and the World Communion of Reformed Churches' Accra Confession. The Bible study is timely in that it addresses issues of poverty, wealth inequalities, and economic injustices in light of the biblical witness and a global and ecumenical confessional statement. According to the World Bank:

- Two thirds of the world's people live in poverty.
- 95 percent of people live on less than \$49 a day.
- 75 percent live on less than \$10 a day.
- 48 percent live on less than \$2 a day.
- 19 percent live on less than \$1 a day.

The 2011 U.S. Census data showed that 46.2 million people in the United States are living in poverty. In the wake of the Great Recession of 2007, wealth inequalities in the U.S. and in the larger global community are weighing more heavily on the minds of people around the world. Commending *Confessing the Beatitudes* to the whole church for prayer and study would signal our solidarity with people who are the most vulnerable in our nation and around the world and invite individuals and our whole community to consider our own faithful Christian witness in the midst of a fragile global economy.

**Item 11-15**

[The assembly approved Item 11-15. See pp. 28, 33.]

*A Resolution to Encourage Participation in the Words Matter Project—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Call on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to promote and encourage participation in the Words Matter project of the Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to include the Words Matter project on its website's carousel of rotating features for one week each quarter, beginning September 2012, and continuing through June 2014.
3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, in cooperation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC), to develop and distribute a bulletin insert promoting the Words Matter project.
4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to provide support to the National Council of Churches' Justice for Women Working Group for Phase 2 of the Words Matter project in the amount of \$4,000.

*Rationale*

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Women's Ministries' Justice for Women Working Group has been involved in an initiative over the past two-and-a-half years to re-direct attention to the lack of progress being made throughout member communions regarding the use of expansive language with reference to God and inclusive language with reference to the people of God. It has been a challenge to develop innovative methods and involve greater numbers of people to explore this issue.

Words Matter, the name for this project, has been designed to incorporate more than words for God and God's people. Words Matter, according to the current site calling for Lenten prayer submissions, "values relationship and storytelling, expansive rather than restricted language, cultural attentiveness, and an understanding of how words are tied to systems of power" (<http://hosted-p0.vresp.com/562830/e8cf257c94/ARCHIVE>). According to the Words Matter site, "Those who agree that Words Matter believe that the words we use shape our realities. We believe that real, personal and social justice is tied together with the language we use. We believe that the words we use can even reinforce the very systems of injustice we say we want to dismantle. Words Matter" (<http://wordsmatter.org/more-information/about/>).

Phase 1 of Words Matter began with a symposium held in Chicago, in August 2010, made up of thirty people from many member communions and a wide variety of ages, races, professions, and sexual orientations. Seven Presbyterian men and women participated in the symposium. It was a transforming experience for all participants. A Lenten devotional, made

available via the internet, was developed for 2011 by the Words Matter group as a follow-up. This more updated communication vehicle was used extensively and was quite well-received.

Information regarding Words Matter needs to be communicated widely throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Using current resources, such as bulletin inserts and the denomination's website carousel of rotating features on a regular basis will assist in disseminating the information and will promote the use of Words Matter.

Phase 2 of Words Matter, which is now underway, will include several strategies. The major thrust will be re-vamping [www.WordsMatter.org](http://www.WordsMatter.org). The budget for Phase 2 is \$30,000. A challenge grant of \$15,000 has been received from Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries. To date, Presbyterian Women's Justice and Peace Committee of the Churchwide Coordinating Team has contributed \$3,000 and a small Presbyterian fellowship in Southern California has contributed \$1,000. A grant from the PC(USA) in the amount of \$4,000 to match the two Presbyterian contributions would be a solid commitment on the part of the PC(USA) to this project.

For Advent 2011, devotionals were prepared for daily use on the Words Matter website. Extremely positive results were received, which affirms investing in a new website is moving in the right direction. There were 4,546 total visits, with 3,673 different people having visited the site. Seventy-seven percent were new visits. The website is attracting a younger constituency and, by its nature, is evangelistic. Prayers will be the focus for the 2012 Lenten devotional series.

The ACWC continues to advocate on behalf of the Words Matter project and our work together with other communions in the Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of Churches of Christ. In these days of a continuing difficult economy, working together with other denominations is wise and helpful for everyone. We urge the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to join in supporting Words Matter.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-15

*Comment on Item 11-15—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The General Assembly Mission Council recognizes and supports the Words Matter project of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., initiated by the Justice for Women Working Group. This inclusive and expansive language project includes devotionals, resources, and videos in an effort to bring inclusive and expansive language out of the academy and church government and into congregations and the stories of people's lives.

The Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area has supported Phase I and Phase II of the Words Matter project. Presbyterian Women, Inc. (PW) sent contributions in 2010 and 2011, and PW funded two staff person's participation in the Words Matter project. Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries sent a contribution in 2011, and a grant is planned for 2012, and grants have also been budgeted for 2013 and 2014.

General Assemblies in 1971, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1998, 2000 on up to the 219th General Assembly (2010) have endorsed the use of inclusive language in the church. The GAMC works in partnership with the National Council of Churches, seeking that the diversity of culture, gender, class, and race, which is present in the church and in the world, will be reflected in the language of the church.

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## Item 11-16

**[The assembly approved Item 11-16. See pp. 28, 33.]**

*A Resolution to Ensure Implementation of Updated and Detailed Safe Child Policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.*

**The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, with the aid of the Child Advocacy Office, to create a new resource concerning safe child measures in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that can be available for presbyteries and individual churches.**

**2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, with the aid of the Child Advocacy Office, to create sample safe child policies that would be available online for use in presbyteries and individual churches as a resource for developing their own safe child policies.**

**[Financial Implications: (2013) \$5,700—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

*Rationale*

Currently the Office of Child Advocacy in the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has provided some extremely helpful resources regarding safe child measures and safe child policies, which are available online. The primary resource is the “We Won’t Let It Happen Here!” training model.<sup>1</sup> The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) asks that the GAMC direct a more updated and detailed resource be created and posted online as a resource model in place of this training model. Certain sections such as the “Procedures for Selecting and Screening Staff and Volunteers” and “Providing a Safe Environment” are in need of changes to meet evolving matters in current safe child policies. There are many issues that have evolved with safe child policies over time, such as technology use with children/youth, which are not addressed in this resource.

The focus of safe child policies is to ensure a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment for children and youth in our churches and church-sponsored events. These policies address screening child and youth workers and volunteers, how to implement mandatory training, simple rules involving transportation and adult/youth/child ratios, minimum age requirement of volunteers, facility security and safety, etc. It is important to understand in developing these policies that these policies and procedures are separate from sexual misconduct policies, and there is a need to differentiate between these resources and policies.

It would also be advantageous for PC(USA) churches and presbyteries to have sample safe child policies available online. These policies would not be used verbatim, but would be used in correlation with individual church/presbytery insurance company advice and individual state regulations for creating safe child policies. It would be helpful for these sample policies to be accompanied with a resource that gives churches and presbyteries direction in beginning to create their own safe child policies. The resources currently given on the PC(USA) website give ideas for creating safe child policies, but no sample policies are given.

It is the church’s responsibility to provide a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment for children and youth, and we must take seriously how our faith informs this responsibility. Our theology of the child is reflected in how we care and nurture these children and youth in our churches. And this theology must reflect the love, care, and high regard for the humanity and dignity of the child reflected in the Gospels.

## Endnote

1. Lois Rifner and Susan Keil Smith, “We Won’t Let It Happen Here!” PC(USA), <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/sexualmisconduct> (accessed on January 20, 2012).

**Item 11-17**

[The assembly approved Item 11-17 with amendment. See pp. 28, 33.]

*Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer—From the Climate for Change Task Force.*

The Climate for Change Task Force recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following:

1. The 220th General Assembly (2012) affirms that effective systems of accountability are critical to any process to effect change. It affirms the valuable contributions of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), and the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) in this process and directs the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council to provide adequate staff support and resources to do their work.

2. The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs GACOR to review and ~~revise~~ recommend revision to the affirmative action goals for employment and purchasing (Supplier Diversity Program) to the General Assembly on a regular and recurring basis, in accordance with their responsibilities in the Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) and the *Book of Order*, G-3.0103.

a. The GACOR shall take into consideration federal Department of Labor statistics on race, ethnicity, and gender in the labor market; race, ethnicity, and gender representation in church membership; and other factors, as appropriate.

b. The GACOR, in consultation with the six General Assembly-related agencies (Board of Pensions, General Assembly Mission Council, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation) and the ~~related~~ General Assembly advocacy

committees, ACREC and ACWC, shall recommend new churchwide goals to the General Assembly in a six-year cycle, beginning in 2014.

c. The agencies of the General Assembly, including the Board of Pensions (BOP), General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), Office of General Assembly (OGA), Presbyterian Foundation (Foundation), Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) shall be held accountable for implementing both affirmative action employment and supplier diversity purchasing goals.

d. The six General Assembly-related entities (BOP, GAMC, OGA, Foundation, PILP, PPC) shall provide biennial status reports on the representation of women and persons of color in employment to GACOR. The GACOR shall assess the agencies' progress and report their findings to the General Assembly.

e. The six General Assembly-related entities shall provide biennial status reports on their achievement of supplier diversity goals to GACOR, showing the percentage of purchases from women and minority-owned businesses. The GACOR shall assess the agencies' progress and report their findings to the General Assembly.

f. The GACOR shall share agency statistical reports and work in consultation with ACREC and ACWC to provide their assessment of each agency's progress for consideration in the review of agency implementation plans for cultural proficiency.

g. The GACOR shall review agency policy and practices regarding major contracts, to ensure that General Assembly entities communicate the church's policy, as stated in the Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan, to the contractors with whom they do business.

3. The 220th General Assembly (2012) approves Appendix A of this report as the definition of cultural proficiency to be used by the six General Assembly-related entities and the General Assembly-related committees (ACREC, ACWC, and GACOR), to guide agency implementation and ACREC's assessment process.

4. The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), as directed by the 216th General Assembly (2004), shall continue to monitor and assess agency implementation of cultural proficiency in the six General Assembly-related entities, in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). The ACREC's review of agency implementation plans shall be guided by the following criteria:

Agency implementation plans for cultural proficiency shall include:

- (1) Expression of the commitment of top management, evidenced through:
  - (a) a mission and/or vision statement,
  - (b) regular discussion in management meetings,
  - (c) training to develop management skills in support of cultural proficiency goals,
  - (d) evaluation of management performance in support of cultural proficiency goals.
- (2) Training and education strategies to promote employee support for cultural proficiency goals and provide opportunities to enhance skills.
- (3) A communication strategy to ensure employee awareness and promote the transformation of organizational culture to support the goals of cultural proficiency.
- (4) Recruitment, training, promotion, and retention strategies to achieve affirmative action employment goals at all levels of the organization, including senior management.
- (5) Employee education programs to promote employee compliance and support for supplier diversity goals.
- (6) Strategies to promote the employment and create a supportive working environment for persons with disabilities.

5. Training and guidance on the development of implementation plans for affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency shall be provided to all General Assembly entities by the GAMC associate for Organizational Diversity, in consultation with ACREC, ACWC, and GACOR, consistent with the Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan.

6. The governing boards or councils of the six corporate entities shall review the performance of executive management on their progress towards achieving cultural proficiency, affirmative action, and supplier diversity goals, as



well as compliance with the contracting policy, on an annual basis. This assessment shall be incorporated in their overall performance review.

7. The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the GAMC to prepare a supplier diversity resource for employees. The resource guide shall be shared with General Assembly agencies, presbyteries, and synods.

8. The six General Assembly agencies shall include training to support the supplier diversity program in their training and orientation for all new employees in their first year of employment, and for all employees on a regular recurring basis, a minimum of every two years.

9. The 220th General Assembly (2012) urges synods and presbyteries to adopt affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency policies and practices consistent with the General Assembly, to promote the denomination's [continuous work and] commitment to ~~[become]~~ [be] a diverse, inclusive, antiracist and culturally proficient church.<sup>[†]</sup>

10. Direct the GAMC to publish and distribute this report of the Creating a Climate for Change Task Force to employees of all six corporate agencies.

11. The assembly expresses its thanks to the members of the task force: Diane Givens Moffett (chair), Yvonne Armstrong, Cathy Chang, Hardy Kim, Al Masters, and Sarah Moore-Nokes. The assembly also thanks Colby Anderson and José Olagues, who served on the task force initially but were not able to complete their terms.

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$4,420—Per Capita—GAMC; (2013) \$2,890—Per Capita—OGA]

#### *Rationale*

*“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. ...”* (Book of Order, F-1.0403, Unity in Diversity)

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2008 Referral: Item 09-16. Creating a Climate for Change Within the PC(USA) Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 1009–55).*

One of the greatest challenges facing the church today is the call to become a truly diverse and inclusive community of faith. If the church is to take this call seriously, it must work to dismantle the systems of power and privilege that create barriers to change in all aspects of church life. The Climate for Change Task Force, created by the 218th General Assembly (2008) to review the equal employment, affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency policies for the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly, calls the church to examine its organizational life and commit itself to systemic change in its work and life together.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the task force urges the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the above recommendations.

The Climate for Change Task Force was charged to examine General Assembly policy, and it has done so with an understanding that the work of the General Assembly-related agencies has an impact on the life of the larger church. The effort to become culturally proficient is both a response to the church’s historical call to be a prophetic witness to justice and an opportunity to develop the expertise necessary to equip leadership across the church, to transform the organizational culture of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ways that will support the denomination’s goal of becoming a more diverse community of faith.

The PC(USA) has a long history of General Assembly action supporting equal opportunity and affirmative action, and a commitment to reflect the diversity of God’s people in its institutional life. Despite this commitment, effective change within the life of the PC(USA) has been painfully slow. The task force also recognizes that change has become a constant in church life and organizational structures are becoming more fluid. In order to sustain an effective commitment to the transformative vision of becoming a culturally proficient community of faith, the recommendations of the task force seek to accomplish the following:

- Encourage effective leadership of cultural proficiency by senior management, promoted by their respective governing boards, councils, or committees;
- Develop and maintain a strong system of accountability, built on committee oversight and regular reporting to the General Assembly; and

- Affirm interactive and cooperative roles and responsibilities for the existing General Assembly committees (General Assembly Committee on Representation, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns).

The recommendations delineate responsibilities between monitoring achievement of affirmative action goals and the implementation of a strategic plan for cultural proficiency:

- The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) has responsibility for affirmative action employment and supplier diversity goals. Numerical goals and accomplishments are a critical measure of compliance and progress. Affirmative action is one tool in the larger process of equipping agencies to be culturally proficient organizations. This role for GACOR is consistent with their responsibilities as defined in the *Book of Order*. They are also the one General Assembly-related body that has explicit charter to advocate for persons with disabilities within the system.

- The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), working in partnership and consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), serves as the lead committee to monitor implementation plans for cultural proficiency in General Assembly-related agencies. This review, assessment, and consultation process will now happen in a six-year cycle, in conjunction with each agency’s overall review. While GACOR gathers the biennial statistical reports from each agency, ACREC will be able to look at longer trends as part of their review of cultural proficiency and the agencies’ implementation plans.

- The participation of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) in the process will ensure a gender lens is part of the on-going assessment of cultural proficiency.

There is an intentional intersection in the work of these committees, recognizing that the roles and responsibilities of each committee complement the others, and that each committee works more effectively when they are working in consultation with each other.

Finally, reflected in the name chosen for this document, the task force wants to underscore what it considers an essential shift in focus required if vision is to become reality. Unexamined systems of privilege and entitlement in any organization are powerful barriers to change. Recognizing and redefining racism, sexism, and other “isms” as systems that create privilege is critical to understanding what is at stake and what kinds of change need to occur to create an organizational culture that is truly welcoming of all people. De-centering privilege means redefining power within an organization—who holds it, how it is used, and how people within a system participate.

In a truly culturally proficient organization the diversity of the members helps to shape organizational life and define organizational identity—it does not expect all newcomers to adapt and conform to what is. This is the transformation that needs to happen to move General Assembly policy from words on paper to lived reality in the agencies of the denomination and throughout the life of the church.

At its roots, the transformation that must happen is a spiritual one. It is the call to give expression to Christ’s abundant hospitality in the life of our institutions. It is the call to all Presbyterians to recognize the commitment to sustaining diversity in community as a fundamental expression of our deepest held theological beliefs and values—our spiritual DNA—the call to embody God’s boundless love in creation to be God’s agents of justice and reconciliation in the world.

## I. Introduction

We live in a complex, pluralistic, and rapidly changing world—the world that our Creator God loves, sustains, and continues to redeem. While the world around us is changing rapidly, the cultural identity of the PC(USA) is deeply rooted in the dominant culture of U.S. society. Our membership remains 92 percent white despite concerted efforts to increase our diversity while the communities we serve are increasingly multiracial and multicultural. There are communities in our nation today where there is no majority group and these demographic trends are projected to continue into the future. As a denomination, we need to learn to communicate the good news of the gospel, reinterpreting our reformed tradition both in language and practices that connect to this increasingly diverse world. As we seek to grow the church deep and wide, denominational policies of nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and cultural proficiency take on new significance as tools that equip the church to be an effective witness. Intrinsic to this task is the challenge to confront the ways in which our traditions and organizational culture continue to embody the realities of systemic privilege. We need to redefine racism, sexism, ableism, etc., as systems that create privilege for some, at the expense of others. Such a reorientation of perspective and perception is essential to garner the energy and motivation for the kind of deep change required to transform our organizational life from one that confronts diversity as a problem, to one that thrives on the gifts of diversity.

The Climate for Change Task Force was created to review the denomination’s EEO, affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency policies for the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly. Over time, some of these policies became dated, and subsequent actions of the assembly created confusing and overlapping reporting requirements. The task force began its work by reviewing the existing policies. It met with the executives and other representatives of all six agencies to learn how the current policies are being implemented and to gather input from the agencies involved. They

also met with the committees of the General Assembly that have a stake in the process: Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR), and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. They also met with members of the racial ethnic caucuses to learn about the impact of these policies at the grass-roots level of the church. Finally, the task force invited subject matter experts who discussed the “state of the art” for these programs in education and in business, as models for the church.<sup>3</sup>

The Climate for Change Task Force was created to examine church policy and has done so with a consciousness that simply revising policy is not enough to transform the church. To equip the agencies of the General Assembly to serve in an increasingly diverse society and support local congregations and mid councils in ways that increase their capacity to minister in an increasingly diverse society, there must be a deep commitment throughout each agency and effective, forward-looking leadership to create organizations that thrive on the rich benefits of diversity.

This will not happen accidentally. It requires a greater awareness of the ways in which systemic racism, sexism, and other systems of oppression create barriers to the goals of diversity, inclusion, and equity. It requires courage to confront the ways in which white privilege and other forms of systemic privilege are embodied in our organizational life. It requires intentional strategies for change and the development of organizational capacity to effect change. It requires new standards of excellence for management and employees alike that recognize cultural proficiency as a mark of the highest professional standards. It requires vigilance on the part of the church and visionary leadership on the part of both its elected and employed leaders. And it requires courage that leads to radical discipleship—a willingness to engage in critical self-examination and open dialogue with those who have been marginalized, so that vision may become reality.

## II. The Current Context

The agencies of the General Assembly currently employ a number of strategies to effect change in the workplace and conduct the business of the church in a manner consistent with the church’s policies and commitments to justice, equity, and diversity in community. These strategies include:

- The Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan,
- Minority Vendor Policy,
- Affirmative action policies for major contracts,
- Cultural Proficiency Initiative.

Each of the agencies related to the General Assembly is working in a variety of ways to achieve the goals established by the General Assembly and the churchwide plan. One goal that challenges every agency is the need to increase diversity in upper management.<sup>4</sup> In addition to agency efforts aimed directly at their own employment posture, Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries (GAMC) has developed a number of leadership institutes to help identify, nurture, and develop the leadership of women and people of color across the church. In 2010/2011 they sponsored the following events:

- Racial Ethnic Clergywomen’s Leadership Institute, Montreat Conference Center, September 19–22, 2010,
- Clergywomen’s Leadership Institute/Young Women’s Leadership Development event, PC(USA) Big Tent, June 30–July 2, 2011,
- Racial Ethnic and Immigrants Convocation, PC(USA) Big Tent, June 30–July 2, 2011,
- Continuing Education Seminar for Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterian Ministers, July 13–18, 2011,
- African American Executive Leadership Seminar, August 28–31, 2011,
- Women of Color Consultation, October 20–23, 2011.

The 2004 ACREC report to General Assembly, *Creating a Climate for Change*, called for the creation of an online recruitment database targeting potential candidates for executive and leadership positions within the church. The *Diversity in Leadership Network* (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/diversity/>) was created through the Office for Organizational Diversity, Education and Recruitment (GAMC). It works with all six of the General Assembly-related agencies. As stated in the website, the network is designed:

- “To equip the church in the creation of diverse and inclusive environments.”
- “To assist in the identification of individuals for key leadership opportunities within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

The Diversity in Leadership Network provides a platform for:

- “culturally rich information,”
- “valuable recruitment and retention resources,”
- “referral resources in the identification of potential leaders,”
- “interactive open-forum discussion on issues of diversity and inclusion within the church.”

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), in its 2008 report to the General Assembly, raised a number of questions concerning the implementation, reporting, and accountability requirements of these strategies. They found:

- Agencies reported employment data in two different formats, one to ACREC, as part of its review of the implementation of cultural proficiency, and in a separate report to the General Assembly, in response to the Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan (AAP).
- Affirmative action goals established in the Churchwide AAP had not been revised or updated since 1991, despite significant change in the representation of women and people of color in the labor force over the past twenty years. The affirmative action employment goals identified in the Churchwide AAP are for 20 percent total racial ethnic representation and 40 percent for women.
- The 10 percent goal established for the Minority Vendor Program had not been reviewed or updated since 1985. (It does not reflect the growth in racial ethnic populations and expansion of minority- and women-owned businesses.)
- Minority vendor goals are not applied consistently to all General Assembly-related agencies. Only the GAMC (which provides some purchasing services for OGA and PILP) reports its accomplishments under this policy.
- The current Minority Vendor Policy does not reflect critical changes over the past two decades that have created a vastly different purchasing environment, including the use of credit cards by a significant percentage of employees and the growing use of online purchasing.
- The Churchwide AAP directs agencies to use the services of Project Equality to ensure that major contractors with which the church does business are in compliance with the church’s affirmative action policies. Project Equality, a nonprofit organization created to provide these services, is now defunct. Agency practices continue to comply with the intent of the Churchwide AAP but the task force found that an accountability system is needed to ensure that agencies continue to maintain these practices.

### III. The Recommendations

The task force offers the following assessments, based on its review of policy and information-gathering sessions with agency representatives, General Assembly committees, and subject matter experts. These assessments provide the context and rationale for their recommendations.

#### A. *Systems of Accountability*

Historically, responsibility to review and monitor implementation of the Churchwide EEO/ AAP was assigned to the GACOR. While agencies regularly report their employment data to the General Assembly, this data has not been shared with, or requested by GACOR, in recent years. In the course of the task force’s inquiry, the current committee membership asserted its interest in reclaiming a more active role, as outlined in the Churchwide Plan and the *Book of Order*.

While the impetus for cultural proficiency emerged out of the work of ACREC and oversight is lodged with that committee, ACWC shares a common role and purpose related to advocating for gender equity in the church and its predecessor groups prior to reunion have had an active role in advocating for the creation and implementation of affirmative action in church employment policies and practices.

Staff turnover, organizational downsizing, and restructuring have also impacted committee effectiveness. Sharing roles and responsibilities between GACOR, ACREC, and ACWC is one way to sustain continuity in the work of the committees as it is less likely that all three committees and their staff would experience significant turnover at the same time.

Having an effective system of accountability is essential to sustain organizational commitment and effective action. The recommendations in this report seek to:

- Strengthen accountability while reinforcing and clarifying the distinctive roles of the three General Assembly committees (GACOR, ACREC, ACWC);

- Encourage shared responsibility and capacity for sustained engagement; and
- Maintain consistent assessment and regular reporting of agency activity to the General Assembly.

The recommendations make a clear delineation between affirmative action efforts (which include supplier diversity and contract compliance,) and cultural proficiency, which has a wider, more systemic focus on embracing diversity and transforming internal organizational culture to support a more diverse workforce.

- Committee responsibilities are divided along these lines, with GACOR having responsibility for affirmative action and ACREC, in consultation with ACWC, having responsibility for monitoring cultural proficiency.

- The GACOR will receive statistical reports from all six agencies in a two-year cycle, reporting on all six at each General Assembly.

- The ACREC, as outlined in their 2010 report to General Assembly,<sup>5</sup> will review agency implementation of cultural proficiency in a six-year cycle, in conjunction with each agency's overall review by the General Assembly. The ACREC's review focuses on agency implementation plans. The statistical reports gathered by GACOR will serve as one source of data, allowing ACREC to look at trends over time, rather than one-time snapshot data. They will not need to gather separate or duplicate statistical data.

There are three committees of the General Assembly that participate in the system of accountability related to the church's commitments to full inclusion and participation of all persons in the life of the church. They are:

- Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC),
- Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC),
- General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR).

Each of these committees has a distinct purpose and perspective, as well as distinctive roles and responsibilities. The advocacy committees include persons who represent constituency based organizations within the church, where GACOR has representation from, and relationship with, the mid councils of the church. The advocacy committees are tasked with addressing the concerns of specific constituency groups (women and people of color), where GACOR is tasked with addressing issues of diversity and inclusion more broadly, including categories such as age and disabilities. Together, these committees work to equip the church to live in to its vision and constitutional mandates.<sup>6</sup>In its review, the task force found that the distinctive role of each committee is essential to maintaining a comprehensive system of accountability. The recommendations of this report seek to reaffirm and enhance the interactive relationship and strengthen collaboration between the committees, while clarifying their distinctive roles.<sup>7</sup>

#### B. *Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan (AAP)*

The Churchwide AAP establishes broad numerical goals for employment and minority vendor purchases (supplier diversity). These goals, which have not changed since they were established in 1985, are dated and do not reflect rapidly changing demographics. The Churchwide AAP also directs agencies to ensure that major contractors are aware of PC(USA) policy and are also in compliance with AA/EEO principles and regulations.

The Churchwide AAP was never intended to be a static document. If it is to be an effective tool, the Churchwide AAP

- needs to be reviewed and updated on a regularly recurring basis;
- needs to have updated numerical goals in a regular recurring schedule;
- needs to support goals with a strategic action plan, with measurable objectives and target accomplishment dates; and
- agencies must report goals, action plans, and accomplishments to the General Assembly on a regular, recurring schedule.

#### C. *Supplier Diversity*

In government and industry, the term "minority vendor policy" is no longer used. The term "supplier diversity" is more accurate and consistent with current practice.

The purchasing practices of any corporate entity are no longer the exclusive purview of a purchasing agent. The expanded role of employees in making purchases online and/or with their credit cards means that each employee becomes an agent in meeting the General Assembly's goals. This new environment mandates less reliance on a compliance-oriented approach and greater focus on education efforts to train, resource, and promote employee support for supplier diversity goals.

An educational approach to supplier diversity could help to link that goal to other equity initiatives of the PC(USA), including support for self-development, sweat free, fair trade, and green initiatives, and the standards developed by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee, reinforcing the understanding that the agencies and their employees are agents of the church and should conduct their business in all ways in a manner consistent with the policies of the General Assembly.

#### D. *Cultural Proficiency*

Cultural proficiency describes an approach to managing diversity in ways that respond constructively to the challenges of diversity and create a working environment that enables all employees to contribute to their fullest. It is designed to address multiple dimensions of diversity that might create tension within an organization, and create a culture that adapts well to learning about difference. Depending on the needs of an organization, Affirmative Action strategies (such as targeted recruitment or supplier diversity purchasing goals) may be a critical component to implementing cultural proficiency. Antiracism and prevention of sexual harassment training may also be components of a cultural proficiency initiative. An effective plan will also communicate top management's commitment to its goals and train managers for effective leadership in a diverse environment. In any setting, becoming culturally proficient will include unique strategies that address the challenges of that particular organization. Based on their study of the implementation of these strategies in private industry and education, the task force recommendations:

- are based on an understanding of cultural proficiency as both a process and a vision for organizational life that flourishes on the strengths of diversity;
- recognize strategies such as affirmative action, supplier diversity, prevention of sexual harassment, and antiracism training currently employed by the church as tools that contribute towards achieving the larger vision of cultural proficiency—not competing initiatives; and
- affirm the use of these strategies and other tools, in support of the deeper commitment to organizational and cultural transformation expressed in its cultural proficiency initiative.

#### E. *Statistical Data for Affirmative Action*

As part of its consultation process, the task force met with representatives of the racial ethnic caucuses in the PC(USA). It was very clear in these conversations that for these communities within the church, these policies are not idle words on paper to satisfy legal obligations. Women and people of color within the church expect the church as an employer to practice the highest standards of performance in this arena and keenly feel the injustice when the church fails to live up to its own proclamation. Statistical data and numerical goals for employment and purchasing are tools for identifying where there are problems and where progress has been made. Representatives of the caucuses expressed deep concern that the church's failure to live up to its commitment to affirmative action and cultural proficiency has wide-ranging consequences that limit the church's capacity to adequately support the needs of their congregations and perpetuate their invisibility and marginalization in the life of the denomination. They also look to the agencies of the General Assembly to provide leadership and establish models for mid councils that can help the whole church live into its vision of becoming a community of faith that truly reflects the diversity of God's people, equipped to proclaim the gospel to all God's people.

A specific issue was raised by the Middle Eastern Caucus, relating to the establishment of numerical goals and the collection and reporting of statistical data for affirmative action and supplier diversity. The collection of data on race and ethnicity related to contracting, purchasing, and employment is governed by federal law, which recognizes four protected groups. These are: African American, Asian American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian or Native American, and Hispanic or Latino/a. The racial ethnic caucuses of the PC(USA) reflect this same construction of racial identity, with one addition—the Middle Eastern Caucus—which is recognized and incorporated in the overall structure of racial ethnic ministries within the church. Thus, the caucus has sought to have employment and purchasing data collected by PC(USA) agencies.

The basic intent of federal law is protective, that is, to measure compliance with equal employment opportunity law and to facilitate affirmative action planning. Originating in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the scope of this body of law is limited and applies specifically to groups that were identified as having experienced historic racial discrimination in U.S. society. Thus, under current federal law it is not lawful for any employer to collect data identifying employees or vendors as Middle Eastern.<sup>8</sup>

While federal law limits data collection, it does not limit the parameters of the church's cultural proficiency initiative, which encompasses a broader and more flexible understanding of diversity. Within the parameters of cultural proficiency, the agencies of the church can and should work to ensure that Middle Eastern Presbyterians are fully incorporated in the life of the church. The Middle Eastern Caucus, like each of the PC(USA) racial ethnic caucuses, may address the leadership of PC(USA) agencies whenever there is a concern. Middle Eastern Presbyterians are also represented in the membership of ACREC, where they participate in the ongoing processes of oversight and accountability for the implementation of cultural proficiency.

Similarly, questions have been raised about establishing numerical goals and gathering data on the workforce participation of people with disabilities. In this area, employers are guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act that does not permit data collection but does prohibit discrimination and mandates that employers provide reasonable accommodation, where needed, to enable qualified employees to do their job.<sup>9</sup> This mandate to create a welcoming work environment, including reasonable accommodations where needed, fits well within the framework of becoming a culturally proficient organization. In the PC(USA), structures for accountability and oversight concerning full participation of persons with disabilities is included in the scope of responsibilities assigned to the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR). The GACOR also maintains a liaison relationship with Presbyterians for Disability Concerns. Moreover, the recommendations of this report address strengthening the active participation and consultation between GACOR and the advocacy committees (ACREC and ACWC), facilitating effective oversight of agency efforts through the strategic planning and implementation of cultural proficiency.

#### IV. Biblical and Theological Foundation

*“Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ‘What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?’” (Mk. 1:23–24a)*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a rich and deep history with its roots firmly planted in the church in Jerusalem. As the early church evolved and moved into the 16th century, its members began to acknowledge the “unclean spirit” in the church and to critique those practices that were detrimental to the church’s mission. The Reformers called the church to accountability, challenging it to live in faith and integrity, practicing the radical discipleship of the Gospel.

From its arrival on the shores of America in 1706, however, the ethical practices of the Presbyterian church were questionable when it came to the enslavement of African people in the new country. Some found biblical and theological justification for the practice of slavery. Others found slavery to be a grievous sin and out of step with the teaching of Scriptures and the theology of the church. The biblical and theological discourse for slavery was highly contentious and an “unclean spirit” lingered in the midst of the denomination. During the 19th century, disagreement over slavery and evangelism broke the church into northern and southern branches. The two branches reunited in 1983 to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Although we are now one church, we are still broken when it comes to racism and the acceptance, not just mere toleration, of people from racial and ethnic backgrounds other than Caucasian. The denomination also struggles in our response to persons with disabilities, and to people who have sexual orientations other than heterosexual. These struggles are best seen in employment statistics and purchasing practices. Although our denomination believes in justice and equality for all, it has yet to achieve it fully. Although we have written about matters of equality in papers such as *Facing Racism*,<sup>10</sup> we have yet to practice such equality. We can point to untold passages of Scripture, such as Gen. 5:1–2, 1 Cor. 12: 25, Gal. 3:28, to affirm our beliefs in equality for all, but we have difficulty in living them out. Though the voice of the unclean spirit of racism and discrimination is heard and presented in papers, at conferences, workshops, and at various levels of the church—it has yet to be destroyed as evidenced by the 218th General Assembly (2008) appointment of the Climate for Change Task Force.

The church acknowledges a need to create an atmosphere that not only tolerates, but fully welcomes and includes persons of diverse backgrounds. This climate needs to be created because it is not evident in all levels of the church. By creating an atmosphere free of the unclean spirit of racism, sexism, and inequality, it is the hope of our church to enrich our Christian work and witness. And while policies are important and must be in place to facilitate change and concurrence, the real challenge of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) lies deeper. There must be a change of heart and a new attitude that helps us put corresponding actions to our professed beliefs.

*“Do you want to be made well?” (Jn. 5:6b)*

This is the question Jesus asks the man at the Pool of Bethesda. Interestingly enough, he did not answer Jesus’ question directly. Instead, he proceeded to explain why he was not able to get in the pool. In many ways, the Presbyterian church takes the same stance when it comes to issues of diversity in the workplace: we explain why we are not able to get into the pool of diversity among all levels of management. We discuss why our church’s workplace does not reflect the diversity on all levels of management. It becomes apparent that if the church wants to be healed, the reality of white privilege and biblical righteousness must be addressed.

Writing on the concept of white privilege, Peggy McIntosh states:

As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage. . . . The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects.

In order to become righteous, the church must find creative ways to deal with white privilege that we may be found righteous in God’s eyes. In his article *Fundamental for Preaching the Book of Proverbs, Part III*, Bruce K. Waltke presents the following definition of the term “righteousness”:

Righteousness’ is a social term signifying that people do right by each other as defined by God’s covenants with Israel. In a nutshell ‘righteousness’ means ‘to disadvantage oneself as necessary in order to advantage others,’ and ‘wickedness’ means ‘to disadvantage others in order to advantage

oneself.' A student who takes a reserved book out of the library to get an A, leaving the rest of the class to get a lower grade, is wicked (i.e., a fool). By contrast a student who resists the temptation to check out a rare book from the library so that his or her classmates have the opportunity to read and write an 'A' paper, even if it means he gets a lower grade, is righteous.

White privilege impedes our healing and transformation because it requires some in the church to “disadvantage ourselves” in order to advantage others. Although this seems hard, this is the work of the Gospel demonstrated in Jesus Christ.

*“Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only as in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (Phil. 2:12–13)*

Like the early church in Philippi, the Presbyterian church today is being challenged to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Our role as partners with God must be strengthened so that we engage in actions that allow God to work in us and accomplish God’s will. Simply put, we must be willing to make the necessary changes and struggle with the inconveniences required in order to make our record regarding affirmative action, cultural proficiency, and vendor policies consistent with our proclamations. As once quoted, “we must preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and if necessary use words.”<sup>11</sup> The world needs to see our sermon rather than hear it. It is time for the church to acknowledge the Holy One of God, and let Christ have his way in our lives. Community is the heart of who we are and who God is. We are the community of the “called out ones,” called to be an inclusive denomination.

## V. The Tools for Change

### A. *Equal Opportunity*

A legal principle established in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, equal opportunity prohibits discrimination or disparate treatment based on a person’s race, color, national origin, religion, or sex. Non-discrimination law applies to employment, contracting, housing, access to public facilities, education, etc. Federal law defines the protected racial categories as: African American, Hispanic/Latino-a, American Indian/Native American, Asian, and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Reporting requirements now include a category for persons who identify with two or more categories. Equal opportunity laws have also expanded since the 1960s to include age (for persons forty years and older), persons with disabilities, and in some states and local governments, sexual orientation.

### B. *Affirmative Action*

Affirmative action emerges out of the recognition that simply removing legal barriers does not change systems or create a level playing field. Historic patterns of discrimination have created inequality in socioeconomic status and resources that put the members of targeted groups at a competitive disadvantage. The term comes out of recognition in the 1950s and 1960s that positive, proactive, intentional efforts needed to be implemented to make the promise of equal opportunity and equal access in education and employment a reality. Affirmative action strategies encompass a wide range of activities. In the employment arena “it involves planning and acting” to increase diversity and overcome historic practices of discrimination “based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, age, or disability. It can include recruitment and outreach programs, mentoring, training, employee development, management development, and special support programs aimed at improving retention of employees.”<sup>12</sup>

Affirmative action strategies may include setting numerical goals to achieve equitable representation of women and persons of color in employment in an organization. Supplier diversity programs are also an example of an affirmative action strategy, designed to ensure that racial ethnic and women-owned business have equitable opportunities to compete for business. Within the church, supplier diversity has also been seen as a way to build wealth in economically marginalized communities.

### C. *Cultural Proficiency*

Cultural proficiency is an approach to promoting and responding to the challenges of diversity in multiracial, multicultural organizations that moves beyond the limitations of affirmative action. While affirmative action strategies focus on increasing numerical representation, cultural proficiency focuses on creating an organizational climate in which individuals of diverse identities can fully participate, without surrendering their particularity; where diversity is seen as strength rather than a deficit or problem. Cultural proficiency also employs a broader definition of diversity—acknowledging that in any particular organization, there may be dimensions of diversity that are not defined by the parameters of race and gender, and yet are significant to that organization; i.e., employees who are Presbyterian and employees who are not.

Cultural proficiency offers a set of tools to guide and equip organizations in their work for intentional, systemic change. The following tools of cultural proficiency provide the foundation and basic parameters for setting goals and identifying strategies for implementation. [For a more detailed description of these tools, see Appendix A.]

- It is built on a set of *Guiding Principles*, which establish the underlying values.
- The *Essential Elements* identify five behavioral standards that provide a way to measure progress towards becoming more culturally proficiency and planning strategies for change.



- It identifies *The Barriers*, recognizing that resistance to change is an expected part of the change process, and promotes constructive responses.
- *The Continuum* provides language and a tool for defining/describing policies, practices, and individual behaviors that contribute to cultural proficiency, and those that are nonproductive or work counter to the goals of becoming culturally proficient.<sup>13</sup>

Cultural proficiency represents both a process and a vision. Creating a culturally proficient organization can involve a wide variety of strategies, and recognizes that becoming culturally proficient is not a static measurement. Organizations may function well in some areas and not so well in others. As organizations learn to incorporate some measure of diversity well, they may recognize new dimensions of diversity that need attention. Cultural proficiency aims for deep cultural transformation—a way of being that is oriented to incorporating diversity into the life of the organization. Becoming a culturally proficient organization involves individual transformation as well as organizational transformation. Organizational strategies to develop cultural proficiency should include:

- A strong expression of management’s vision and commitment to the goals of cultural proficiency;
- Assessment of organizational policies and practices to gauge consistency with cultural proficiency goals;
- Assessing organizational structure and communication patterns;
- Evaluation and assessment of organizational progress and individual performance for employees and management;
- Strong accountability systems, internally and externally; i.e., regular reporting of accomplishments and challenges within organizational systems, as well as to governing bodies or others with oversight responsibility;
- A vital affirmative action program to promote and sustain diversity in the organization; and
- Orientation and training for new employees and on-going educational activities to promote and sustain support of all employees, including:
  - anti-racism and prevention of sexual harassment training;
  - training to support supplier diversity goals;
  - training for specific skills, based on identified needs in the organization (e.g., training in cross-cultural communication, or providing an orientation to Presbyterianism for non-Presbyterian employees).

#### D. *Supplier Diversity*

Supplier diversity in the PC(USA) is a product of the church’s historic commitment to economic justice. In 1984 the 196th General Assembly (1984) adopted policy to increase “the purchase of goods and services ... from businesses owned by racial ethnic people” and directed *all* agencies to report on their progress to the Council on Church and Race and the General Assembly in 1985 (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, p. 503). Modeled on the federal program, it sets a goal for purchases from businesses owned by women and persons of color as a percentage of all purchases made by the agencies related to the General Assembly.

#### VI. Historical Context

*“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).*

The development of the church’s policies implementing equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency reflect the denomination’s historic commitment to justice, equity, and inclusion in its prophetic witness and in its own institutional life. The definition of these policies reflects both the evolution of civil law and creative innovation in responding to the challenges of diversity in business, education, and the nonprofit sector; and they reflect the intention of the General Assembly that the organizational life of the church give witness to the theological convictions of the church. The earliest actions of the General Assembly in this arena express a commitment to racial justice in the workplace. This commitment later expands to include women, persons with disabilities, and sexual orientation. The actions of the General Assembly express a prophetic vision, a hope for change, and a recognition that for effective institutional change to happen there must be mechanisms to set measurable goals, plan strategically for change, and hold the agencies and entities related to the General Assembly accountable for their efforts.

A review of some of the critical turning points in the development of church policy gives a sense of the commitment and direction that the church has taken. They also reflect, in some instances, a pattern of frustration within marginalized communities in the church—as actions are taken with high expectations of change that do not come to fruition. Key turning points

are often followed by successive actions to attempt to strengthen and clarify expectations, mandate greater accountability and call for deeper commitment. [For a summary of key General Assembly actions, see Appendix D.]

The 180th General Assembly (1968) (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1968, Part I, pp. 232–33) directed the Council on Church and Race to

- “review the employment practices of the General Assembly, its boards and related agencies;”
- “give guidance wherever it finds covert or overt discrimination; and”
- report to the 181st General Assembly (1969) on “the status of equal opportunity employment in the General Assembly, its boards and related agencies.”

The assembly also directed “the General Council, boards and related agencies ... to immediately establish programs wherein all purchase of and contracting for goods and services and all construction be done under a program of affirmative action toward equal opportunity employment.” The Council on Church and Race was directed to establish guidelines and procedures for implementation, and synods were encouraged to establish similar commitments.

Two years later, the 182nd General Assembly (1970) acknowledged that continuing de facto discrimination restricted the full participation of women and called on the church at all levels, in all judicatories, in the ecumenical bodies it participated in and in early discussions of reunion between the UPC(USA) and the PCUS, to work for the full participation of women.

An Office of Equal Employment was created. The General Assembly Mission Council also began working with Project Equality, a nonprofit organization created with support from the Presbyterian church and other denominations to provide assistance with implementation of affirmative action. Project Equality became a critical resource for all General Assembly-related entities—providing affirmative action audits for major contractors and a buyers’ guide for other purchasing.

In 1973, the 185th General Assembly 1973 (*Minutes*, 1973, Part I, pp. 506–508) adopted a formal policy of equal employment opportunity, proclaiming

In determining its own witness to the world and its service to humanity, the church of Jesus Christ ... sounds the note of liberation, reconciliation and healing, and calls all persons to the more abundant life in Christ. ... Such a mission ha[s] many implications, one of which is the removal of discriminatory practices that deny individuals the opportunity to achieve their highest employment potential.

The new EEO policy addressed employment practices (recruitment, hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits, and termination), contracting, and purchasing. It further directed the church to support its policy of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination through an affirmative action program, defining affirmative action as “the execution of a set of specific and results-oriented procedures designed to eliminate unconscious discriminatory practices in the employment of women and minority groups.”

With reunion, the PC(USA) reaffirmed its commitment to assuring the full participation of women and people of color in the Articles of Agreement (Articles 8 and 9). A Churchwide Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) was developed defining the PC(USA) commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in its own employment practices. The Churchwide AAP also spells out the commitment in contracting and purchasing to do business with companies and contractors who maintained the same standards of practice. Subsequent actions of the General Assembly added persons with disabilities and sexual orientation as protected categories—i.e., prohibiting discrimination by General Assembly-related entities based on these categories.

Reunion created new structures of accountability. The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) was established with representation from each synod. Its members also reflect the diversity that they are tasked with protecting/promoting (*Book of Order 2009–2011*, G-9.0105). The GACOR is given specific responsibility in both the *Book of Order (Book of Order 2011–13*, G-3.0103) and the Churchwide AAP to provide advice and oversight on employment practices and the implementation of affirmative action.

The two advocacy committees—the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns—were also formed as a result of reunion. The foundational principles for these committees, which are formed with direct access to the General Assembly to be a voice for advocacy and accountability in the denomination, are found in Articles 5, 8, and 9 of the Articles of Agreement. Each committee is structured to include representation of caucuses and other organizations that represent the interests of women and persons of color within the church.

## VII. Conclusion

*“Lamentably, it is an historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups tend to be more immoral than individuals.”* (The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in *A Letter from the Birmingham Jail*)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stands at a crossroads. It is time to do the hard work of confronting the barriers to change within our own institutional life, to choose a path that demands we listen to the voices of those who have been marginalized by systems of privilege, and exhibit the courage to change ourselves. The lesson learned in the review conducted by the Climate for Change Task Force is that deep change in our organizational life will not happen without the commitment of the whole church. It most certainly requires visionary leadership in each corporate entity, but it also requires the vigilance of the General Assembly committees and agency governing boards and councils responsible for oversight and accountability. It requires the participation of agency employees and the support of congregations and mid councils willing to participate in a culture of change. And it requires that each time the assembly gathers it take seriously its responsibility to monitor and assess the church's progress towards the goals it sets for its corporate entities. God has blessed the human family with a rich diversity of talents, traits, and experience. As a community of believers, we are called to give full expression to the gospel through the rich diversity of who we are, to break down the barriers that cut us off, one from the other, and grow in the fullness of who God created us to be.

#### Endnotes

- [1. ~~*Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, 211th General Assembly (1999). <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-vision-community/>.~~]
2. The six corporate entities related to the General Assembly are: Board of Pensions, General Assembly Mission Council, Office of General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.
3. Dr. Reginald Bruce, assoc. professor of management, College of Business, Univ. of Louisville, "Models for Addressing Diversity in Organizations." Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer, Vice Provost for Diversity and International Affairs, University of Louisville, "Creating a Climate for Inclusiveness". William H. Drewes, MBA-JD, Supplier Diversity Counsel, "Leveling the Playing Field."
4. The ACREC reports to the General Assembly from 2004 to the present document both agency efforts to implement cultural proficiency strategies and statistical representation of women and persons of color in employment at all levels.
5. *A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 857ff.)
6. *Book of Order: the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part II, 2011/2013*  
 F-1.0403 "The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. ..."  
 G-3.0103 "The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church's membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403)."
7. For more information about the membership, purpose, and work of each committee, see their respective pages in the PC(USA) website: [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org).
8. The EEOC is responsible to enforce the laws related to discrimination based upon certain protected categories, including race and national origin. Employers are required to submit an annual EEO-1 report, which includes the categories that the EEOC recognizes in its enforcement efforts. Instructions for an EEO-1 can be found at this link: <http://www.eeoc.gov/employers/eeo1survey/> and include this definition: "White (Not Hispanic or Latino)—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa." Therefore, the PC(USA) agencies, in conforming to federal law, recognize this definition imposed upon it by the EEOC for purposes of data collection.  
 While federal law limits data collection, there is no such limitation on protection from discrimination. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or protected activity. "Congress drafted the statute broadly to cover ... anyone—Whites, Blacks, Asians, Latinos, Arabs, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, persons of more than one race, and all other persons." *EEOC Compliance Manual* (<http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/race-color.html#VIC>).
9. "An employer is required to make a reasonable accommodation to the known disability of a qualified applicant or employee if it would not impose an 'undue hardship' on the operation of the employer's business. Reasonable accommodations are adjustments or modifications provided by an employer to enable people with disabilities to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Accommodations vary depending upon the needs of the individual applicant or employee. Not all people with disabilities (or even all people with the same disability) will require the same accommodation." Americans With Disabilities Act (<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/fs-ada.html>). Employers are barred by the ADA from inquiring about disabilities before and after hire, except in very limited circumstances. (See <http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/guidance-inquiries.html>). After hire, employers can ask employees disability-related question only if they are job-related and consistent with business necessity. The EEOC does not consider asking employees about their disabilities for the purpose of data collection as job-related or consistent with business necessity.
10. *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*. 211th General Assembly (1999). <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-vision-community/>.
11. Often attributed to Saint Francis Assisi, the originator of this quote is unknown.
12. Teresa Chávez Saucedo. "Is Affirmative Action Still Needed?" *The Racism Study Pack*, 2009. <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com>.
13. Lindsey, Randall B., KikanzaNuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell. *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, Inc., 2003, pp. 5–7.

## APPENDIX A

## Cultural Proficiency

*Cultural Proficiency* is an approach to building organizational capacity to thrive on the strengths of diversity. It is a process for intentional systemic change within organizations to nurture and sustain diverse community. It encompasses both

- the policies and practices of an organization, and
- the values and behaviors of individuals,

that enable an organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency defines diversity as a strength rather than a problem in organizations. As a process for strategic, intentional transformation, cultural proficiency addresses organizational culture, commitments, practices, and skills. It engages a set of tools for change and a vision of community that nurtures the diverse gifts of all its members.

As a transformational tool, cultural proficiency is an inside-out process that builds on the core values, norms, and traditions within the existing organizational structure to equip the organization to live out its vision with integrity. This approach creates a platform for creative, innovative leadership for change.

*The Tools of Cultural Proficiency* are not strategies or techniques. They provide a framework for assessing organizational practices and individual behaviors with an eye to giving direction to change and setting parameters for developing strategies for change within an organization.

- *The Continuum*

Language for describing both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and individual behaviors.

- *The Essential Elements*

Behavioral standards for measuring and planning for growth toward cultural proficiency.

- *The Barriers*

Caveats that assist in responding effectively to resistance to change.

- *The Guiding Principles*

Underlying values of the approach.

*The Continuum* recognizes that change processes are fluid and do not happen uniformly. There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum that indicate various ways of perceiving and responding to differences. They provide a vocabulary for assessing policies, practices, and behaviors. Organizations and individuals may have practices at multiple points on the continuum at any time.

- *Cultural destructiveness* works to eliminate any vestige of culture or difference defined as “other,” practices exclusion, or segregation.
- *Cultural incapacity* works to define culture or difference defined as “other” to be wrong, requires assimilation to the normative culture.
- *Cultural indifference* refuses to acknowledge the culture of others, treats difference as insignificant, and of no value to the organization.
- *Cultural pre-competence* accepts difference as normal, reflects an initial awareness of the need to adapt in order to incorporate diversity in a constructive manner in an organization, and work effectively as an individual in a diverse environment.
- *Cultural competence* works to build individual skills and organizational capacity to incorporate cultural diversity in an interactive manner, creates a culture that welcomes cultural difference.
- *Cultural proficiency* values difference, works to learn from the “other,” nurtures full participation and contributions of diverse cultural and social groups.

*The Essential Elements* of cultural proficiency provide the standards for building individual competencies and organizational practices. Organizational change begins with individual actions.

- *Assessing Cultural Knowledge:* Aware of one’s own cultural identity and organizational norms, aware of what you know about other’s cultures, about how you react to difference, and what you need to do to be effective in cross-cultural situations.
- *Valuing Diversity:* Makes intentional effort and adaptation to be inclusive of people whose cultural perspectives and experiences are different from yours or the normative culture of the organization, in order to enrich the conversation, decision-making, and problem-solving processes.

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- *Managing the Dynamics of Difference*: develops problem-solving and conflict resolutions strategies that are accessible to everyone and attend to cultural differences as normal processes within the organizational culture.
- *Adapting to Diversity*: Develops habits and ways of being within the organization that facilitate learning about differences of experience and cultural perspectives as normative practices.
- *Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge*: Learning about cultural differences, developing skills for cross-cultural communication, and problem-solving become integral to the organizational culture and standards for professional excellence.

*The Barriers* to cultural proficiency area present in varying degree in any organization. Effective strategies for change will be cognizant of the need to educate and motivate employees to gain support for change. The barriers also point to the importance that each individual plays in effecting change within an organization.

- *Unawareness of the need to adapt (resistance to change)*: Persons who are served well by the existing organizational culture may see the pressure to change as unnecessary and respond with indifference or see it as threatening. Resistance can create adversarial relationships within an organization if not addressed.
- *Systems of oppression*: Racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, etc. are historically embedded in the internal cultures of organizations and the external culture of society. Systems of oppression create barriers for members of non-dominant groups and extend unearned privilege to the members of the dominant group. Being able to recognize these systemic patterns apart from individual behavior is critical to effecting change within an organization, just as recognizing ways that the organization is impacted by external systems is important.
- *The presumption of privilege and entitlement*: When one group is defined as marginal and denied access to rights and privileges within a system, those same rights and privileges accrue to those who are by definition members of the dominant group, through no effort of their own. Failure to recognize this impact of systemic oppression leads to the presumption of privilege and entitlement as normative. This skewed sense of reality can lead to negative perceptions of persons in marginalized groups and undermines the moral force for organizational transformation.

*The Guiding Principles* provide the core values and assumptions on which cultural proficiency is built. They reflect the significant role of culture in perpetuating systems of oppression, the complexity of attempting deep systemic change, and the potential for culture to be an instrument of change and transformation.

- *Culture is a predominant force* in people's lives and in organization's lives. Within an organization, you cannot NOT participate or be influenced by the organizational culture.
- *People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture.*
- *Acknowledge group identities.* People have group identities and personal identities. The group identities that an individual participates in are important to that person as an individual.
- *Diversity within cultures is important.* Cultural groups are neither homogenous nor monolithic. Persons within a cultural group are unique individuals.
- *Respect unique cultural needs.* Culture shapes every aspect of life. Members of different cultures bring different needs to organizational life. In a culturally proficient organization, the dominant culture is attentive to the needs of non-dominant groups.

Adapted from: *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*. Lindsey, et al; "The Tools of Cultural Diversity" at <http://www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org/?q=resources>; and "Cultural Proficiency: Changing the Conversation," Lindsey, et al, at [ACSA/CommitteesGroups/EAD-for-Success/Cultural-proficiency.aspx](https://www.acsa.org/committees/groups/EAD-for-Success/Cultural-proficiency.aspx)

### APPENDIX B

#### Glossary of Terms

*Affirmative Action*: "In order to address past, present, and future discrimination, affirmative action is the execution of a set of specific and result-oriented measures designed to eliminate both conscious and unconscious discriminatory practices in order to promote equal opportunity and access to the entire church" (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 87).

*Ableism*: A pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who have mental, emotional, or physical disabilities. People with disabilities experience discrimination, segregation, isolation as a result of prejudices and institutional barriers, and not because of the disability itself.

*Ageism*: Bias and discrimination on the basis of age. Age as a protected class in federal equal employment law applies to persons age forty and over.

*Antiracism*: An action-oriented strategy to identify and dismantle systemic and institutional racism and interconnected systems of social oppression. Antiracism training is designed to equip people with knowledge and skills to acknowledge how racism impacts them personally, creating internalized oppression or privilege, and to work for social change.

*Class:* A social category defined by economic indicators including income, inherited wealth, formal education, networks of influence, and access to resources. *Classism* refers to the cultural practices and belief systems that assign value to individuals based on their perceived class status.

*Culture:* Everything you believe and do that identifies you as a member of a group and distinguishes you from other groups. You may belong to more than one cultural group. Cultures reflect the belief systems and behaviors that are informed by ethnicity as well as other sociological factors like gender, age, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Both individuals and organizations are defined by their cultures.

*Cultural Proficiency:* The policies and practices of an organization, and the values and behaviors of individuals, that enables an organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency defines diversity as a strength, rather than a problem in organizations. It is a process for strategic, intentional organizational transformation that addresses culture, commitments, practices and skills.

*Diversity:* In organizational systems, diversity refers to the range of social differences within the organization. It includes race, ethnicity, language, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, and other culturally defined factors. Diversity, as an organizational concept, does not provide a framework for addressing disparities in social power within an organization.

*Dominant Culture:* Refers to a person or group whose social identity confers on them unearned power and privilege. The dominant culture defines what is considered normative in a given context, and conveys greater access to the benefits of group membership or participation. In U.S. culture, the most prevalent dominant culture identities are white, male, English-speaking, heterosexual, able-bodied, Christian, affluent and middle class, college-educated.

*Ethnic:* The beliefs, practices, and traditions held in common by a group of people who share an identity, whether linguistic, historical, geographical, religious, or racial. While everyone belongs to an “ethnic” group, the word is often used to identify only non-dominant or marginal ethnic groups.

*Equal Employment Opportunity:* Refers to non-discrimination law and practice in employment. The 1964 Civil Rights Act identifies race, color, sex, religion, and national origin as protected classes. Age was added in 1967 and persons with disabilities in 1990. Sexual orientation laws have been passed in twelve states and many local governments also have non-discrimination laws based on sexual orientation.

*Gender:* The socially constructed roles, identity, and expectations associated with male and female. It encompasses behavior, appearance and other culturally defined expectations.

*Intersectionality:* Refers to the ways in which racism, sexism, classism, and other systems of oppression interact and compound one another in the lived experience of persons. It is most frequently employed to describe the experience of women of color.

*Internalized Oppression:* Communities oppressed by systemic racism, sexism, etc., develop and internalize false constructs—ideas, beliefs, actions, and behaviors that support or collude with their oppression. Internalized oppression has its own systemic reality and its own negative consequences in the lives of people of color, women, people with disabilities, etc. Systemic internalized oppression participates in, and expands the power of systemic privilege by actively undermining the power of marginalized groups. Internalized oppression provides a rubric for oppressed groups to talk about the work that they must do within themselves and with other oppressed groups to effect change.

*National Origin:* One of the protected categories under anti-discrimination laws. National origin discrimination involves treating people unfavorably because they are from a particular country or part of the world, because of ethnicity or accent, because they appear to be of a certain ethnic background (even if they are not), or are associated with a person, organization, or group of a certain national origin.

*People of Color:* This term originates with racialized people as a positive construction for naming themselves, rather than as “non-white,” “minority,” or “ethnic.”

*Prejudice:* A prejudgment drawn in the absence of evidence and held in the face of evidence that contradicts it. Prejudices based on stereotypic ideas about groups of people promulgate attitudes of superiority or inferiority. Prejudice is often hard to change because in an environment of discrimination, systemic patterns of oppression may make stereotypes appear to be normative.

*Race:* A social category used to classify people by physical attributes such as skin color, hair texture, facial characteristics, or stature. Race assigns meaning and value to racial differences in ways that have disparate impact on racial groups.

*Racism:* Refers to systemic oppression rooted in racial prejudice and the social power ascribed to white identity. It impacts social, cultural, economic, and political well-being. It encompasses beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that perpetuate racial stereotypes; the complex network of institutional structures, policies, and practices that create and/or perpetuate racial disparities, resulting in the exclusion or marginalization through socially constructed invisibility for people of color.

*Racialization:* The process through which groups come to be designated as different, and on that basis subjected to different and unequal treatment. Racialized groups include people who might experience differential treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, religion, or culture.

*Sexism:* Refers to systemic oppression rooted in stereotyping of men and women as hierarchically ordered (men over women) and also as confined to limited cultural identities and roles as “masculine” and “feminine.” Sexism ascribes privilege and social power to men, ex-

cluding women from certain types of leadership roles, restricting access to employment opportunities, and marginalizing their voice in the public arena. Sexism may be expressed in interpersonal, cultural, economic, legal, and political terms.

*Stereotype*: A fixed notion or conception of a person or group that ascribes personal characteristic based on the group identity. Stereotypes are broad, false generalizations that are often used to justify discriminatory actions or to rationalize disparate treatment of individuals.

*White Privilege*: The concrete benefits resulting from access to resources and social rewards, and the social power to shape the norms and values of society that white people receive, consciously and unconsciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racialized society. White people generally receive these benefits without consciously choosing to do so and help to perpetuate it when they do not recognize that the same systems exclude people of color from full participation or access to the social benefits of the dominant culture.

Sources: *Hearing and Singing New Songs to God*, Report of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force to the 218th General Assembly (2008). Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, *Cultural Proficiency: a Manual for School Leaders*, 2003. Lopes and Thomas, *Dancing on Live Embers: Challenging Racism in Organizations*, 2006. Ruether, *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996); <http://www.eecoc.gov>. and <http://www.racialequitytools.org/index.htm>.

## APPENDIX C

### Resources

#### *Bibliography*

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- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman& Littlefield, 2006.
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- Johnson, Allan G. *Privilege, Power and Difference*. 2nd Ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006.
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- Lopes, Tina and Barb Thomas. *Dancing on Live Embers: Challenging Racism in Organizations*. Toronto, Canada: Between the Lines, 2006.
- Parker, Robin and Pamela Smith Chambers. *The Anti-Racist Cookbook: A Recipe Guide for Conversations About Race That Goes Beyond Covered Dishes and "Kum-Bah-Ya"*. Roselle, N.J.: Crandall, Dostie& Douglas Books, Inc., 2005.
- Pease, Bob. *Undoing Privilege: Unearned Advantage in a Divided World*. New York: Zed Books, 2010.

#### *Video/DVD*

- Light in the Shadows*. World Trust Educational Services. [www.world-trust.org](http://www.world-trust.org).
- Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*. World Trust Educational Services. [www.world-trust.org](http://www.world-trust.org).
- Race, the Power of an Illusion*. California Newsreel. [www.newsreel.org](http://www.newsreel.org).
- The Complete Blue-Eyed with Jane Elliot*. California Newsreel. [www.newsreel.org](http://www.newsreel.org).
- The Lunch Date* by Adam Davidson. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epuTZigxUY8>.

#### *Websites*

- Facing Race: We're All in This Together. Saint Paul Foundation. [http://www.facingrace.org/tools\\_for\\_addressing\\_racism/stories/](http://www.facingrace.org/tools_for_addressing_racism/stories/).

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Kaleidoscope Institute: *for Competent Leadership in a Diverse, Changing World*. Eric Law, Exec. Dir.  
<http://www.kscopeinstitute.org/index.html>

National Minority Supplier Diversity Council, Inc. <http://www.nmsdc.org/nmsdc/>.

Racial Equity. Aspen Institute. <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/community-change/racial-equity>.

Racial Equity Tools. <http://www.racialequitytools.org/index.htm>. A web site designed to support people and groups who are working for inclusion, racial equity and social justice. The site includes ideas, strategies and tips, as well as a clearinghouse of resources and links from many sources.

Racial Justice Systems Thinking. A webinar by John Powell, Executive Director, Kirwan Institute (kirwaninstitute.org)  
<http://portal.sliderocket.com/AQUEZ/johnpowell-webinar>

Women's Business Enterprise National Council. <http://www.wbenc.org/>.

### Blogs

*White Privilege Is Not About Feeling Guilty*. Momma C. <http://pullthisblogover.blogspot.com/2010/08/white-privilege-is-not-about-feeling.html>.

*Working on White Privilege*. Mary Elizabeth Hess, PhD. <http://www.religiouseed.org/tensegrities/archives/3645>

*How to Tell People They Sound Racist*. Illdoctrine.com, a hip hop video blog. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0Ti-gkJiXc&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0Ti-gkJiXc&feature=player_embedded)

### PC(USA) Resources

*Becoming the Beloved Community Antiracism Resource Packet*. Presbyterian Women. PWR10046.

*Becoming the Beloved Community: People of Faith Working Together to Eradicate Racism*. Presbyterian Women. PWR-06-120 (video/DVD).

*Diversity in Leadership Network* (<http://gadc.pcusa.org/ministries/diversity/>), Office for Organizational Diversity, Education and Recruitment (GAMC).

*Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies*. Report of the Women of Color Consultation Task Force to the 218th General Assembly (2008). PDS# OGA-08-94.

"Is Affirmative Action Still Needed?" *The Racism Study Pack*, 2009. <http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/>

*Office of Gender and Racial Justice*, GAMC, offers a variety of resources and training models for use in congregations, presbyteries and synods. For information, go to the following websites:

Gender Justice: <http://gadc.pcusa.org/ministries/gender-justice-ministries/>; or

Racial Justice: <http://gadc.pcusa.org/ministries/racialjustice/>.

## APPENDIX D

### General Assembly Policy Highlights:

#### Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Minority Vendor Policy & Cultural Proficiency

1. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) Report: *Creating a Climate for Change within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, 218th General Assembly (2008). Created a task force to review the current Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (AA/EEO), contracting, and purchasing policies; and recommend revisions. The task force was directed to provide a final report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

2. *God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation*, 218th General Assembly (2008). Called for the church at all levels to ensure equity in compensation for women and men. Directed the Office of Vocation, with ACWC, to prepare a tool for use by presbytery committees on ministry and provide training "with regard to gender and racial/ethnic sensitivity in hiring and employment."

3. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) Task Force to Examine General Assembly Entities: Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, 216th General Assembly (2004). Recommendations in this report initiated cultural proficiency programs and established ACREC consultations with the six General Assembly entities, to create a corporate church culture, including its boards, agencies, and institutions that is equipped to address the issues that arise in a diverse environment.

4. *On Affirming Civil Rights and Nondiscrimination for All Persons, Regardless of Sexual Orientation*, 214th General Assembly (2004). Reaffirmed resolutions adopted by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the UPCUSA, and called upon Presbyterians to work for the passage of laws that prohibit discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations based on the sexual orientation of a person.



5. *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community*, a report from the Initiative Team on Racism and Racial Violence, 211th General Assembly (1999). Outlined a strategy to equip the church to be an agent for change in the struggle to dismantle racism. Directed the General Assembly Council to provide antiracism training to the staff at the Presbyterian Center.

6. Project Equality (*Overture 98-24*), 210th General Assembly (1998). Affirmed earlier actions of the General Assembly to support equal employment opportunity through validation for vendors with Project Equality and encouraged General Assembly agencies, synods, presbyteries, and congregations to validate vendors and suppliers with Project Equality as an effective tool to work for economic justice and eradicate race- and gender-based discrimination in the workforce.

7. Affirmative Action (*Overture 95-55*), 207th General Assembly (1995). Reaffirmed the commitment of the General Assembly to affirmative action as a means of achieving equal employment opportunity and to undoing historical and institutional effects of discrimination based on age, disability, marital status, race, or gender. It directed the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns to monitor the fulfillment of these recommendations in cooperation with the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action and directed the church's Office on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action to monitor affirmative action within the church and with church-related enterprises.

8. *On Developing and Strengthening Churchwide Affirmative Action Provisions in the Book of Order*, 204th General Assembly (1991). Defined affirmative action, amended *Book of Order* to develop and strengthen churchwide affirmative action provisions.

9. Regarding Fair Representation of Persons with Disabilities (*Overture 89-73*). 201th General Assembly (1989).

10. Joint Report of the Councils on Church and Race, *A Statement on Racial Ethnic*, 199th General Assembly (1987). Defined the term "racial ethnic" for use in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

*"A racial ethnic group is a group that defines itself and is defined by others as being phenotypically (physically) or culturally divergent from the dominant White American group. And, most crucial is the fact that the racial ethnic group has held and continues to hold ascribed and unequal status in participation and representation in most, if not all, major institutions of American society. The racial ethnic groups in America include Black Americans, Indian Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans."* (Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 565)

11. Joint Report of the Committee on Women's Concerns and the Council on Women and the Church, 198th General Assembly (1986). Reaffirmed the assembly's opposition to sex-biased wage discrimination, urged all governing bodies and agencies of the General Assembly to evaluate their own wage scales to ensure pay equity for both women and men. Supported effective affirmative action to achieve the goal of employment equality.

12. *A Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action*, adopted by the 197th General Assembly (1985), revised and reprinted in 1994.

The following are excerpts from the Plan:

"It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide equal employment opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons; to prohibit discrimination in employment based upon age, disability, marital status, racial ethnic group, or sex; and to correct any existing patterns of discrimination. The realization of inclusiveness and diversity in employment is promoted through positive, results-oriented, equal employment opportunity/affirmative action practices." (p. 1)

The Churchwide Plan provides instruction to all governing bodies:

- In accordance with the Book of Order (G-9.0105) the General Assembly Committee on Representation shall develop and establish guidelines for governing bodies and their related Committees on Representation (pp. 4, 11);
- Gives the General Assembly Council "a leadership role in coordinating the churchwide plan." (p.11);
- Directs the General Assembly Council to
  - Develop and implement an overall plan for coordinating the equal employment activities of the General Assembly –level; and
  - recommend periodically to the General Assembly
- EEO/Affirmative Action goals
- Annual summaries of performance for GA related entities
- Proposed corrective action when necessary" (pp. 11–12).

13. *Minority Vendor Policy*. Report of the Council on Church and Race, 196th General Assembly (1984). Directed the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopt policy to increase the purchase of goods and services for the operation of its national agencies from businesses owned by racial ethnic people. Directed all agencies provide a progress report to the 1985 General Assembly and to the Council on Church and Race, and urged other governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to adopt similar policy.

14. General Assembly Mission Council, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity: *Policy Statement of the General Assembly on Equal Employment Opportunity*, 185th General Assembly (1973). Complete text follows:

*Policy Statement of the General Assembly on Equal Employment Opportunity*

In determining its own witness to the world and its service to humanity, the church of Jesus Christ is bound by the gospel mandate to "announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to let the broken victims go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Thus it sounds the note of liberation, reconciliation and healing, and calls all persons to the more abundant life in Christ.

In the modern world such a mission had many implications, one of which is the removal of discriminatory practices that deny individuals the opportunity to achieve their highest employment potential. Therefore, it is the policy of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America to provide equal opportunity in employment and upward mobility for all qualified and qualifiable persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, religious affiliation, color, national origin, sex, age, or marital status, and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a positive and continuing program of affirmative action.

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180th General Assembly (1968):

“There shall be no discrimination on the part of department heads or other supervisory officers, based on sex, marital status, ethnic origin, color, or religious affiliation, in making recommendations for the advancement, remuneration, application of benefits, etc., of any employee in the clerical and elected and appointed staffs of the boards and agencies of the General Assembly.” (Minutes, 1968, Part I, p. 233.)

182nd General Assembly (1970):

“The 182nd General Assembly (1970) requests all judicatories including the sessions of churches, agencies, boards, councils, and committees to include women fully in their tasks and ministries and to remove causes of *de facto* discrimination against the full participation of women within the boundaries of their jurisdiction.” (Minutes, 1970, Part I, p. 434.)

183rd General Assembly (1971):

“Boards and agencies shall take affirmative action and judicatories are urged to take affirmative action to insure that employment policies include equal opportunity in employment, salary level, promotion, transfer, recruitment, advertising, employee benefits, vacation, termination rates of pay or other forms of termination.” (Minutes, 1971, Part I, p. 313.)

In compliance with the above and the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, The Equal Pay Act of 1963, New York State Human Rights Law, the Equal Pay Law of New York State, and the applicable executive orders, the policy of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America not to discriminate in employment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America will recruit, hire, and promote all job classifications without regard to race, religious affiliation, color, national origin, sex, age, or marital status except where religious affiliation is a *bona fide* occupational qualification.
2. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in line with the above statements, will periodically conduct analysis of all personnel actions and develop plans to insure that equal opportunity is supported through an Affirmative Action Program. Affirmative action is the execution of a set of specific and result-oriented procedures designed to eliminate unconscious discriminatory practices in the employment of women and minority groups.
3. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America will provide equal opportunities in training during employment.
4. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America will insure that all other personnel actions such as compensation benefits, transfers, leaves of absence, lay-offs, return from lay-off, education, tuition assistance, and any others will be administered on a non-discriminatory basis.
5. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as purchaser, shall contract or purchase services, supplies and goods, whenever possible only from businesses which have committed themselves to the goal of equal employment opportunity and which are willing to cooperate with Project Equality Incorporated.

The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America shall utilize the Project Equality process and all its forms, so that whenever a reasonable choice exists, the agency will favor suppliers who are listed in the Buyers’ Guide and supplements.

6. The General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as investor, shall invest wherever possible in businesses that are committed to Equal Employment Opportunity.

Appendix E:

Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer  
Committee Roles and Responsibilities

GA Committee on Representation (GACOR)	Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>[2a,b] review numerical affirmative action goals for employment and supplier diversity purchasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recommend new goals to GA in 6-yr cycle, beginning in 2014, in consultation with ACREC &amp; ACWC</li> </ul> <p>[2d,e] receives statistical reports every 2 yrs., from all 6 agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures progress against goals for employment data and supplier diversity</li> <li>• Reports on all 6 agencies to GA</li> </ul> <p>[2f] share statistical reports and GACOR assessment with ACREC and ACWC</p> <p>[2g] monitor agency policy and practice for compliance with Churchwide Plan regarding major contractors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is on statistical measurement and basic compliance with AA/EEO requirements</li> <li>• Reviews number AA goals in a 6-yr cycle</li> <li>• Reviews agency statistical reports in a 2-yr cycle and reports to GA</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendation</p> <p>[3] Reviews and monitors implementation of cultural proficiency, using agency implementation plans and onsite consultations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews each agency on a 6-yr cycle, reporting to GA on 1 agency at each Assembly. (as established in ACREC 2010 rpt to GA)</li> <li>• Incorporates statistical data reported to GACOR as part of their assessment, focusing on trends over the 6-yr period.</li> <li>• Does not collect their own statistical data.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is on assessment and consultation with agencies on their implementation of cultural proficiency</li> <li>• Agency implementation plans are the key document for their review</li> <li>• Review each agency in a 6-cycle, in conjunction with the GA agency review</li> <li>• Works in consultation with ACWC</li> </ul>

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-17**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-17—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-17.

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 11-17**

*Comment on Item 11-17—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve Item 11-17 and offers this comment:

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, in the *Book of Order*, has given to committees on representation the function of advising their respective councils on the employment of personnel since reunion in 1983, establishing the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA). Committees on representation are mandated at all councils above session (G-3.0103). The General Assembly Committee on Representation serves at the assembly level and advises all General Assembly entities as well as the assembly itself. The references in the Constitution to its functions are found in the Form of Government at G-3.0103 (before July 10, 2011, it was found at G-9.0105e). At Reunion and the inception of GACOR, the structures of the assembly level employers (the six entities) and their capacities were drastically different. The committee in recent years, after restructures removed offices dedicated to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, met confusion as to where it was to connect and whom in a staff role had the relevant portfolio and the information GACOR needed. The GACOR continues to meet stiff resistance to its inquiries for data and its responsibilities in this regard. The GACOR has not been adequately provided with the necessary data and information to provide this counsel since staff with portfolios of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action were removed from the structure of the General Assembly Council (now General Assembly Mission Council). Reporting is impossible and not useful without the requisite data. When the task force was created by action of the 218th General Assembly (2008), GACOR engaged them about the barriers they have experienced to fulfilling their function in this aspect of their assigned work. While the direct reference to the *Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action* (adopted in 1985, last updated in 1994) is no longer mentioned by name in the *Book of Order*, it remains the implementation plan of record and contains within it, for direct references to GACOR and its role in the work. The GACOR concerns are informed by the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F-1.0403) that outlines the communities for whom they show particular concern. These communities are specifically listed not as a reward or achievement but because persons in these groups experience chronic and systemic discriminatory practice, under-representation, and under resourcing merely because of their identification of being in the group. The “other”ness expressed here is wider than its sister advocacy committees.

The GACOR welcomes the distinctions in separate mandates that the task force has drawn in their report and the clear roles they recommend for an adaptive and effective accountability system within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The complimentary missions and mandates of the GACOR and its sister advocacy committees (Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns), work together to provide accountability and advice to the institutions empowered by the assembly for the mission and ministry of the national church. Clarifying the distinct roles and responsibilities between GACOR, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns regarding the monitoring and reporting of employment of personnel, supplier diversity, cultural proficiency, and other institutional means impacting the church’s employment and purchasing actions efficiently uses the volunteer resources of committee service and will enhance diversity and inclusiveness within the body of Jesus Christ. Having a system in place monitored by elected committees, holding national entities accountable to the assembly with regard to the employment of personnel, supplier diversity and cultural proficiency provides a witness to the Body of Christ, to the society at-large, and models equitable practices how the church operates with its own staff. As a committee of elected persons from across the church, GACOR welcomes the specificity of tasks offered in this description of its responsibility in implementing its assigned role, and the clarity provided to the entities with which it must engage to do the work. The GACOR welcomes the 220th General Assembly (2012)’s approval of these recommendations as restoring its ability to fulfill its constitutional functions and by the assembly reminding the council’s six entities of their tasks to provide GACOR the information, to engage in consultation, and to receive feedback and advice.

The task force was asked to, “[u]pdate churchwide AA/EEO policies to reflect the church’s commitment to using the tools of cultural proficiency for organizational change; provide guidance and standards for consistent application of the Minority Vendor Policy in the six corporate entities related to the General Assembly; in consultation with staff, develop new guidelines and procedures to be used in lieu of services formerly provided by Project Equality; and revise and update AA/EEO and Minority Vendor policies to reflect changes in the agencies related to the General Assembly and the changing business environment created by emerging technology” (Presbyterian News Service article, February 26, 2009, titled “GA moderator continues work on filling special committees and task forces” accessed on the web at <http://www->

[test.pcusa.org/news/2009/2/26/ga-moderator-continues-work-filling-special-commit/](http://test.pcusa.org/news/2009/2/26/ga-moderator-continues-work-filling-special-commit/)). The GACOR commends the effective work of the Climate for Change Task Force, and their recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-17

*Comment on Item 11-17—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

If the General Assembly approves the recommendation for an expanded role for the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR), then the GAMC would request that clarification be given to General Assembly agencies regarding the overlapping mandates, and multiple reporting structures, in these areas. Currently the GAMC and the other assembly agencies already report employment and supplier diversity information to ACREC and to the General Assembly. The ACREC reports to the General Assembly regarding its findings from each agency. This recommendation adds another reporting mechanism—the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The GAMC believes that a streamlined reporting process will produce the best results, and the least distraction from the General Assembly’s mission directions.

The recommendations of the Climate for Change Task Force propose substantive changes in the responsibilities of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR). The *Book of Order* mandate for committees on representation states:

... Councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403 ... (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103)

The word “council” in this sentence refers to the presbytery, synod, or General Assembly, and so, the role of the General Assembly Committee on Representation is to:

- Advise the General Assembly regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity;
- Advocate for diversity in leadership;
- Consult with the General Assembly on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.

The Climate for Change Task Force recommendations also refer to the mandate for committees on representation that is found in “A Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.” However, this mandate consists entirely of language from the old “Form of Government,” which was eliminated in 2011. The only current mandate for committees on representation is referenced above from the current *Book of Order*.

In 1994, the General Assembly created two advocacy committees for examining critical aspects of the church’s ministry, as described in the “Organization for Mission”:

- The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403. The committee shall be a prophetic voice for involving racial ethnic people in the formation of public policy, particularly where race is a factor that negatively impacts the quality of life of people of color. The committee will also monitor the implementation of policies approved by the church that impact the quality of life of racial ethnic people in the church and in the world.
- The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns shall assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church and the world; and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society as a whole.

Among other responsibilities, these committees are charged with:

- Preparing policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women’s or racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the GAMC, or on its own initiative.
- Advising the GAMC on matters of women’s or racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.

- Monitoring the implementation of women’s or racial justice policies and programs relative to women’s or racial ethnic concerns.
- Through advocacy maintaining a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s or racial ethnic concern.

In addition, the General Assembly has given the GAMC responsibility for: “Approval and monitoring of the ‘Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action’” (*Organization for Mission*, V.D.5.)

The General Assembly Mission Council has been a leader in exceeding the denomination’s Equal Employment Opportunity goals of 40 percent women and 20 percent racial ethnic persons. The GAMC’s 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity report shows a workforce of 312 members that is 70 percent female and 25 percent racial ethnic. Over the past six years, the GAMC workforce has decreased by 152 members, yet the percentages have continued to exceed the goal, and remain remarkably consistent (2005—71 percent female and 26 percent racial ethnic).

The GAMC is committed to the highest levels of excellence with regard to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, in the areas of employment, supplier diversity, and cultural proficiency. The recommendation rightly notes GAMC competence in these areas when it directs GAMC personnel to train and guide other General Assembly agencies in these areas.

The GAMC would also note that many of the recommendations in this item retain an outdated understanding of the role of the GAMC. From 1987 through 2006, the General Assembly Mission Council had a superintending role among the General Assembly agencies; that is, it had some responsibility for providing coordination between assembly agencies, and providing centralized support for equal employment opportunity, etc. In 2006, the *Book of Order* mandate for the work of the GAMC was amended to focus its work on mission activities.

For example, changes included:

- ~~To institute and coordinate a churchwide plan for~~*To provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities;*
- ~~To develop and engage in churchwide planning to~~*propose, for General Assembly approval/determination, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the church/General Assembly Mission Council, doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the General Assembly Council;*
- ~~to coordinate the work of General Assembly agencies and bodies, synods and presbyteries, in light of the these mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities;~~
- ~~to review the work of General Assembly agencies and bodies in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities;~~

While the GAMC engages in ministry collaboratively with the other assembly agencies, readily commits staff members to joint projects, and shares best practices, it no longer has a supervisory role with respect to the other agencies.

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**GAMC ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON ITEM 11-17**  
**[Received June 29, 2012]**

*Additional Comment on Item 11-17, Recommendation 2.a.–g.—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

In 2006, the General Assembly amended the *Book of Order* with respect to GAMC responsibilities, eliminating the GAMC’s superintending role for the six agencies. This action came at the request of the GAMC in view of the changing structures of General Assembly agency structures in the years that followed reunion in 1983, the new structural design for mission in 1987, and the proliferation of General Assembly agencies that has transpired since that time (OGA/COGA, PPC, PILP). Prior to 2006, the GAMC had the responsibility to implement the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, as stated in the plan itself from 1985. After 2006, GAMC’s role was to “provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action” and to approve and monitor the Churchwide Plan. This created a gap in implementation for the General Assembly’s commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The Climate for Change Task Force recommendation suggests that GACOR fill that gap, and become responsible for reviewing and revising the goals, both for employment and purchasing. The GAMC believes that this is a function that should remain individually charged to the assembly’s agencies with input from other professionals in the field. The GAMC understands the role of GACOR is to bring advice to the assembly’s agencies in this area, and that the role of ACWC and ACREC is to monitor implementation of policy and advocate for change.

In keeping with this understanding, the GAMC suggests that a task force be formed to include

- the Human Resource directors of the six General Assembly agencies (or their designees);
- two members of GACOR and the primary staff member for GACOR;
- two at-large members with expertise in Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action implementation (one upon recommendation from ACREC and another upon recommendation from ACWC).

Further, the GAMC suggests that Recommendations 2.a–2.g be referred to this task force for study, along with the paragraph from the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action that deals with oversight of Equal Employment Opportunity implementation (Section Two, II.A.). The task force will bring specific recommendations for revisions and implementation to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

## Item 11-18

[The assembly approved Item 11-18. See pp. 28, 34.]

### *A Resolution on Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. **Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to seek advice from the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., on how to educate and advocate for ending the problem of rape kit backlogs in the United States.**
2. **Direct the PC(USA) to stand behind the Justice for Sexual Assault Survivors Act of 2011 and advocate for its passing.**

#### *Rationale*

According to the Human Rights Watch, there are currently approximately 400,000–500,000 untested rape kits sitting in police evidence storage facilities and crime labs throughout the United States.<sup>1</sup> Rape kits are comprised of the physical and DNA evidence taken from survivors of rape during a five-to-six-hour exam. Currently, many of these kits sit until the evidence has deteriorated to the point of not being testable or until the statute of limitations on crimes of rape expires. This leads to many persons being victimized a second time by the system of justice that was supposed to protect and seek justice for them. The city of Detroit reports that in 2010 there were 12,000 rape kits unprocessed and sitting in storage, and some of those kits were more than ten years old.<sup>2</sup> Rape is a terribly underreported crime, and the fact that many communities struggle to fund and process these rape kits may discourage survivors of rape from reporting these crimes. It is estimated that a rape kit costs anywhere from \$900–\$1,000 to process.<sup>3</sup> The Debbie Smith Act was passed in 2004, which uses federal funding to help cities and states pay for rape kits through grants. However, this act does not require states to report and set up a system to prevent backlogs, and these funds also cannot be used to hire staff in cities where these labs are sorely understaffed.

Currently, the Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault Act of 2011 is being sponsored by Senator Al Franken and co-sponsored by nine other senators (Michael Bennet [D-Colo.], Richard Blumenthal [D-Conn.], Richard Burr [R-N.C.], Robert Casey [D-Pa.], Dianne Feinstein [D-Calif.], Charles Grassley [R-Iowa], Kay Hagan [D-N.C.], Frank Lautenberg [D-N.J.], and Bernard Sanders [I-Vt.]). This bill has been introduced and referred to committee, but has not moved forward since. This bill’s purpose is to redirect how federal grant money can be used to better solve this problem and also to require states and cities to not only report what their rape kit backlog is, but also to have a plan prepared to end and prevent rape kit backlogs. This bill will amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to better address the problem of rape kit backlogs.

Rape is a crime against a person that horrifically assaults every aspect of personhood. It is a crime that affects one’s body, mind, and spirit, and has long-term implications in the survivor’s life. Our faith informs our action, as we are called as the Church to stand up in the face of injustice and work towards freedom from systems of oppression and injustice. The writer of the final chapters of Isaiah proclaims, “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?” (Isa. 58:6). We are called to action through our faith and the Gospel message, and in the case of injustices transpiring involving the backlog of rape kits, we are called to stand and act alongside persons who have already survived a tremendous evil.

For these reasons, we recommend that the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) seek advice from the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., on how to educate and advocate for this issue. We recommend that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stand behind the Justice for Sexual Assault Survivors Act of 2011 and advocate for the passing of this bill.

## Endnotes

1. “Eliminate Rape Kit Backlog,” *Human Rights Watch*, [http://www.kintera.org/c.nIWIgN2JwE/b.5706887/k.37FC/Eliminate\\_the\\_Rape\\_Kit\\_Backlog/siteapps/advocacy/ActionItem.aspx](http://www.kintera.org/c.nIWIgN2JwE/b.5706887/k.37FC/Eliminate_the_Rape_Kit_Backlog/siteapps/advocacy/ActionItem.aspx) (accessed January 20, 2012).
2. Devin Dwyer and Lisa Jones, “Rape Kit Testing Backlog Thwarts Justice for Victims,” May 20, 2010, *ABC News* [<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/sexual-assault-victims-congress-solve-rape-kit-backlog/story?id=10701295>] (accessed on January 20, 2012).
3. Dwyer and Jones, “Rape Kit Testing Backlog Thwarts Justice for Victims,” [accessed on January 20, 2012).

## Item 11-19

[The assembly approved Item 11-19 with amendment. See pp. 28, 34.]

*On Advocating for Trade Reform and Accountability—From the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks.*

The Presbytery of Plains and Peaks respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to address the [American] Free Trade Agreements that affect immigration and economic development, particularly the United States’ role in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), through the following measures:

1. Encourage PC(USA) members, congregations, and presbyteries to advocate for corrective measures to mitigate trade imbalances, unemployment trends, and market distortions related to NAFTA, the current recession, and to longer term patterns of inequality and underdevelopment, such as:

- The Trade Reform, Accountability, Development, and Employment (TRADE) Act, designed to enhance the lives of farmers and factory workers, to free poor children to attend school, and to help lift people out of poverty.
- Revisions to trade agreements that often privilege corporations over citizens and protective agencies of government, and other measures to challenge both governmental and corporate dangers of corruption or collusion.
- Similar mitigating measures and trade reforms that would relate to many areas of the world such as Central and South America[;] [and] Jordan[; ~~and Peru~~].
- Appropriate investigation of violations of land, water, labor rights, and tax-shelters by corporations taking advantage of World Trade Organization and free trade agreement provisions.

2. Request the Office of Immigration Issues of the Office of General Assembly, and the Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministry area of the General Assembly Mission Council to report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the status of trade issues and the concerns expressed in discussions within the church.

### *Rationale*

As Christians we have a biblical mandate to establish justice, and care for the powerless. For example:

- Micah 6:8 tells us that we are to “do justice and love kindness”;
- Amos 2:6 speaks of God’s judgment on those who “sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes.”

As Presbyterians we have a constitutional imperative:

- to promote social righteousness (F-1.0304)
- to promote acts of compassion and advocacy (W-7.3003)

#### A. *Five Key Points of the TRADE Act*

##### 1. *Labor*

- Acceptable minimum wages, fair hours of work, work health, and safety standards
- Rights to collective bargaining, elimination of force labor, and child labor

##### 2. *Human Rights*

- Sustains fundamental human rights (defined by United Nations Universal Declaration to Human Rights)

3. *Environment and Public Safety*

- The partner country's established environmental, public health, or safety standards upheld
- Prohibits illegally harvested resources and prohibits illegally extracted natural resources

4. *Food and Product Health and Safety*

- Food and non-food products imported to US must meet or exceed existing US standards concerning safety, pesticides, inspections, packaging, labeling, etc.
- The partner country may impose standards to protect public health and safety

5. *Agricultural*

- Ensure adequate and stable market returns for each country
- Encourage conservation through best practices in management and production of crops
- Prevent dumping of agricultural commodities at below cost production (undercutting prices of agricultural goods by transnational businesses)
- Protect rights of partner country to establish policies that determine fair remuneration for management and labor costs

All key points will preserve or uphold:

- US laws relating to antitrust and anticompetitive business practices
- Policies which do not conflict with current agricultural policies and laws of United States
- Enforcement of these standards (included in each key point)

B. *Examples of Relevant Economic Developments*1. *North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)*

- “(In) 1989 Mexico was self-sufficient in the production of rice and corn. Today Mexico imports about 80–90% of its needs from the USA, because NAFTA requested that the Mexican Government not provide support to the Mexican farmers.”<sup>1</sup>

- “Many schools are abandoned as underage children work in the fields to help parents earn enough to feed them. A child might produce twenty to thirty bunches—half the total produced by an adult. Companies pay 80 or 81 centavos (11 cents in 1996) for a dozen bunches of onions.”<sup>2</sup>

- “In many Mexican factories, working conditions are threats to the health of the workers. No ventilation in plants and some workers suffer from “metal fume fever,” a condition caused by welding, which causes damage to lungs and eyes.”<sup>3</sup>

- “The Increase of poverty and unemployment resulted in the growth of the drug cartels. Gangsters rich on profits brought hell to Juarez, a dusty border city. Mexico has become the major transit route for drugs from Central America.”<sup>4</sup>

- “[The drug cartels’] mobsters are putting Mexico’s halting democracy to a test, using violence and bribes to influence elections for governor, the legislature and all 113 mayors.”<sup>5</sup>

2. *Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)*

- Guatemala: The women and their families are trapped in extreme poverty, earning 76 cents to \$1.15 an hour.<sup>6</sup>

- El Salvador: The women are paid just 94 cents for each \$165 North Face jacket they sew – meaning that their wages amount to less than six-tenth of one percent of the jacket’s retail price.<sup>7</sup>

- In 2010 the drug smugglers ensured that Honduras, El Salvador, Belize, and Guatemala were among the world’s seven most violent countries.<sup>8</sup>

- Nicaragua: The consequences of neoliberal trade policies in towns like El Regadio, made it difficult for rural communities to compete with U.S. subsidized agricultural exports. Many farmers had to leave their land to work in factories.<sup>9</sup>

3. *Other*

- U.S.—Jordan Free Trade Agreement Descent into Human Trafficking: Tens of thousands of Foreign Guest Workers Stripped of their Passports and Trapped in Involuntary Servitude.<sup>10</sup>



- La Oroya, Peru, a smelting plant has put out so much pollution that 97% of children, in that area, have had high levels of lead in their blood.<sup>11</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Pamela K. Brubaker, *Globalization at What Price?* Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2001, p. 46.
2. David Bacon, *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Laws on the U.S./Mexican Border*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2004, p. 35
3. *Ibid.*
4. “Friendly Fire,” *The Economist*, November 12, 2011. <http://www.economist.com/node/21538198>
5. Mark Stevenson, “Mexican democracy tested by drug cartels’ influence in elections,” (AP wire story). November 13, 2011. [http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci\\_19325123#ixzz1uOMzL8Nx](http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci_19325123#ixzz1uOMzL8Nx)
6. National Labor Committee and Center for Studies and Support of Local Development, “Women Exploiting Women,” joint report, February 25, 2009. <http://www.globallabourrights.org/reports?id=0535>
7. National Labor Committee, *loc. cit.*
8. Stevenson, *loc. cit.*
9. Witness for Peace, Winter 2012
10. National Labor Committee, [http://www.globallabourrights.org/admin/documents/files/Jordan\\_Report\\_05\\_03.pdf](http://www.globallabourrights.org/admin/documents/files/Jordan_Report_05_03.pdf); cf. Jennifer Altman, “An Ugly Side of Free Trade, Sweatshops in Jordan,” *The New York Times*, May 3, 2006. [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/03/business/worldbusiness/03clothing.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/03/business/worldbusiness/03clothing.html?_r=1)
11. OxfamAmerica, “Toxic Doe Run lead smelter could reopen in La Oroya, Peru,” April 11, 2012. <http://www.oxfamamerica.org/press/pressreleases/toxic-doe-run-lead-smelter-could-reopen-in-la-oroya-peru>

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-19**
*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-19—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

This overture seeks General Assembly support for advocacy activities by members, congregations, and presbyteries seeking corrective measures to mitigate trade imbalances, unemployment trends, market distortions, and longer-term patterns of inequality and underdevelopment related to NAFTA and other regional free trade agreements involving the United States.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-19 be approved with the deletion of its Recommendation 2 (on reporting back to the 221st General Assembly [2014]), if Recommendation 2 should be judged to have notable budget implications.

General Assemblies of the PC(USA) have a strong record of support for advocacy on behalf of populations disadvantaged by inequities generated by regional and bilateral trade agreements, and the present request is consistent with prior General Assembly positions on these matters.

The 208th General Assembly (1996) affirmed the report, *Hope for a Global Future*, which urged just and sustainable international trade and noted that

given the unequal bargaining positions of various nations, trade policy now requires careful study regarding its implications for poor people, peasants, and workers—their access to land and employment, the respect accorded to workers’ rights, the viability of participatory community-based development, the maintenance of traditional community support systems, and the workers’ place in the income distribution (p. 135).

In its resolution on *Just Globalization, Justice, Ownership and Accountability*, the 217th General Assembly (2006) asked the church to work for fair exchange in international trade. The *Social Creed* approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) calls for “Equitable global trade and aid that protects local economies, cultures, and livelihoods.” The same body approved a request (Item 11-18, Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 1180ff) for the Stated Clerk to write members of Congress asking them *not* to approve the Free Trade Agreement with Colombia because of its possible negative social impact. The 219th General Assembly (2010) accepted that tariffs can play an important role in protecting the development of local agriculture in countries such as Haiti (Item 13-12, Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 973ff).

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-19**
*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-19—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-19.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns supports this overture because trade agreements drastically affect workers’ rights and have a negative impact on racial ethnic and women employees. After years of living with NAFTA and

CAFTA, we are now facing the reality that not only have the economic gains not been realized as promised, but these trade agreements have led to significant problems for labor standards, workers' rights, and collective bargaining rights.

The erosion of these rights is of particular concern to communities of people of color as well as to women workers. As always, women of color are at the crossroads of this erosion of rights. As workers' rights erode, there is an exponential impact on people of color. Racial ethnic communities hold a disproportionately higher number of jobs in the industries that are most affected by NAFTA and CAFTA. Additionally, these groups have a history of discrimination in the workplace, needing greater protections such as those historically provided by union memberships. Collective bargaining emphasizes equal pay and fair treatment in the workplace, two areas of rights that are essential for women and people of color. ACREC believes that in this depressed economy when we find the middle class struggling more than ever before, trade agreements need to shore up keep workers' rights not strip them away.

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**GAMC ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON ITEM 11-19**  
[Received June 29, 2012]

*Additional Comment on Item 11-19—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The GAMC suggests that the American Free Trade Agreements be changed to Free Trade Agreements enacted by the United States to more accurately reflect that these are FTAs that are initiated by the U.S. government. We also suggest that Peru be omitted (it is part of South America).

The PC(USA) has long history of policies related to trade and globalization. The 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 826) passed the Resolution on Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership and Accountability <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-just-globalization/> which is a comprehensive guide for working towards trade policies within the context of “globalization that reflects justice, community, and the sustainability of creation.” The rationale from pages 7–10 and 40–50 is applicable to this overture.

The Resolution on Just Globalization supports advocating for the corrective measures listed above related to NAFTA and bilateral free trade agreements. The PC(USA) policy instructs that PC(USA) agencies engage “in creating guidelines and mechanisms to help balance appropriately the interests of transnational corporations and of host or trading nations with weakened internal governance structures” (B.2.e.). It also challenges Presbyterians to undertake cross-cultural dialogue in order to understand other cultures and assist them in their struggle for survival (F.5.). Church partners and mission co-workers in Mexico, Peru, Colombia, El Salvador, and Nicaragua are increasingly highlighting the profound impact that U.S. trade agreements have on communities, the environment, and national services including schools, health, and infrastructure. They bring to our attention guidelines or mechanisms needed to balance more appropriately the interests of transnational corporations. Presbyterians have visited partners in some of these countries and are supportive of campaigns such as No Greater Rights in Peru to focus attention on the unfairness of some of the clauses, such as the Investor State Clause, of these agreements that allow transnational corporations to sue governments in international tribunals (while the reverse is not possible—governments have no recourse to sue transnational corporations). You can learn more about the structural imbalance created by the Investor State Clause of these Free Trade Agreements at [http://www.ips-dc.org/reports/the\\_new\\_us\\_model\\_bilateral\\_investment\\_treaty\\_a\\_public\\_interest\\_critique](http://www.ips-dc.org/reports/the_new_us_model_bilateral_investment_treaty_a_public_interest_critique) or [http://www.ips-dc.org/reports/mining\\_for\\_profits\\_in\\_international\\_tribunals](http://www.ips-dc.org/reports/mining_for_profits_in_international_tribunals).

Since the passage of Just Globalization in 2006, a number of bilateral free trade agreements have been passed and the intended and unintended, positive and negative impacts of NAFTA and these agreements have emerged. Item 11-19 focuses PC(USA) attention more specifically on the areas where corrective measures are needed.

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## Item 11-20

[The assembly referred Item 11-20 to Mission Responsibility Through Investment to report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014). See pp. 28, 34.]

*A Statement on the Housing and the Mortgage Crisis—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Urge all councils (sessions, synods, and General Assembly) of the PC(USA) to examine their financial ties to large banks that continue to operate against the common good of their communities at the expense of their own parishioners and communities.
2. Urge all PC(USA) entities (including, but not limited to, the Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., etc.) to examine their financial ties to large banks and Wall

Street institutions that continue to operate against the common good and against the Socially Responsible Investment Policies of the General Assembly.

3. Investigate moving monies out of large Wall Street institutions and into local banks, saving and loans, and credit unions who act in partnership with their depositors instead of financial adversaries.

4. Urge the Congress of the United States to form an independent investigator or commission and fully investigate the links between large banks and the FDIC and the practices put in place that places higher value on foreclosure than modifying existing loans.

5. Ask the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to find ways for the church at large to respond to this crisis.

**[Financial Implications: (2013) \$13,420, (2014) \$6,420—Per Capita—GAMC]**

*Rationale*

As of June 2010, East Contra Costa County, California, was at ground zero of the “housing crisis.” This crisis was triggered by the government, Wall Street, and banks as the housing market was turned into another vehicle for illusory financial “gain” and “profit” using creative and deceptive loan products that artificially inflated the housing market. When the inevitable bubble burst, the large banks stood back and refused to take any responsibility for the loss in value, instead maintaining that it was the client who should bear the full responsibility of the loss and continue to pay on loans that are now up to 233 percent of their homes new market value (i.e. current home market value of \$325k on an original loan/market value of \$725K). Banks have refused loan modifications in mass and continue to put corporate profits ahead of community and societal welfare using “legal” tactics at the expense of the greater good in the name of “profit.” The artificially created mortgage market heated up the housing market as government and Wall Street created/pushed ever more “creative” and risky loan products causing home prices to be inflated far past their intrinsic or sustainable value. The borrowers were lent money based on the value of the property WHEN PURCHASED (therefore on an artificially high price and appreciation rate to start with) and the home was taken as collateral by the lender *as an appreciating asset*. If the lender was not forming a business relationship based on the value of the property, then they would not have insisted on the home as collateral. When the bubble burst and home prices fell precipitously the lenders have refused to take any responsibility for the loss of value in the asset, that they approved and accepted via formal appraisal (again artificially high due to artificial demand created by their own loan products), and are instead leaving the loss of value 100 percent on the shoulders of the homeowners. How can this possibly be fair to the business partner called the “homeowner”? If the banks would revalue the asset and split the “loss” 50 percent with the borrower while locking in a current fixed rate this would share the burden and responsibility of the loss while resetting the market and leveling the playing field. Instead the lenders are only focusing on their own balance sheets and refusing to share any responsibility for the losses. These “losses” are write-offs for the corporations but the homeowners do not have the same option, except to emulate the banks and walk away from depressed or nonperforming assets. When banks do this they call it “strategic default,” when homeowners do it the bank’s call it “immoral” and “walking away.”

Banks are refusing loan modifications on the same homes that they went into financial partnership on with their borrowers on the basis that the same home no longer has enough “equity” for them to loan money on and they refuse to lower the existing interest rate or reduce the principle even though they already hold the mortgage on the same property at a higher and increasingly punitive interest rate. Analysis of these homes shows it will take approximately 10 to 15 years for many of these homes to approach a “break even” point for these homeowners. These homes hold an unsustainable mortgage rate that is increasing the payment, based on the original loan when the appreciation of the home was in double digits, dramatically above the original rates. The banks refuse to even lock in the current existing rates that new applicants enjoy and even when the existing borrowers would be willing to continue to pay on hundreds of thousands of dollars in “blue sky,” or illusory, equity in order to stay in their homes. Current interest rates under 5 percent are simply unavailable to existing homeowners.

As of June 2010, the large banks have completed approximately 10 percent of those eligible under federal guidelines for loan modifications. Many thousands have been given “trial modifications” only to find that at the end of the ninety-day period, despite having made all payments on time, they are told “sorry, you no longer qualify,” “we have lost your paperwork,” or “we have canceled your loan modification at YOUR request,” despite written contracts and instructions from the banks stating otherwise. In one case when the written contract was called to the attention of the bank’s loss mitigator, the client was told “yes we did send that contract and yes you did comply with all requirements, however, we were never bound by the contract because we ‘did not SIGN it.’” These stall tactics and deceptive practices only exacerbate the problem and, apparently, are done to collect partial payments from the clients while the banks wait for the market to recover and THEN foreclose on the property to maximize their profit.

Many banks sold their toxic assets to investor groups while other larger banks or independent investor groups with the “help” of the government, acquired them from failed banks by way of the FDIC, at 70 percent of par value and received a “loss share agreement or LSA” from the FDIC for 80 percent to 95 percent of any loss taken on those loans based on their

ORIGINAL value. Banks are therefore financially incentivized NOT to make loan modifications to clients and instead foreclose and sell at the current market price or accept a short sale market offer as both events trigger the LSA. In actual cases the banks pocket over \$100K than originally paid for the asset. Finally, as a last insult, under the threat of financial ruin, the banks force the borrowers into personal notes for some or all of the difference between the loan value and the short sale price.

These tactics of placing corporate profits ahead of the general welfare of the country stand against the principles of honest dealing, fair play, and ethical conduct expected by our country's founding documents, as well as biblical Scripture and other inspired documents through the ages. Community groups and faith leaders have been turned away when attempting to contact large bank CEOs on behalf of their communities.

Since the summer of 2010, the foreclosure nightmare has continued for millions of Americans. The following is from Marian Wang of ProPublica, Dec 27, 2011 as part of [www.ProPublica.org](http://www.ProPublica.org)'s on-going coverage:

If last year was the year in which faulty foreclosures and bank errors became a full-blown scandal, this has been the year of waiting for something to be done about it. First, there's the still-to-come multi-state settlement over alleged fraud on the part of the country's five largest mortgage servicers. That's the settlement being brokered by a coalition of state attorneys general and once touted as homeowners' best bet for redressing banks' flaws in foreclosure and mortgage documentation. Over the past year, one story after another declared such a deal was imminent, but the details—the total price tag, the deal's framework, and the expected date—have continually been changing.

Earlier this month, the Des Moines Register reported Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller—a point man for the attorneys' general probe—as saying that the final deal should be complete before Christmas and would include a measure to reduce the total debt owed by underwater homeowners. No deal has yet been announced. Miller wouldn't disclose a dollar figure on the size of the settlement—or whether California, one of the hardest-hit states, would participate.

Finally, it bears mentioning that despite the efforts on both the federal and state level to address the systemic failures of banks and mortgage servicers, errors are continuing—and they're still causing wrongful foreclosures.

According to the government's own figures, of 1,639,382 Trial Modifications started the banks have only made permanent 40.1 percent and have canceled more than 46 percent. This does not take into consideration the millions more loans that were not deemed "qualified" to begin a trial modification at any price because they had "lost" too much of their value. i.e. negative equity typically beyond 20 percent or where the loan product was not "covered." Additionally, there has been documented mortgage fraud, both with the origination of some loans and the practice calling "robosigning" where notary publics have fraudulently signed loans at a later date when the original paperwork was not to be found.

From 2007 to June 2010 an estimated 2.36 MILLION homes have been repossessed by foreclosure (RealtyTrac data).

According to CNN, for the year 2011 more than 50,000 homes per MONTH were being foreclosed upon by banks. (*CNNMoney*, December 15, 2011).

Outgoing Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Chairwoman Sheila C. Bair's exit interview by the *New York Times* included this statement. Bair said that the mortgage's industry's reluctance to provide mortgage modifications stems in part from the industry's "disdain for borrowers." *"I think some of it was that they didn't think borrowers were worth helping,"* she said (*New York Times* via [www.ProPublica.org](http://www.ProPublica.org) July 13, 2011).

In 2011 many local communities and church groups have banded together or acted unilaterally and removed millions of dollars of deposits from the large banks that continue to act only on behalf of their profit motive. Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church has closed accounts with Bank of America totaling more than \$3 million dollars. Other churches are following suit and groups such as PACT—People Acting in Community Together as part of PICO—are helping to lead the bank and housing accountability actions across the nation.

With this information the writers reaffirm our commitment to the Statement on Housing and the Mortgage Crisis and ask that it be included in the 220th General Assembly (2012) actions in the summer of 2012.

The PC(USA) congregations and their collective influence controls or influences literally billions of dollars of investments and holdings with the large commercial banks across the country and around the world. It is the history of PC(USA) to stand against financial tyranny and against profiting from the suffering of others. The mortgage crisis was created and driven by greed, profiteering at the expense of our citizens and communities, and constructive fraud that is still to be adjudicated through the court systems. When such organizations as the major banks and Wall Street Investment have lost their moral center it is incumbent upon us to investigate other avenues of investment that support our communities and support those organizations that work for the betterment of our all of our people and all of our communities.

The American financial system has lost its moral center. It's time to turn over the tables of the moneychangers, and insist that they be good corporate citizens.

Resources on Foreclosure Prevention & Neighborhood Stabilization:

1. Fighting Preventable Foreclosures—[www.CrimeShouldntPay.com](http://www.CrimeShouldntPay.com).

2. Investing the Public's Money in Responsible Banks—[www.MakeWallStreetPay.org](http://www.MakeWallStreetPay.org).
  3. Pass a Responsible Banking Ordinance in your City—<http://www.piconetwork.org/action/0011>.
- Other Links—[www.moveyourmoney.info](http://www.moveyourmoney.info), <http://www.cissco.org/>, [www.ourmoneyourvalues.org](http://www.ourmoneyourvalues.org).

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-20

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-20—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 11-20 overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to urge all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) councils and entities to review their financial ties to large banks and Wall Street institutions to determine whether any of them operate against the common good or the socially responsible investment policies of the General Assembly and, if so, to move their monies into local banks, savings and loans, and credit unions. It further requests that the 220th General Assembly (2012) urge Congress to initiate an independent investigation of large banks, their links with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), and practices that put corporate profit ahead of community and societal welfare.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that this overture be approved with the following amendments to Recommendations 3–5: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. [~~Request PC(USA) councils and investing bodies to~~] [~~investigate~~] [~~the costs and benefits of~~] moving monies out of large Wall Street institutions and into local banks, saving and loans, and credit unions [~~who~~] [~~that~~] act in partnership with their depositors [~~and borrowers~~] instead of [~~acting as~~] financial adversaries[, and to report to these boards and councils on the feasibility of doing more business with more accountable local institutions].

“4. Urge the Congress of the United States to form an independent [~~investigator~~] [investigatory body] or commission [~~and~~] [to] fully investigate the links between large banks and the FDIC and the practices [~~put in place~~] that place[s] higher value on foreclosure than modifying existing loans.

“5. [~~Ask the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)~~] [Direct] the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), [~~and~~] [in consultation with] Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI)[,] to [~~find ways for the church at large to respond to this crisis~~] [analyze the growing lack of accountability to clients for the consequences of their actions among large banks, financial management services, and related transnational firms, and to recommend to the 221st General Assembly (2014) appropriate responses to the growing corporate practice of denial of responsibility for actions that are not in the best interests of their clients.”

#### *Rationale*

The financial exploitation of clients and the injustices it generates have been addressed in Scripture since the origins of the Hebrew Bible (specifically in prohibitions of usury), but is a relatively recent topic for policy attention within the General Assembly. In fact, PC(USA) policy on this subject originated just six years ago with approval of *A Reformed Understanding of Usury for the 21st Century* (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/usury.pdf>) by the 217th General Assembly (2006). While noting the dangers in subprime lending, that document did not focus on housing and the practices that led to the housing and credit bubble, the subsequent loss of home value, and the continuing foreclosure crisis.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) resolution, however, did recommend support for less costly financial services, church-wide education on the ethics of lending, and advocacy for more just regulation. It also posed three criteria for determining modern day usury:

1. Does a practice or a law promote financial relationships that take advantage of the financial distress of those economically disadvantaged?
2. Is a practice or a law structured in a manner that balances the economic benefits for both the lender and the borrower?
3. Does a practice or a law lead to the conduct of financial transactions in a fair and just manner, e.g. characterized by truthfulness; nondiscrimination to the borrower; full (and understandable) disclosure; and the absence of coercion?

On the basis of these criteria, the practices by large banks and financial institutions which form the focus of this overture clearly constitute usury.

But the larger question is why these unjust practices seem to be increasingly common among institutions that previously sought to serve the interests of their clients. The proposed analysis would explore the sources of growing corporate irresponsibility and seek to identify mechanisms of accountability that might curb these abuses.

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-20**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-20—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-20.

*Rationale*

The impact of these practices has been disastrous for poor and working class communities. It has been especially difficult for racial ethnic communities.

The impact of this activity has caused many racial ethnic people to lose their homes, some to become homeless and many have difficulty finding help in working through the legal implications and ramifications.

As the unemployment picture gets worse more and more people have been forced to give up or walk away from mortgages and homes. There are many that with modification are still struggling.

The PC(USA) continues to stand against financial practices that are exploitative or that destroy the quality of life for our communities.

**Item 11-21**

[The assembly approved Item 11-21 with amendment. See pp. 28, 34.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Appointing Two Seasons of Prayer to Seek the Will of Almighty God in This Year's Election.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at its meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, appoints two seasons of prayer. The first on Saturday morning, July 7, 2012, before the assembly adjourns, and the second on Sunday morning, November 4, 2012, in our churches across the nation. [These] [The] purpose of these seasons of prayer will be to seek the will of Almighty God in this year's election, and to ask the Almighty God to lead the political parties of our nation to seek the [peace, unity, and purity of our nation and world, not their own individual political ideologies] [common good of the nation and the world].**

*Rationale*

The *Book of Order*, W-2.1002, declares that: "In prayer we respond to God in many ways. In adoration we praise God for who God is. In thanksgiving we express gratitude for what God has done. In confession we acknowledge repentance for what we as individuals and as a people have done or left undone. In supplication we plead for ourselves and the gathered community. In intercession we plead for others, on behalf of others, and for the whole world ..."

On November 6, 2012, the citizens of the United States of America will be given the opportunity to claim one of the highest privileges and duties of all citizens—to vote in a national election.

The political climate of our nation has taken on more of the character of a political war between Democrats and Republicans than the original intention of the constitutional writers who sought a cooperative endeavor of American citizens who seek the patriotic good of all the land, and all its citizens.

As in our churches we seek to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church, so should we, as citizens of our nation, seek the very same for our society.

That prayer is, at all times, proper for Christians to use to respond to God in many ways.

Zolton Phillips, III, Presbytery of The James

Zella Spiers, Presbytery of The James

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-21**

*Comment on Item 11-21—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The Office of Public Witness (OPW) is in the process of launching a new Respectful Dialogue Initiative. The OPW will welcome the opportunity to incorporate these seasons of prayer into its work to encourage our nation to move past partisan politics and to treat one another with respect.

## Item 11-22

[The assembly approved Item 11-22 with amendment. See pp. 28, 34 .]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Prolonged Solitary Confinement in U.S. Prisons.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):**

1. Calls upon the fifty states and the federal government to follow the example of Maine, Colorado, and Mississippi in significantly limiting the number of prisoners held in solitary confinement, and to limit a prisoner's duration of solitary confinement, and to instead offer alternatives that address the mental health needs of prisoners, offer skill building opportunities such as anger management, job training, and educational classes that effectively contribute both to prisoners' rehabilitation and to their successful transition back into society.

2. Joins in the call of U.S. faith leaders to urge the president to sign and the senate to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture in order to reduce risk of torture and abuse in U.S. prisons.

3. Urges presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to participate ~~in the efforts of the~~ with the Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network, and presbyteries may also wish to participate in the work of PHEWA, on the National Religious Campaign Against Torture to significantly limit the use of solitary confinement.

### *Rationale*

God created human beings, endowed with inherent dignity, to live in fellowship with one another. Hebrews 13:3 states: "Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured."

Prisoners held in solitary confinement are often detained in a cell by themselves for twenty-three hours a day; some prisoners are kept in these conditions for months, years, or even decades. Scientific studies have found that prisoners held in isolation for extended periods experience symptoms akin to delirium, including hallucinations, perceptual distortions, heart palpitations, panic attacks, and suicidal ideation. The impact of isolation on mentally ill prisoners and juveniles is especially damaging.

The United States reportedly has 5 percent of the world's population, 25 percent of its prisoners, and the vast majority of prisoners in long-term solitary confinement. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that in 2000 there were more than 80,000 prisoners in restricted housing units in the United States.

Prisoners are sometimes released from solitary confinement units directly to their communities when they complete their prison sentence and such prisoners are significantly more likely to recommit crimes. Holding prisoners in solitary confinement units is significantly more expensive than keeping them in the general prison population. Instituting humane alternatives makes sense, both financially and morally. States including Maine, Colorado, and Mississippi have significantly limited the use of solitary confinement in their prisons and as a result, have experienced cost savings and decreased prison violence.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture treaty that would establish independent monitors to prevent torture and abuse that occurs in our nation's prisons, detention centers, and police stations, has not been signed by the president nor ratified by the U.S. Senate.

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture, organized at a conference at Princeton Theological Seminary, led by several Presbyterians with membership that includes the General Assembly Mission Council, operates a major effort to limit the use of solitary confinement.

R. Ward Holder, Presbytery of Boston  
Margery Rossi., Presbytery of Hudson River

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-22

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-22—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 11-22.

### *Rationale*

The ACREC recognizes that African American and Latino/Hispanic men are disproportionately part of the U.S. prison population. As a result, they bear the brunt of extreme penalties that are imposed including prolonged solitary confinement. We encourage the church to address the issue of mass incarceration including prolonged solitary confinement of the poor

who are largely people of color and to refocus societal resources from imprisonment and punishment to rehabilitation and successful transition of our brothers and sister back into society.

The financial burden of this resolution can be minimized by use of electronic media, such as the PC(USA) website, internet publications, as well as email communication to church bodies.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-22

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-22—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-22 be approved with amendment to Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a brackets and strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“3. Urges presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to participate ~~[in the efforts of the]~~ [with the Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network, and presbyteries may also wish to participate in the work of PHEWA, on the] National Religious Campaign Against Torture to significantly limit the use of solitary confinement.”

#### *Rational*

The Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network (PCJN) of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) was established through action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to develop and implement education and advocacy ministries around issues of criminal justice. The PCJN is currently addressing the issue of solitary confinement in the context of prison conditions.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 11-22

*Comment on Item 11-22—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) took the lead in the debate on torture and were instrumental in forming the National Religious Campaign against Torture (NRCAT). Staff from the Office of Public Witness (OPW) was present at the initial conference where the campaign was formed and the OPW has been working closely with the campaign since its inception on issues such as the following:

- Ending the practice of extraordinary rendition.
- Urging President Obama to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT). This treaty would protect all prisoners in U.S. custody from torture by setting up mechanisms to assure that U.S. laws prohibiting torture are followed in all detention facilities, including domestic prisons.
- Advocating for the State Department to prepare a “Torture Watch List” of countries engaged in torture and then to make U.S. assistance available for efforts to end the use of torture.

The Office of Public Witness is currently working with NRCAT to end the practice of solitary confinement. The office advocated along with other members of the faith community for a public congressional hearing on the subject that was held on June 18th. Director Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson joined other faith leaders in a twenty-three hour fast representing the number of hours that persons are allowed under the present law to be held in isolation. Rev. Nelson led his colleagues in breaking the fast at a press conference after the hearing.

This year, funds were given to the office for a summer fellow specifically to cover the issues related to torture (such as solitary confinement). The summer fellow is currently on staff.

## Item 11-23

**[The assembly disapproved Item 11-23. See pp. 28, 35.]**

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Alternate Giving Options for Union Members.*

The 220th General Assembly (2012) instructs the Office of the Stated Clerk to provide e-mail notice to sessions, presbyteries, and synods, announcing that members of our PC(USA) congregations who belong to organized labor unions can claim employee choice with the “Beck Rule” (see below) to “unbind” and enable those members to authorize redirecting the union fees unrelated to representation issues, to charitable causes such as for our neighbors in need, our churches, or Presbyterian missions.



*Rationale*A. *Background*

- The Presbyterian church has responded to the harshness of the early 20th century industrialization when we embraced organized labor and unions with the Social Creed of 1908.

- In the 1930s and 1940s unions were much needed to secure safety and working conditions that enabled human dignity and quality of life.

- In 2006, we offered a Social Creed for the 21st Century so in our era “We offer a vision of a society that share more and consumes less ... seeks compassion over suspicion and equality over domination ... and finds security in joined hands rather than massed arms.” Through the Social Creed, the churches declared that they would stand together and work toward addressing the needs of all workers. This Social Creed remains focused on economic issues but also addresses issues that fell outside the earlier reformers’ line of vision. Language chosen for the creed may be seen as optimistic by some, but is intended to express the gospel conviction that real freedom and power in life consist in sharing, rather than in an abundance of things. Jesus came not to be served, but to give his life for others: his life and example still challenge us to confront injustice and preach the Good News. (ref: November 9, 2006, background to Social Creed for the 21st Century]

- Labor Day Sunday 2011: We begin with an affirmation: the PC(USA) does have something to say to the approximately 25 million unemployed, under-employed, and discouraged workers. We have something to say to the 46-47 million who are on food stamps, often despite living in families with at least one person employed—though in a low-wage job ... we favor an adequate minimum wage and freedom for workers to bargain collectively. And, we are starting a new interactive journal of Christian Social Justice, *UNBOUND*, which brings to mind unshackling prisoners. *UNBOUND* will also call to mind Jesus’ words at Lazarus’ tomb: “unbind him”! (Jn. 11:44) [ref: Salt and Light, Helping the church to use its voice for justice, Labor Day Sunday 2011].

- 1959 Statement—*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1959, Part I, p 383. “[The General Assembly]: “... Believes that union membership as a basis of continued employment should be neither required by law nor forbidden by law, Condemns unequivocally violence and threats of violence in labor disputes, Urges federal legislation to insure the honest use of union funds and to guarantee the right of appeal and the right of secret ballot, Calls upon individual Presbyterian union members to take a responsible part in the activities of their unions.”

- 1977 Statement—*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1977, Part I, p 126. The 189th General Assembly (1977): “... Reaffirms the actions of previous General Assemblies supporting the right of every employable person a job, decent and safe working conditions and a salary adequate to meet at least his or her basic needs.”

- 1980 Statement—*Minutes*, PCUS, 1980, Part I, p 229 “... The style of servanthood means that economic activity needs to be viewed as serving the needs of the world. Decisions should not be based solely on the self-interest of corporations, workers or social interest groups. Servanthood also means that a stronger emphasis needs to be placed on a mutual sharing of burdens instead of the shifting of risks to other people, groups, or societies in a time of growing economic uncertainty.”

- 1995 Statement—*Minutes*, PC(USA), 1995, Part I, pp. 426–427

... The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should provide educational materials so that its members can become informed voters and advocates for economic policies that will serve to alleviate poverty, empower marginalized groups, and generate environmentally sustainable economic growth around the world.

All sectors of society—including labor, management, and government—must be engaged in the task of economic renewal of our life together. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should play a significant role as a catalyst for conversation among these sectors. Justice demands that social institutions guarantee all persons the opportunity to participate actively in economic decision making that affects them....

B. *Observations and Basis*

- Unions automatically negotiate payroll deduction dues, which are a combination of fees from their members for the expenses related to representation issues and expenses not related to representation issues, such as political contributions over which individual members have no say. The leadership only of labor unions can decide to give portions of members’ fees to political causes that may not reflect the individual member’s choice of donation or support.

- Members of unions pay fees that include portions for union expenses unrelated to representation issues.

- The “Beck Rule” after the Supreme Court’s decision in *Communications Workers of America v. Beck*, In 1988,

The Supreme Court concluded that the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) does not permit a union to collect and expend dues beyond those necessary to finance collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance adjustment. Further, Employees have a right to know how their union dues are spent and have a right to stop money from being taken out of their pockets that is not used for legitimate collective bargaining purposes.

## 11 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

This rule, often referred to as “Beck Rights,” sets forth such employee rights, as not to pay fees for union expenses unrelated to representation issues.

- [This resolution does not suggest reducing or increasing union fees that are payroll deducted. It suggests educating union represented workers that they can redirect that portion of fees not required for union business to mission/charitable uses.]

### C. *Biblical and Theological Foundation*

- Jesus’ words at Lazarus’ tomb: “unbind him”! (Jn. 11:44).
- Obviously justice and freedom and other themes are found widely in Scripture.

### D. *Mission and Charitable Needs*

Mission and charitable needs continue their long decline in the PC(USA) as well as reductions in other philanthropy sectors. These resources document the facts.

- The Center of Philanthropy at Indiana University in December 2008 said that: “Nearly 94 percent of nonprofit fundraisers surveyed said the economy is currently having a negative (65.3 percent) or very negative (28.5 percent) effect on fundraising” [<http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/About/>].

- The Empty Tomb studies on giving declines, <http://www.aboutus.org/EmptyTomb.org>.

Dale Deist, Presbytery of Shenango  
Paul Clairville, Presbytery of San Fernando

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-23

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-23—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 11-23.

#### *Rationale*

This item has the impact of weakening collective bargaining rights. The ACREC, in ACREC’s resolution Item 11-10, supports collective bargaining rights. The ACREC does not challenge any person’s right to challenge any acts that may be unlawful. This item, although entitled as an “alternate giving option” for union members to contribute financially to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other charitable causes, appears to be a disguise for an effort to weaken unions and collective bargaining.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-23

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-23—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 11-23 be disapproved.

This commissioners’ resolution would instruct the Stated Clerk to provide notice to PC(USA) sessions, presbyteries, and synods that members of PC(USA) congregations who belong to labor unions, or who work under union contracts, could claim employee choice with the “Beck Rule” to authorize redirecting a portion of their union fees unrelated to the representation issues, to charitable causes including PC(USA) activities.

#### *Rationale*

Previous General Assemblies have supported the right of every employable person to a job, decent working conditions, and a salary adequate to meet at least his or her basic needs. The Social Creed for the 21st Century, approved in 2008, expresses strong support for labor organization, for example.

We believe that this resolution would negatively impact collective bargaining and lessen the ability of workers effectively to join together for jobs, decent working conditions, and salaries adequate to meet their needs. It would do this in two ways. It would reduce the funds available to unions to complete their missions, and cause administrative burdens on unions as they respond to redirection requests. It could also add administrative costs for receiving bodies such as churches depending on the manner in which percentages of union dues might be sequestered, the number of unions involved, etc.

There have been many interpretations around the National Labor Relations Act, the Beck Rule, and more than one Executive Order on the subject, varying by presidential administration and National Labor Relations Board composition. The commissioners' resolution does not reflect settled law. Additional legal costs would be needed to develop a substantial legal basis and financial mechanisms if its objectives were desired. As such, we urge a disapproval of this resolution.

We also think that any church notice on any redirection of dues would have a chilling impact on collective bargaining, and that would not represent historical church guidance.

## 11-Info

### A. *Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) Agency Summary*

“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Ps. 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

...[Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers ...” (Jas. 1:22)

#### 1. *Introduction*

The context of women's advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in God who liberated the people of Israel from oppression and covenanted with Israel that they might do justice, and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) explicitly articulated in the Articles of Agreement its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. The new *Book of Order* continues to uphold this commitment: “In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403). Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to:

give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order*, G-4.0403 ... monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church...and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

#### 2. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The ACWC's assigned functions are delineated in the *GAMC Manual of Operations* (Appendix I, VII.C., p. 23).

They include:

- a. Prepar[ing] policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on women's concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advis[ing] the General Assembly Mission Council on matters of women's concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provid[ing] advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners' resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women's concerns.
- d. Assist[ing] the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women's concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provid[ing] the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women's concerns.
- f. Monitor[ing] the implementation of women's policies and programs relative to women's concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain[ing] a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women's concerns.

The ACWC is housed in the Office of the Executive Director, General Assembly Mission Council. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). The ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two serve as corresponding members to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council respectively. One member of ACWC is a voting member of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). There are twelve voting members of the committee; ten members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. One member is the current moderator for Justice and Peace of Presbyterian Women and one member is a member of the General Assembly Mission Council, chosen and sent by

that body. The committee also has a number of liaison members: Carmen Rosario from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Erica Harley from the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen (NAPC), KT Ockels from World Mission of the General Assembly Mission Council, and Margryette Boyd from Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), who joined the committee as liaison in 2011. During this term, the committee had representation from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) through Marsha Fowler, Gloria Albrecht, and Eric Mount, who each attended one or more meetings in that role. Members who rotated off the committee in July 2010 are Gay Byron, Adeline de Castro, and Maria Cardenes-Baez. Members who were elected to the committee in July 2010 were Barbara Adams Smelter, Samuel Chung, and Joann Haejong Lee. Samuel Chung's position was declared vacant after two unexcused absences and has not yet been filled. Voting members who continued on from the previous term were Terry Alexander (MRTI), Jerri Rodewald, Jan Martin (GAMC), N'Yisrela Watts-Afryie, Bill Gray, Darcy Metcalfe, and Chris Wolf (PW).

### 3. *Gatherings and Foci 2010–2012*

The ACWC met five times:

#### a. *September 9–11, 2010, in Louisville, Kentucky*

- The committee spent a significant amount of time on introductions as this was the first meeting for those elected at the 219th General Assembly (2010).
- The committee reviewed their work at General Assembly and looked ahead to what items they would need to monitor in the coming years.
- Nancy Young, coordinator for Racial Ethnic & Women's Leadership Development Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges, met with the group to share her vision for her work and to hear about the work of ACWC.
- Vince Patton, who was soon to be Executive Administrator, joined the group for lunch and conversation.
- Unzu Lee, Presbyterian Women associate, reported to the group about the National Council of Churches' project "Language Matters," (later to be called "Words Matter").
- Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) shared some of the work of the GAMC with the committee.
- The committee spent significant time determining how to divide their work into smaller working groups, and then spent time in those groups to determine work for the next two years. The committee organized themselves into three working groups: Health and Sexuality, Women and the Church, and Violence Against Women.

#### b. *November 8–10, 2010, in New Orleans, Louisiana*

- The committee's focus in this meeting was ecumenical and interfaith relations, which influenced their decision to meet in New Orleans, where the National Council of Churches (NCC) was holding their general assembly.
- The committee heard from Meagan Manas and Ann Tiemeyer of the NCC on the many ecumenical projects of the NCC related to gender justice. In particular, they heard about the beginnings of the project, "Words Matter," as well as the Fistula Stories Project. They also learned about the NCC's Justice for Women Working Group, a group of ecumenical women who focus on partnering to work on various gender justice issues. One member of ACWC, as well as ACWC's staff person, participate in the work of this group. This keeps ACWC connected to the work of other denominations, which often serve as good resources in a time when resources are limited.
- The committee participated in a group-building session as part of bringing on the new members and strengthening the work relationships of those who had been on ACWC for a time.
- The committee heard Cecilia Casal's report of the ecumenical trip she participated in to Columbia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.
- The committee working groups decided which issues they would focus on for this two-year cycle.
- The committee was able to attend a portion of the NCC's general assembly.

#### c. *March 23–24, 2011, in Washington, D.C.*

- The committee met in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference, which was focused on gender justice issues. Following their meeting, the committee attended the conference.
- The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson met with the committee to share some of the work of the Office of Public Witness.

## 11 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

- Committee member, Darcy Metcalfe, reported on her experience at the United Methodist Church's Sexual Misconduct Conference and expressed her interest in looking further into the Safe Child policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

- Committee member, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, reported on her time in Hungary.

- Committee member, Belinda Rice, reported on her work with the General Assembly committee assigned to study the situation of violence on the Mexico-U.S. border.

- Committee member, Jerri Rodewald, reported on her time in New York at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

- Glenn Northern of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Nicolette Paterson of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice met with the committee to discuss reproductive justice in the current context of the United States.

- Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council, met with the committee to hear more about their work.

### d. *September 15–17, 2011, in Louisville, Kentucky*

- The committee worked on updating the ACWC manual of operations.

- SanDawna Ashley, associate for Gender and Racial Justice, met with the committee and shared some of her work with them.

- Tom Hay, director of operations, Office of the General Assembly, came to have a conversation with the group about the lack of childcare provided at General Assembly.

- The committee spent time discussing the importance of the ACCRA confession and the Bible study written by Dr. Margaret Aymer and published by Presbyterian Women.

- Committee member, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, gave an update of the work of the Status of Women Task Force.

- Lisa Robbins and Ruth Gardner from the General Assembly Mission Council's Human Resources department shared with the group the gender equity audit they are preparing for the next General Assembly.

- Valerie Small, manager of General Assembly Nominations, met with the group to discuss best ways to include and encourage the participation of younger women on the advocacy committee.

- Vince Patton, Executive Administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council, discussed the staffing for the committee.

- The Health and Sexuality working group met with Claire Lewis and Michael Harper to discuss the church's new online adolescent development curriculum.

### e. *January 17–19, 2012, in Louisville, Kentucky*

- The committee met to finalize its work going into the 220th General Assembly (2012).

- Valerie Small, manager of General Assembly Nominations, and Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks of the General Assembly Nominating Committee met with ACWC to discuss nominations to ACWC going to General Assembly.

- Patrick Heery, managing editor for *Unbound*, met with the committee to discuss his work with this interactive, online journal of social witness.

- The committee met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to discuss their work for General Assembly.

- Three members of ACWC had attended the Women of Color Consultation in October of 2011, and Joann Lee led a discussion on her experiences at that event and on the consultation report going to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

## 4. *Highlights*

### a. *Status of Women Task Force*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns continued to stay connected to and support the work of the Status of Women Task Force, and is looking forward to the potential acceptance of the task force's recommendations. The 218th Gen-

eral Assembly (2008) approved ACWC's recommendation to study the status of women at all levels of the church, calling for the creation of the Status of Women Task Force. While restructuring slowed the initiation of this group and its work, the Status of Women Task Force has been created and met once in January 2010. The task force will continue its assigned function and report back to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

b. *Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Services*

The Health and Sexuality working group of ACWC monitored the development of legislative limitations on the availability of and access to reproductive health services for men and women in the United States and internationally. They studied "truth in advertising" issues related to self-described "abortion counseling clinics," and questioned the availability of adequate scientific sexuality education. Further, they examined the inactivity by the PC(USA) in advocating for existing church policies and reviewed new PC(USA) materials and policy regarding sexual misconduct.

c. *Ecumenical Focus*

The committee has found that connections made through various ecumenical channels have provided resources and information for the committee that would otherwise have not been possible. Connections to the National Council of Churches' Justice for Women's Working Group and intentional participation in conferences like Ecumenical Advocacy Days and in groups like Ecumenical Women at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women have deeply benefitted and informed the work of ACWC. The committee values ecumenical partnerships, particularly in a time when resources are limited in all denominations.

d. *Young Women*

The committee continues to be committed to working toward intentional inclusion of younger women in the work of the committee, and has spent considerable time considering the ways in which it could be more welcoming to younger women. Some of the younger members currently on ACWC have been instrumental in considering ways in which serving on the committee could be made more accessible to young women.

e. *Intersectionality*

The committee has worked to become more aware of and intentional about the places where women's issues intersect with those of race, class, disability, etc., recognizing that most women find themselves at the intersection of more than one social identity marker that may influence the way they are treated and experience the world.

f. *Partnering with Programmatic Staff of the GAMC*

The committee is still working to adjust to the still relatively new separation of gender justice policy and program work. They have been intentional about staying connected with the staff of Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/ Presbyterian Women, and look forward to continuing to build their relationships with these women in order to make the work of gender justice in the church as effective as possible.

g. *Staffing Shifts*

As of shortly following the 219th General Assembly (2010), ACWC has begun sharing their staff person with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC). This provides a definite challenge to both committees in having adequate access to the resources staff provides and in finding meeting times that don't overlap or occur too close together. The committee is concerned about how staff will manage at the General Assembly, when demands of both committees will be extremely high.

5. *Actions of the Committee for Consideration of the 220th General Assembly (2012)*

a. *Resolutions in Response to Assigned Referrals*

- A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah's Daughters (Response to 2004 Referral: Item 05-03)
- A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God (Response to 2008 Referral: Item 09-13)

6. *ACWC's 2012 Resolutions*

- A Resolution to Encourage Participation in the Words Matter Project
- A Resolution on Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault

- A Resolution to Ensure Implementation of Updated and Detailed Safe Child Policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- A Resolution Commending Study of the 2011–2012 *Horizons* Bible Study and the Accra Confession

### **B. *Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Agency Summary***

The committee is composed of twelve regular members representing African Americans, Native Americans, Latina/o Americans, Asian Americans, Middle Eastern Americans, and European Americans.

The 2010–12 membership of the committee is as follows: Stephen Hsieh, chairperson, National Asian Presbyterian Council; Carmen Rosario, vice chair, National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus, liaison to Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; Patricia Petty Morse, secretary, African American, at-large; Aida Faris, chair of Study and Comment Subcommittee, National Middle Eastern Caucus; Cynthia Holder Rich, chair of Resource and Referral Subcommittee, European American, at-large; Clay Antioquia, liaison from the General Assembly Mission Council, Native American; Debbie Battisse-Kleinman, Native American, at-large; Women of Color Joint Working Group; NoushinFramke, Middle Eastern American, at-large; Paul Hoang, Korean American, at-large; Carroll Jenkins, National Black Presbyterian Caucus, liaison to Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy; Buddy Monahan, Native American Consulting Committee; Ruth-Aimee Belonni-Rosario, liaison from Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), Hispanic/Latina; Women of Color Joint Working Group; Christine Darden, liaison from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) African American; Barbara Adams Smelter, liaison from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, African American.

The committee was staffed by Courtney Hoekstra, associate for Advocacy Committee Support, General Assembly Mission Council, and Sherri Pettway, administrative assistant, General Assembly Mission Council.

As of January 2010, the committee had one vacancy in the Hispanic/Latino/a at-large position.

#### 1. *Assigned Functions*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) works to fulfill its General Assembly mandate to provide advocacy and monitoring on issues affecting people of color in both church and society. The committee evaluates social trends in church and society and provides advice and counsel to the General Assembly (GA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). The committee addresses issues, including civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, economic justice, public education, law enforcement, health care, employment, and housing as they directly impact communities of color and thereby the entire body of Christ. The committee also monitors the implementation of programs and policies approved by the church that impact the participation and quality of life for people of color within the church. The committee works in close cooperation with other agencies and entities within the church, including the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), to fulfill its responsibilities. The ACREC’s assigned functions, as stated in the GAMC *Manual of Operations* include:

- a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, or on its own initiative.
- b. Advise the General Assembly Mission Council on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.
- d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.
- f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.
- g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

The work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) is coordinated through the Office of the General Assembly Mission Council by the executive administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council. The committee

has direct access to the General Assembly, and its chair has corresponding member status with the General Assembly Mission Council and with the General Assembly.

## 2. *Officers for 2010–2011*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns elected Stephen Hsieh as chair and Carmen Rosario as vice-chair. Patricia Petty Morse was chosen to serve as secretary. Cynthia Holder Rich was elected chair of the Resource and Referral Subcommittee, and Aida Faris was elected chair of the Study and Comment Subcommittee.

## 3. *Accomplishments*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns used its regularly scheduled meetings to explore a wide range of topics of special interest to the committee and its work. Following the 219th General Assembly (2010), the committee met as follows:

- *August 26–28, Louisville, Kentucky:* The committee dedicated a large portion of its agenda to antiracism training led by the Reverend David Bowie. This prompted the group to commit to using a portion of each of their meetings on antiracism work. The group reviewed and made plans to complete its assignments from the General Assembly (GA) and had the opportunity to meet with several Louisville PC(USA) staff people, including Julia Thorne on immigration and Rhashell Hunter on racial ethnic and women's ministries. They also had a dinner to honor and thank Curtis Kearns, retired executive administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), who also served as staff person to ACREC for a year and a half.
- *November 11–13, Houston, Texas:* The committee heard from several guest speakers on a variety of immigration issues, including the experiences of new immigrants very much tied to racism. Representatives from the Asian Coordinating Ministry led a discussion regarding the difficulties new immigrants face when starting new church developments. The ACREC drafted a letter to those organizing the stewardship conference in Arizona requesting that they reconsider the location of the meeting, given the racist immigration law put into place there and our GA's stance against holding national meetings there. The group also drafted letters of concern regarding the vacant Middle Eastern staff position in Louisville, as well as one regarding the consultation of ACREC in revision of the paper on Christians and Jews. The group strategized on ways to most efficiently and effectively use their budget in this two-year cycle while remaining committed to meeting face-to-face three times a year. The group updated a few procedural items in ACREC's manual of operations, and elected new officers.

In 2011, the committee continued its work with the following schedule of meetings and content summaries:

- *March 3–5, Louisville, Kentucky:* The committee had the opportunity to have conversations with Linda Valentine, Executive Director, GAMC, and Vince Patton, Executive Administrator, GAMC, as well as many of the staff people from Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries, including Sterling Morse, coordinator for Cross Cultural Ministries and Congregational Support. The subcommittee working on the GA-assigned task of renaming ACREC met extensively with Virstan Choy and mapped out a plan for their work. The full committee met with Julia Thorne, manager of Immigration Issues, Office of the General Assembly, to continue their education and work on immigration. The ACREC wrote letters of concern to Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries regarding the continued vacancy in the Middle East staff position, as well as the reduction in Native American staff.
- *July 21–23, Stony Point, New York:* The committee met at the Stony Point Conference Center. Rick Ufford-Chase introduced the group to some of the work going on at Stony Point, and some of the young adult interns led the group in a discussion around interfaith work and intentional community. The committee heard from Hans Hallundbaek and Theo Harris on criminal justice, a topic the group chose to focus on heading toward GA. The committee also spent time discussing the failure of the passage of the Belhar Confession, and considered next steps in its promotion. The ACREC continued conversation regarding concern over the vacant Middle East staff position and the reduction of Native American staff. On the final day of their meeting, the committee connected with the Mid-Council Commission and discussed the work of that group and the possibility of consultation with ACREC.
- *November 10–12, Louisville, Kentucky:* The committee met with the intention of gathering resources for their reports and referrals going to the 220th General Assembly (2012). As the committee is committed to participating in antiracism training at all of its meetings, Monica Cabell, associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment of the General Assembly Mission Council, led the group in this training. Kim Bobo, director of Interfaith Worker Justice, discussed with the group some of the major issues of workers' rights. The Reverend Dr. Margaret Aymer led the committee in a Bible study that focused on issues of immigration, workers' rights, and incarceration, giving the committee solid biblical witness to some of the issues of racial justice in our current context. A panel of experts led the committee in a discussion on the failure of the Belhar Confession to pass and what could be done to potentially bring this confession before the denomination again. Warren Cooper briefed the committee on the work of the Mid-Council Commission.

In 2012, the committee had its final full-committee meeting prior to General Assembly:



## 11 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

- *January 19–21, Louisville, Kentucky:* The committee met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to discuss business going to General Assembly. In their ACREC meeting, the committee again participated in antiracism training with Monica Cabell, associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment of the General Assembly Mission Council. Valerie Small, manager of General Assembly Nominations, and Warner Durnell of the General Assembly Nominating Committee discussed the nominations process for new members to ACREC. The committee worked to finalize its business for General Assembly and also nominated new officers for the 2012–2014 term, which begins following General Assembly.

### 4. *Items of Business for the 219th General Assembly (2012)*

The following items were sent to the 220th General Assembly (2012):

- *2012 Creating a Climate for Change, report and recommendations.* Every two years ACREC interviews and receives reports from the chief executives of the six General Assembly agencies in order to ascertain the status of the “Creating a Climate for Change” recommendations approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004).

- *A Resolution to Retain the Name, “Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns,”* in response to the 2012 Referral: Item 09-16.

- *A Resolution on Racism, Incarceration and Restoration.*
- *A Resolution to Reaffirm the Call to Prophetic Witness in the PC(USA).*
- *A Resolution to Reaffirm the Commitment of the PC(USA) to Making Just Immigration a Reality*
- *A Resolution on Workers’ Rights and Income Inequality.*



## Item 12-01

**[The assembly disapproved Item 12-01. See p. 55.]**

*On Rescinding the 219th General Assembly (2010) Action Regarding a Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians (Item 11-11)—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.*

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to rescind the 219th General Assembly (2010) resolution regarding a call to stand with immigrant Presbyterians in their hour of need (Item 11-11, *Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 879–81 [electronic, full version] and pp. 338–39 [print version]).

### ***Rationale***

We affirm our historic confession that “the members of the church are emissaries of peace and seek the good of [humanity] in cooperation with powers and authorities in politics, culture and economics. But they have to fight against pretensions and injustices when these same powers endanger human welfare” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.25).

We confess that “the life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church’s mission. His life as man involves the church in the common life of [humanity]. His service to [humanity] commits the church to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all the sufferings of [humankind] so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of men [and women] in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God’s judgment on man’s inhumanity to man and the awful consequences of its own complicity in injustice” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.32).

We stand with those who authored the Theological Declaration of Barmen Declaration in the rejection of “the false doctrine, as though the church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Theological Declaration of Barmen, 8.18).

Introduction: There is no question that it is important for the General Assembly Mission Council to direct resources toward educating congregations regarding immigration issues and supporting targeted communities with legal resources. While we agree

- that the Arizona law known as SB1070/HB2162 neither secures the border nor advances the goal of comprehensive immigration reform;
- that it unfairly targets a specific population, unduly threatening the family and community integrity of those perceived to hold immigrant status, and
- that the initial proposal was born out of a deep love for the church and a strong passion for justice;

we believe that the recommended actions which have the effect of a boycott of the state of Arizona by the 219th General Assembly (2010) of the PC(USA) do not appropriately address these concerns. Further, we believe that this resolution has a harmful effect on congregations in the state and for the target population in general.

*Calling the church to refrain from holding national meetings in Arizona and states with immigration legislation similar to SB1070/HB2162 represents an unprecedented decision that directly impacts congregations, presbyteries, and a synod, all of which need additional support in this time.* Previous boycotts have been directed at corporations that were engaging in unjust practices. These included calling for members to avoid shopping in particular stores, buying particular investments or making use of particular products. While travel restrictions have been recommended in times of war or civil unrest, accompaniment programs such as those underway in Colombia have an important positive effect, both on broadening the ongoing knowledge of the situation “on the ground” and as well as fostering pastoral care for those individuals and congregations there.

*Calling for what seems like a boycott on a particular state could have a powerful effect on the local congregations and the presbyteries of which they are a part. Insofar as the individual congregations are part of the whole body of Christ, avoiding a particular region means the church is turning away from part of itself.* The action taken by the General Assembly could well result in the loss of appropriate help, resources, and support from General Assembly staff, in particular, those resources most needed to support the work of immigration reform. Further, to the local congregations and communities in the region, this action feels like abandonment by the leaders of the church.

*Given current legislative trends, this kind of action is impractical and virtually impossible to sustain over time.* Unless the General Assembly means to make an example out of the state of Arizona, as other states consider and pass similar laws, the resolution will necessarily be extended, significantly increasing the numbers of Presbyterians affected.

*A similar action taken by the Synod of the Southwest, which was cited as a precedent example of an already “on the books” action, was, on further review, rescinded in October, 2010.*

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 12-01 asks that an action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) on measures to support immigrant rights, including a selective patronage action, be rescinded.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-01 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Item 12-01 asks the General Assembly to rescind a resolution of the 219th General Assembly (2010) calling for a refusal to hold PC(USA) national meetings in Arizona and states with immigration legislation similar to SB1070/HB2162. The reasons given are the harm caused or risked by this refusal, even to the populations the supporters of the strategy seek to help, and the sense of abandonment felt by fellow Presbyterians in Arizona and elsewhere at the precise time that they needed accompaniment as they labored on behalf of immigrants’ welfare. The overture claims that the 2010 action to refrain from locating national meetings in such states “did not appropriately address” the concerns about objectionable immigration legislation that prompted it and amounted to a boycott.

The overture does not, however, stipulate what the harmful effects have been and what specific instances of abandonment have been experienced by the congregations in Arizona and the target population in general. Nor is there any taking account of possible positive results of the policy or its impact on the mission and witness of the PC(USA). Neither did this overture address other elements of advocacy for immigrant rights contained in the assembly’s 2010 action, although several of those concerns were put in a subsequent overture. In fact, the 2010 action was not unprecedented as assemblies have authorized a range of selective patronage efforts over the years.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises disapproval for several reasons:

1. While the action of the General Assembly in 2010 was not a stated boycott and did not endorse the La Raza boycott, it has had an arguably positive impact on the enforcement of SB 1070/HB 2162. The primary purpose of the assembly’s action was to protect Hispanic Presbyterians visiting the state from racial profiling. The influence of this and other decisions, however, is estimated to have cost the state approximately \$140 million.<sup>1</sup> It is further said to have prompted business leaders to join with others in addressing punitive impacts of the law on citizens and immigrants in Arizona. [<http://www.azcentral.com/news/politics/articles/2012/04/17/20120417immigration-law-politics-change.html>] Thus significant progress appears to be underway in Arizona, effectively modifying the enforcement of the SB 1070 legislation if not rescinding it.

2. The impact of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s witness on other state governments cannot be fully documented, but seems to have been significant in Kentucky itself and in Indiana, where a bill was modified in advance of the July 2011 Big Tent gathering in Indianapolis. The leadership of Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons and GAMC Executive Director Linda Valentine deserves commendation in their presenting the positive concern of the church through appropriate channels.

3. Both anti-immigrant legislation and the flow of immigration seem to have slowed, largely for economic reasons. Thus, while several states (notably Alabama, as well as Georgia, South Carolina, and Utah) did follow an Arizona-like pattern, that trend seems to have ended. The 2010 action authorized resources to address anti-immigrant campaigns in historical context, an educational component also retained by the Synod of the Southwest when it modified its earlier action.

4. In May of this year, the U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against the Sheriff’s office of Maricopa County (Phoenix area). “A federal Department of Justice investigation into (Sheriff Joe) Arpaio’s office made public in December described “a pervasive culture of discriminatory bias against Latinos at MCSO that reaches the highest levels of the agency.” Note: [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-04-05/justice/justice\\_arizona-sheriff-case\\_1\\_toughest-sheriff-arizona-sheriff-joe-arpaio-mcso?s=PM:JUSTICE](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-04-05/justice/justice_arizona-sheriff-case_1_toughest-sheriff-arizona-sheriff-joe-arpaio-mcso?s=PM:JUSTICE); [<http://www.azcentral.com/news/politics/articles/2012/05/10/20120510joe-arpaio-doj-lawsuit.html>.]

5. Thus the concerns of the church expressed in the 2010 action remain valid, although the enforcement issue is partially moot, unless the state legislature changes course, which is unlikely in the current climate. The need for an orderly, fair, and legal path to citizenship remains the overall problem that burdens some state governments more than others. The Supreme Court is currently considering whether four provisions (so far blocked) of the Arizona law usurp federal enforcement authority and impinge on foreign policy.<sup>2</sup>

For those who are loathe to repudiate so quickly the action of the last General Assembly and equally loathe to turn a deaf ear to a plea for help from a presbytery that is also committed to hospitality and justice for immigrants (see Item 12-02), the

220th General Assembly (2012) could conceivably call for a temporary suspension of the assembly's commitment to allow time for further assessment. After all, the National Coalition of La Raza decided to suspend its participation in a boycott as conditions changed. The results of the assessment could be reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014), and a future policy regarding national meetings could either be returned to the 2010 stance or changed. The Office of Immigration Issues of the PC(USA) could be a valuable aid in this endeavor.

#### Endnotes

1. Peter Spiro. "Let Arizona's Law Stand." *New York Times*. April 13, 2012, p. A15.
2. Julia Preston. "Defining Moment on Immigration." *New York Times*. April 23, 2012, pp. A1 & 12.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL IN ITEM 12-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 12-01.

#### Rationale

The General Assembly's action is and was not intended to be an alert to Presbyterians but to provide additional leverage within the state to aid those who are struggling for change.

See Item 12-09, "A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality," from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-01

*Comment on Item 12-01—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

In considering Item 12-01, commissioners of the 220th General Assembly are encouraged to review the language of the 219th General Assembly (2010) resolution [\*A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need\*](#). The stated purpose of the 219th General Assembly (2010) resolution is to show the whole church's solidarity with those who may be subjected to harassment based on their outward physical characteristics while attending church-wide events. *A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need*, is in-line with principals of finding unity in our diversity (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403), leaving no place for discrimination in the church. Additionally, the 2010 resolution reflects the church's call to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301) and is evidence of the church seeking a new openness its own membership, recognizing that we are made one in Christ (*Book of Order*, F-1.0404). As such, *A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians* seeks to be sensitive to and benefit all of the members of the body of Christ.

In response to the 219th General Assembly (2010) resolution, the Office of Immigration developed various [resources](#) and presentations to educate and engage congregations and councils in conversations concerning these matters, which includes tracking [state immigration legislation](#). Further, the Office of Immigration Issues continues to be a resource to the whole denomination with regard to state immigration laws and how these laws impact our church. It is also important to note that PC(USA) national staff continue to travel to and resource congregations and presbyteries regardless of the laws enacted in the states in which they are located.

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## Item 12-02

**[The assembly answered Item 12-02 by the action taken on Item 12-03. See p. 55.]**

*On Taking Action Concerning the Place and Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.*

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take actions concerning the place and plight of immigrant people (both documented and undocumented) in our neighborhoods and communities of faith. The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for comprehensive legislation for immigrants living and working in the United States. The conditions that brought about that resolution have not improved. Therefore, we ask the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families to do the following:

1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to strangers, and thus welcome immigrant people to our nation and our church, as part of our national and our church's history, and our nation's and church's future.

2. Hold high and measure our conduct by these principles and ideals, in the love of Jesus Christ:
  - a. Welcoming the traveler who comes our way seeking help.
  - b. Nurturing God's gift of the mind.
  - c. Protecting the integrity of the family unit and keeping family members together.
  - d. Honoring those who demonstrate the desire to make a constructive contribution to their community while they secure a life for themselves and their families.
  - e. Respecting the rights of all humans as children of God.
3. Build bridges that encourage deeper relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and immigrants, and pay more attention to the presence and value of immigrant people in our neighborhoods and churches by
  - a. identifying and becoming acquainted with immigrant people around us;
  - b. resisting the temptation to let language and culture be a barrier in our call to meet new people;
  - c. receiving the gifts immigrant people bring into our midst by listening and experiencing stories of joy and challenge and being open to how God is calling us to change and to stand with immigrants in need;
  - d. encouraging and supporting pastors and congregations whose memberships and ministries are directly impacted by the immigration crisis; and
  - e. encouraging and financially supporting the education of immigrant people in a holistic way, from after-school programs for young children through scholarships for college and graduate studies.
4. Educate and advocate with religious, business, community and law-enforcement leaders for legislative reform at the national, state, and local levels that strives to address the following:
  - a. legal assistance in applying for resident alien status;
  - b. employers' rights to employ responsible workers, provide safe and reasonable work conditions, and assist employees in the payment of taxes;
  - c. educating immigrant people, celebrating the culture and languages of their homelands and teaching the culture and language of their new home;
  - d. focusing law enforcement on the elimination of criminal behavior without creating an environment of harassment for decent immigrant people, which disrupts homes and families;
  - e. establishing minimum standards of care for detainees that includes legal representation; and
  - f. encouraging all church councils to meet with their state's Access to Justice Commission and encourage their work honoring the principles and values for which we stand.

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**Concurrence to Item 12-02 from the Presbyteries of Chicago and de Cristo, and the Synod of the Southwest.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-02 be answered by the action taken on Item 12-03.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-02.

*Rationale*

Conditions have not improved. The conditions that prompted this resolution are still in existence and in some instances have grown worse because of economic and social conditions.

See Item 12-09, “A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality,” from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-02

*Comment on Item 12-02—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) are invited to consider Item 12-02 in light of past General Assembly actions calling for a comprehensive approach to “advocacy and welcome” for immigrants and for the United States Senate and House of Representatives to work across party lines to produce comprehensive immigration reform legislation ([217th General Assembly \(2006\)](#)). This call recognizes that a workable immigration policy must balance a variety of concerns and priorities that impact immigrant families, the nation, and citizen workers, which have been the basis of past reforms. Item 12-02 is consistent with these actions and other General Assembly policies advocating for the humane treatment of all God’s children ([216th General Assembly \(2004\)](#)) and encouraging presbyteries and congregations to work closely with immigrants with issues related to legal status ([218th General Assembly \(2008\)](#)).

Further, commissioners are encouraged to evaluate whether a reconfiguration of Recommendation 4 would better reflect the different responsibilities of local, state, and federal officials. For example, Recommendations 4.a., c., and f. could be addressed at the local, state, and federal level. In seeking to be consistent with former policies, Recommendations 4.b., d., and e. should fall under the purview of the U.S. Congress who has the tools and resources to: (1) establish employer obligations and sanctions under immigration laws and ensure compliance; and (2) create uniform and enforceable immigration detention standards.

Regarding Recommendation 4.b., commissioners should consider this language and interpretation of advocating for “employers’ rights” and “safe and reasonable work conditions.” It seems that one issue this section may be contemplating is the fact that employers have a quasi-immigration officer role while checking immigration status of employees via the I-9 process. Other language commissioners may consider involves the effort to make participation in E-Verify, an automated employment verification system, mandatory.

E-verify is opposed by many advocates, employers, and immigrants due to higher than necessary incidence of inaccuracy, burdens on employers, and response time delays. Commissioners might consider this trend in the law when crafting a resolution that will both protect workers and ensure a verification process that is as reliable as possible. For possible economic impact see this article from the American Immigration Lawyers Association: <http://www.globalimmigrationcounsel.com/uploads/file/bloomberg.pdf>.

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## Item 12-03

**[The assembly approved Item 12-03 with amendment. See pp. 55–56.]**

*On Taking Action Concerning the Place, Plight, and Contributions of Immigrant People in Our Country, Neighborhoods, and Communities of Faith—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.*

**The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to urge General Assembly agencies, presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to ~~[do the following:]~~ [take actions concerning the place and plight of immigrant people, regardless of status, in our neighborhoods and communities of faith.]**

**[The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for comprehensive legislation for immigrants living and working in the United States. The conditions that brought about that resolution have not improved; therefore, we ask the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families to do the following:]**

1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to and advocate ~~[for]~~ justice for immigrants regardless of status.
2. Encourage presbyteries to ~~[create]~~ **[build bridges by creating]** cross-cultural ministry teams and immigration issues task forces (or their equivalent) that will~~[:]~~
  - a. identify and become acquainted with immigrant people in their communities;
  - b. encourage and support pastors and congregations whose memberships and ministries are directly impacted by the immigration crisis;

c. encourage and financially support the education of immigrant people in a holistic way—for example through English as Second Language programs, after-school programs for young children, and scholarships for college and graduate studies; ~~and]~~

d. provide opportunities to celebrate and learn from the culture and languages of the immigrants' homelands while helping the immigrants to navigate within the culture and language of their new home~~[-][:]~~

e. resist the temptation to let language and culture be a barrier in our call to meet new people; and]

f. lift up the gifts immigrant people bring to the Church by sharing stories of joy and challenge while experiencing mutual transformation.]

3. Educate and advocate in partnership with religious, business, community, and law-enforcement leaders for ~~[legislative]~~ reform and action ~~[at the national, state, and local level]~~ by~~[:]~~

~~[a. continuing to advocate on behalf of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, especially the DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors);]~~

~~[b.]~~ a.] offering legal assistance to immigrants applying for ~~[resident-alien]~~ [lawful permanent resident] status or other immigration status;

~~[c. advocating for employers' rights to employ workers, provide safe and reasonable work conditions, and assist employees in the payment of taxes;]~~

~~[d.]~~ b.] focusing law enforcement on the ~~[elimination of criminal behavior without creating an environment of harassment for immigrant people;]~~ [maintenance of community safety and fostering the growth of positive relationships and confidence between law enforcement and immigrant populations; and]

~~[e.—establishing minimum standards of care for detainees that includes legal representation; and]~~

~~[f.]~~ c.] encouraging all church councils to meet with their state's Access to Justice Commission (or equivalent) and to encourage their work in honoring principles and values that respect and value immigrants.

4. Partner with religious, business, community, and law-enforcement leaders for legislative reform at the federal level on the following:

a. continuing to advocate on behalf of Comprehensive Immigration Reform as outlined in the resource guide published by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). Specifically, it must simultaneously create legal avenues for people to enter the U.S.; allow people already here to earn the opportunity to adjust their status; address the multiyear backlogs in family and employment based immigration; and create and implement a smart border security and enforcement regime that respects core principles of due process;

b. actively advocating for legislation such as the DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) that offers hope for young immigrants by providing a pathway to citizenship;

c. advocating against mandatory participation in the E-verify system, in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform, for as long as the E-verify system continues to have a higher than necessary incidence of inaccuracy; and

d. establishing minimum standards of care for detainees that include legal representation.]

#### *Rationale*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for comprehensive immigration reform with a path to legalization for undocumented immigrants living and working in the United States that would keep families together and honor the gifts that immigrants bring to our society. We recognize that now in 2012, the conditions that brought about that resolution have not improved. Through the actions described in this overture, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will reaffirm its commitment to be in solidarity with immigrant people in our communities and churches by

1. showing hospitality and sisterhood/brotherhood to the traveler who comes our way seeking help;
2. receiving the gifts that immigrant people bring into our midst by listening to and experiencing stories of joy and challenge, and being open to how God is calling us to change and to stand with immigrants in need;
3. building bridges across cultures that encourage deeper relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and immigrants, and to pay more attention to the presence and value of immigrant people in our neighborhoods and churches;
4. protecting the integrity of the immigrant family unit by keeping family members together;



5. honoring those whose only desire is to make constructive contributions to their community while they secure a life for themselves and their families;
6. respecting the rights of all humans as children of God;
7. resisting the temptation to let language and culture be a barrier in our call to meet new people.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-03 be approved as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to urge General Assembly agencies, presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to [~~do the following~~] take actions concerning the place and plight of immigrant people (both documented and undocumented) in our neighborhoods and communities of faith.]

“[The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution calling for comprehensive legislation for immigrants living and working in the United States. The conditions that brought about that resolution have not improved. Therefore, we ask the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families to do the following:]

- “1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to and advocate for justice for immigrants regardless of status.
- “2. Encourage presbyteries to create cross-cultural ministry teams and immigration issues task forces (or their equivalent) that will
  - “a. identify and become acquainted with immigrant people in their communities;
  - “b. encourage and support pastors and congregations whose memberships and ministries are directly impacted by the immigration crisis;
  - “c. encourage and financially support the education of immigrant people in a holistic way—for example, through English as Second Language programs, after-school programs for young children, and scholarships for college and graduate studies; ~~and~~
  - “d. provide opportunities to celebrate and learn from the culture and languages of the immigrants’ homelands while helping the immigrants to navigate within the culture and language of their new home[-:][.]”
  - “[e. resist the temptation to let language and culture be a barrier in our call to meet new people.]
- “3. [Text for 3.a.–f. remains unchanged.]”

*Rationale*

The amendments incorporate language from a similar overture, Item 12-02 from the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

The theological and ethical rationale for this advice and counsel is found in *Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounters With New Neighbors* (211th General Assembly [1999]) and *Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States* (216th General Assembly [2004]). The action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) calling for the church “to stand with immigrant Presbyterians” also provides rationale. Both Items 12-02 and 12-03 cite the action of the 216th General Assembly (2004), which spells out its biblical and theological basis fully. Both call for actions (1) to provide hospitality to strangers and welcome of immigrants to our nation and our church; (2) to exemplify principles and ideals grounded in the love of Jesus Christ in welcoming the traveler, nurturing minds, protecting the family unit, honoring those who desire to make constructive contributions, and respecting the rights of all peoples; (3) to build bridges that encourage deeper relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and immigrants; and (4) to work with religious, business, community, and law-enforcement leaders for legislative reform at national, state, and local levels as spelled out in the overtures. This attention to “the place and plight of immigrant people (both documented and undocumented) in our neighborhoods and communities of faith” that has been requested by several overtures to this General Assembly surely merits approval and support.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-03.

*Rationale*

Conditions have not improved. The conditions that prompted this resolution are still in existence and in some instances have grown worse because of economic and social conditions.

See Item 12-09, “A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality,” from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-03**

*Comment on Item 12-03—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly are invited to consider Item 12-03 in light of past General Assembly action, *Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors* (211th General Assembly (1999)). The 1999 resolution encourages Presbyterian congregations to recognize God’s call to reach out to local communities and embrace the gifts that all neighbors bring to Christ’s church. Item 12-03 is a reminder of this call and highlights specific tasks and actions that Presbyterians can undertake to ensure our faithfulness to biblical hospitality. Christ welcomes all to his church and sends the church, Christ’s faithful evangelist (F-1.0302d), into the world to invite others to join the “community of faith to worship and serve the triune God” (W-7.2001f) and to seek reconciliation through “working for fair laws and just administration of the law” (W-7.4002).

However, commissioners are encouraged to evaluate whether a reconfiguration of Recommendation 3 of Item 12-03 would better reflect the different responsibilities of local, state, and federal officials. For example, Recommendations 3.c., d. and e., should be grouped together to illustrate that the U.S. Congress has the responsibility to: (1) establish employer obligations and sanctions under immigration laws; and (2) create uniform and enforceable immigration detention standards.

Regarding Recommendation 3.c., commissioners should consider this language and interpretation of advocating for “employers’ rights” and “safe and reasonable work conditions.” It seems that one issue this section may be contemplating is the fact that employers have a quasi-immigration officer role while checking immigration status of employees via the I-9 process. Other language commissioners may consider involves the effort to make participation in E-Verify, an automated employment verification system, mandatory.

E-verify is opposed by many advocates, employers, and immigrants due to higher than necessary incidence of inaccuracy, burdens on employers, and response time delays. Commissioners might consider this trend in the law when crafting a resolution that will both protect workers and ensure a verification process that is as reliable as possible. For possible economic impact see this article from the American Immigration Lawyers Association: <http://www.globalimmigrationcounsel.com/uploads/file/bloomberg.pdf>.

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## Item 12-04

[The assembly approved Item 12-04 with amendment. See pp. 55, 57–58.]

*On Advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.*

“The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

**[1. Urge all congregations to consider the biblical mandate to love the stranger among us and to see Jesus in his or her face. To this end we urge congregations to**

**[a. reexamine reasons behind the fears that jobs will be taken away by immigrants in our communities;**

**[b. support denominational goals toward diversity and make efforts toward a better understanding of immigrant sisters and brothers’ language and culture;**

**[c. practice biblical hospitality to immigrant groups, particularly those formed for religious or self-help purposes.]**

[+ ] [2.] Urge all councils within the church to join with other faith communities, business organizations, law-enforcement entities, and other civil society groups to educate and advocate for comprehensive immigration reform at the [national, state, and local] [federal] level[s]. Elements of such reform, from our perspective, must include:

a. Making family unity a priority by avoiding separation of families, revising visa preferences and caps, and eliminating visa backlogs;

b. Providing a reasonable and inclusive path for undocumented migrants presently living in the United States to eventually gain citizenship without imposing punitive costs, wait times, or other irksome conditions;

c. Facilitating integration of immigrants into their communities by celebrating the culture and languages of their homelands, by providing civics education and legal assistance to regularize their status, and by providing access to all social services;

d. Requiring humane enforcement procedures that develop measures to reduce human smuggling and migrant deaths, and that aim to eliminate human and civil rights abuses [~~stemming from indiscriminate raids on homes and workplaces~~]; abolishing enforcement programs such as Operation Streamline and arrangements that involve local agencies in the enforcement of immigration laws, such as “287(g)” Agreements and the Secure Communities Program;

e. Eliminating lengthy detention for migrants, except those accused of dangerous crimes, strengthening due process protections at every stage of the system, and establishing and stringently enforcing minimum standards of care in all detention facilities;

~~[f. Protecting refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced persons by more careful vetting of their conditions upon entry into the country and by rigorous training for and oversight of immigration officials;]~~

~~[g.]~~ [f.] Protecting all workers from exploitation, abuse, and affronts to their dignity by enforcing labor and employment laws that provide fair wages, the right to organize and to seek redress for grievances;

~~[h.]~~ [g.] Providing safe, legal, and realistic paths for future migration, consistent with the needs of the U.S. economy without undercutting the employment of anyone already working in the U.S, allowing new migrants to bring their families with them and allowing them the freedom to change places of employment.

~~[2.]~~ [3.] Urge all councils within the church to join Christ’s mission of building communities, encouraging them to

a. Draw from materials readily available\* to provide education to congregations and surrounding communities concerning economic contributions of immigrants, problems migrants face as a result of current legislation, and its practical application during and after crossing the border;

b. Create welcoming worship services and programs ~~[for]~~ [with] migrants in the area;

c. Build relationships ~~[with migrant communities]~~ by celebrating gifts ~~[they bring]~~, listening to stories ~~[they tell]~~, and accepting ~~[them]~~ [all] as children of God, and

d. Supporting migrant communities through providing and funding educational programs and by advocating access to higher education.

~~[3. Form a diverse team whose task is to create a confession, possibly to be included in *The Book of Confessions*, which describes and celebrates the perceived desire and movement of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Presence, regarding the issues of borders, migration, and the treatment of migrants at this point in history.]~~

[4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Office of Public Witness and other related ministries, and the Office of the General Assembly, through the Office of Immigration Issues, to advocate for other measures that will improve the plight of immigrants in our midst:

[a. Call on Congress to immediately pass legislation comparable to the DREAM Act that provides a pathway to citizenship for eligible students. Simultaneously, urge the administration to provide temporary legal status for students eligible under the DREAM Act or comparable legislation in the meantime.]

[b. Urge the administration and Congress to enact clear, enforceable detention reforms, including rigorous medical treatment standards and increased access to pastoral care, legal counsel, and legal orientation programs. And to expedite the release of individuals who pose no risk to the community and expand the use of community-based alternatives to detention that are more humane and cost-effective.]

[c. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to urge the Border Patrol to cease the practice of lateral repatriation that separates migrant families.]

[d. Direct the Office of General Assembly to urge the administration to end policies such as Secure Communities and 287g programs that lack oversight and transparency and have led to racial profiling and have undermined the stability of communities and their trust of law enforcement agencies.]

[e. Draw attention to the human rights crisis along the border region between Mexico and the United States that has led to the deaths of thousands of migrants, affirm the right of individuals and organizations to provide life-

**saving humanitarian aid in the border regions, and urge church councils to support humanitarian aid efforts. Join a multitude of other communities by becoming an official member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, whose principles are echoed above and laid out in the *Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform*.<sup>4</sup>**

**[f. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Office of Immigration Issues and other appropriate offices, to investigate how free trade agreements are affecting immigration into the U.S., and to report its findings to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

**[g. When selecting venues for church-related activities, especially church-wide events, consider the safety and freedom from harassment of all who might attend.**

[4.] 5. Invite church-wide prayer for all suffering on both sides of the border, recognizing that fear, hatred, tension, and division in our communities is counter to God's desire for human life.

#### *Rationale*

This overture is presented by the Session of the First United Presbyterian Church of Las Vegas, New Mexico, Presbytery of Santa Fe, a church that has been involved with border and immigration issues for decades. People of this congregation have participated in educational, medical, and work trips to Ciudad Juarez, Agua Prieta, and Nogales and have hosted individuals and groups from those Mexican border communities. Our mission giving includes support of Presbyterian Border Ministry and specific ministries in Ciudad Juarez. We sell Café Justo. In late 2010 we became involved in relocating a human rights defender from Ciudad Juarez who was seeking asylum. Since that time the church has held her in prayer, hosted her, heard her story, financially supported her, and is now rejoicing with her because she and her children were given asylum last spring. Granted funding from the Synod of the Southwest, the Mission/Peacemaking Committee of the church spearheaded a conference on Border and Immigration Issues in the fall of 2011, drawing a diverse group of almost 200 participants and presenters from near and far, including undocumented migrants and those with opposing viewpoints. Through fifteen workshops and plenary sessions, we heard informed presentations and discussed issues included in this overture.

Abraham migrated from his homeland upon the urging of God.

God, hearing the cries of the Hebrew people because of harsh working conditions, called Moses to lead them from the Land of Egypt.

Jesus Christ, as a child, was taken by his parents across a national border in order to save his life.

The Bible entreats us repeatedly to welcome the strangers from other lands who dwell among us as members of our own families with love and compassion, as God welcomes us.

Jesus Christ in the Scripture teaches and commands his followers to love neighbors, especially the most vulnerable, as much as themselves.

The Brief Statement of Faith, from *The Book of Confessions*, urges us to speak on behalf of those who have no voice in political conversations because of lack of wealth and cultural status.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been advocating for justice concerning issues of immigration for several decades.

We sense the importance of keeping compassionate, comprehensive immigration reform at the forefront of discussion on all levels of church, community, and government.

Migrants have historically enriched and strengthened the life of our churches and nation.

#### Endnote

\*Information, for instance, found on the PC(USA) website, which includes biblical references, support information, and study guide, included in an overture passed by the General Assembly in 2004.

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**Concurrence to Item 12-04 from the Synod of the Southwest.**

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-04--From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-04 be approved as amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

“1. Urge all congregations to consider their biblical mandate to love the stranger among us and to see Jesus in his or her face. To this end we urge congregations to

“a. re-examine reasons behind the fears that jobs will be taken away by immigrants in our communities;

“b. support denominational goals toward diversity and make efforts toward a better understanding of our immigrant sisters and brothers’ language and culture;

“c. practice biblical hospitality to immigrant groups, particularly those formed for religious or self-help purposes.]

“~~1.~~ 2. [Text for ~~1.~~ 2.a.–h. remains unchanged.]

“~~2.~~ 3. [Text for ~~2.~~ 3.a.–d. remains unchanged.]

“~~3. Form a diverse team whose task is to create a confession, possibly to be included in *The Book of Confessions*, which describes and celebrates the perceived desire and movement of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Presence, regarding the issues of borders, migration, and the treatment of migrants at this point in history.]~~

“4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Office of Public Witness and other related ministries, and the Office of the General Assembly, through the Office of Immigration Issues, to advocate for other measures that will improve the plight of immigrants in our midst:

“a. Call on Congress to pass legislation comparable to the Dream Act<sup>1</sup> immediately and to urge the administration to provide temporary legal status to Dream Act eligible students.

“b. Urge the administration and Congress to enact clear, enforceable detention reforms, including rigorous medical treatment standards and increased access to pastoral care, legal counsel, and legal orientation programs. And to expedite the release of individuals who pose no risk to the community and expand the use of community-based alternatives to detention that are more humane and cost-effective.

“c. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to urge the Border Patrol to cease the practice of lateral repatriation that separates migrant families.

“d. Direct the Office of General Assembly to urge the administration to end policies such as Secure Communities<sup>2</sup> and 287g programs that lack oversight and transparency and have led to racial profiling and have undermined the stability of communities and their trust of law enforcement agencies.

“e. Draw attention to the human rights crisis along the border region between Mexico and the United States that has lead to the deaths of thousands of migrants, affirm the right of individuals and organizations to provide life-saving humanitarian aid in the border regions, and urge church councils to support humanitarian aid efforts. Join a multitude of other communities by becoming an official member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition,<sup>3</sup> whose principles are echoed above and laid out in the *Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform*.<sup>4</sup>

“f. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Office of Immigration Issues and other appropriate offices, to investigate how free trade agreements are affecting immigration into the U.S., and to report its findings to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

“g. When selecting venues for church-related activities, especially church-wide events, consider the safety and freedom from harassment of all who might attend.

“5. Invite church-wide prayer for all suffering on both sides of the border, recognizing that fear, hatred, tension, and division in our communities is counter to God’s desire for human life.

“[Endnotes

“1. Passage of the Dream Act would allow for a process towards permanent residency for those who arrived in the United States prior to age 16, have proof of residency for five consecutive years, are of good moral character, and are either enrolled in community college, university, or serve in the U.S. military. For more information: <http://www.immigrationforum.org/policy/legislation/the-dream-act-in-the-111th-congress>.

“2. <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/secure-communities-fact-sheet>.

“3. <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/>--The PC(USA) is not a member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, even though the church has signed onto the Coalition’s Platform.

“[4. <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/interfaith-immigration-platform-2009.pdf>.]”

### *Rationale*

Most of the amendments proposed incorporate material from Item 12-06 and are combined for the coherence of General Assembly action and efficiency of commissioners.

This overture, along with similar Overture 12-06, is a logical outgrowth of past actions of the General Assembly, especially the *Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States* (216th General Assembly [2004]). It follows that the “Biblical and Theological Basis” developed in that approved resolution (regarding hospitality to the stranger, gifts of the stranger, justice as the distribution of power and resources, etc.) also serves appropriately as the rationale for this advice and counsel. Still another source for a rationale, cited in Item 12-06, is the Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform, of which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a signatory. The pillars of the platform, which was addressed to the 111th Congress in 2009, are the priority of family unity; the need for a process for undocumented immigrants to earn legal status and eventual citizenship; the protection of workers and provision of efficient channels of entry for new migrant workers; integration of immigrants into society; restoration of due process protections and reform of detention policies; and alignment of immigration laws with humanitarian values. Because the central tenets and recommendations of Items 12-04 and 12-06 are so similar, the amended text above combines the language of the two overtures.

Review of Items 12-04 and 12-06 will reveal an omission from Item 12-04 and revisions to Item 12-06. Recommendation No. 3 in Item 12-04 recommends that a diverse team create “a confession, possibly to be included in *The Book of Confessions*, which describes and celebrates the perceived desire and movement of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Presence, regarding the issues of borders, migration, and the treatment of migrants at this point in history.” There is certainly a need for creation of aids for worship that lift up immigrant issues, as cited by Item 12-07, but the effort to write a new confession seems ill-advised at this time in the life of our church and our nation because of the continuing debate about the Belhar Confession, the expense that would be involved in the work of the proposed team, and the contentious current climate for such an endeavor.

In the material incorporated from Item 12-06 (4.e.) in the amended recommendation above, the call for approval of the Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform has been changed to a call to become a member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, which produced the platform. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is already a signatory of the platform. Item 12-06 also requests a fact-finding team “to ascertain what effects the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement has had on immigration and the condition of immigrants, both documented and undocumented.” Recommendation 4.f. in the amended recommendation above would broaden the inquiry to other free-trade agreements affecting immigration into the United States such as the Pacific Free Trade Agreement. It also designates the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Office of Immigration Issues and other appropriate offices, to conduct the research and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy has provided studies of trade and employment matters in the past, and also prepared the current immigration policy. Commissioners would need to consider the value and scope of such a focused inquiry and its relation to immigrant ministries.

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### **OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-04**

*Comment on Item 12-04—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly are encouraged to consider Item 12-04 in being consistent with and in light of General Assembly policies since the 1990 statement on the *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986*. This includes [Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States](#) (216th General Assembly (2004)) and [Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants](#) (217th General Assembly (2006)). In accordance with this overture, these three prior General Assembly statements addressed components of a just and humane immigration policy that takes into account family unity, alternatives to unnecessary detention, and protection of workers.

Further, Item 12-04 is in-line with the calling of the church to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (F-1.0401), to find unity in our diversity (F-1.403), and to bear witness to God’s reign through proclamation of the gospel and works of compassion and reconciliation (W-7.1001).

However, it is advised that the language of the overture in Recommendation 1 be changed to reflect the language of previous General Assembly policies to note that comprehensive immigration reform is to be undertaken by the U.S. Congress ([217th General Assembly \(2006\)](#)), as the federal government has the resources and expertise to create and enforce measures targeted to address Recommendations 1.a.–h.

It is advised that commissioners consider *The Book of Confessions* in its current form and how a confession drafted by a team that reflects the diversity of the church today and embraces the hope of the church we desire to become, may speak to the current and future generations of the church.

## Item 12-05

[The assembly approved Item 12-05 with amendment. See pp. 55, 58–59.]

*On the Plight of Indonesian Christian Immigrants and the Passage of the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act—From the Presbytery of Newark.*

The Presbytery of Newark overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) to take action as follows with respect to ~~[a certain group of Christians]~~ [refugees] who are threatened with deportation to Indonesia and to request that the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families join in the action as follows:

1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to [strangers] [others], and thus welcome immigrant people to ~~[our]~~ [this] nation and ~~[our]~~ [this] church as part of both the history and the future of ~~[our]~~ [this] nation and ~~[our]~~ church.
2. Educate and advocate for the passage of the bill introduced in the House of Representatives called the ‘Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act’, H.R. 3590, together with any bill introduced in the Senate to achieve the same ends, as well as for the signature of such act upon submission to the president.
3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations about the plight of the Indonesian ~~[Christian]~~-immigrants and the proposed Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act and calling congregations to support and advocate for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.
4. Direct the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness to advocate on Capitol Hill for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.

### *Rationale*

“When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19:33–34).

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Mt 25:35).

The persecution of Christians in Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim country, through church bombings, church burnings, and numerous other acts of mob violence has been well-documented by various sources: “In Indonesia, church runs afoul of Islamic street name,” *Ecumenical News International*, 9/20/2011 [PC(USA) website]; “Indonesian church leaders say attack on its members ‘barbaric,’” *Ecumenical News International*, 9/20/10 [PC(USA) website]; “Suicide bomber strikes church,” *Jakarta Post*, 9/26/11; Human Rights Watch, Indonesia Country Summary (January 2012); Press Statement, U.S. Department of State, 2/9/11 (“We also note with concern the recent church burnings in Central Java.”); *Tampubolon v Holder*, 610 F.3d 1056 (9th Cir. 2010).

About fourteen years ago, thousands of Indonesian Christians fled to this country. Through ignorance, misjudgment, or otherwise, these refugees did not apply for asylum within the required one-year deadline. Instead, they set about getting jobs, raising families, and generally becoming productive residents of the United States.

Later, when our government enacted a regulation requiring men from certain predominantly Muslim countries, including Indonesia, to register with our government, these dutiful Christians filled out the required forms. Now, our government seeks to deport them, and, because the one-year deadline has passed, they cannot be granted asylum (“Canceling Stay, U.S. Orders 72 Indonesians in New Jersey to Leave,” *New York Times*, 12/6/11). As a result, around our land, in the final stages before deportation, Indonesian Christians have been compelled to wear ankle monitors, our modern electronic chains, so that when the final order of deportation comes, our government will be able to capture and ship these people back to Indonesia with the minimum amount of difficulty.

Representative Carolyn Maloney has sponsored a bill, H.R. 3590, that would allow these poor Indonesians to make their cases for asylum even though the one-year deadline has passed. Note carefully, if the bill were to become law these Indonesians would not be granted asylum automatically, they simply would be allowed to have their day in court. The bill has been referred to the Judiciary Committee, and there it sits, and there it will die. And thousands of Christian Indonesians will be notified, and then shackled, and then deported to meet their fates.

The passage of this bill and its enactment into law is simply the right thing to do and advocacy for this event is at the core of what we profess to believe in.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-05 be approved.

*Rationale*

This overture seeks advocacy for the Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act (HR 3590 and Senate equivalent) from all levels of the PC(USA) to address the plight of Indonesian Christian immigrants who fled their home country due to severe persecution and failed to apply for asylum within the one-year deadline out of ignorance or misjudgment. Due to later enacted U.S. regulation requiring men from certain predominantly Muslim countries to register, those who failed to do so now face deportation. The proposed IFRP Act, which is now stuck in the Judiciary Committee, asks not for automatic asylum but for the chance for a day in court to make a case for asylum despite passage of the deadline. In our view, the case for asylum is not weakened by acknowledging the improvement in Indonesian conditions noted in the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) comment.

The rationale for support of this legislation is the biblical admonition of hospitality to the stranger and love of the alien in your land as yourself. The overture cites Leviticus 19:33–34 and Matthew 25:35, and there is much more biblical support that could be summoned. An especially rich resource concerning refugees and asylum seekers is *Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors*, (approved by the 211th General Assembly [1999]), particularly sections entitled “Historical Perspective: Refugees and Asylum Seekers” and “Theological and Ethical Basis for Policy.” Among the statements in the latter section are these: “Churches are called to ministry with refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants, and to public witness on their behalf.” “Christians have the responsibility to challenge and to shape government policy regarding refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants.” “Love of neighbor requires Christians to seek justice for refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants” (p. 15).

Notable General Assembly action in response to intense persecution of Christians in Indonesia and other human rights abuses there was taken by the 212th General Assembly (2000). As part of the Human Rights Update—1999–2000, it called “for the Indonesian government to keep the situation under Civil Emergency Law rather than Military Emergency Law” and “to keep the troubled areas open to the international press.” In addition, it called for other UN member nations to urge United Nations “action and pressure upon the Indonesian government” and for United States corporations “not to invest in Indonesia until the situation is resolved and rights for all guaranteed” (p. 1). Action on behalf of beleaguered Indonesian Christians clearly has precedent in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON OVERTURE 12-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-05 as amended:

“The Presbytery of Newark overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) to take action as follows with respect to ~~[a certain group of Christians]~~ [refugees] who are threatened with deportation to Indonesia and to request that the General Assembly, the presbyteries, the congregations, and individual Presbyterians and their families join in the action as follows:

“1. Affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to strangers and thus welcome immigrant people to our nation and our church as part of both the history and the future of our nation and our church.

“2. Educate and advocate for the passage of the bill introduced in the House of Representatives called the “Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act”, H.R. 3590, together with any bill introduced in the Senate to achieve the same ends, as well as for the signature of such act upon submission to the president.

“3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations about the plight of the Indonesian [Christian] immigrants and the proposed Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act and calling congregations to support and advocate for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.

“4. Direct the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness to advocate on Capitol Hill for passage of the proposed legislation and its enactment into law.”

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns seeks justice for all refugees, regardless of their ethnicity, race, or religion. In this particular case, we believe that all refugees seeking asylum deserve “their day in court” and that no one, Christian or otherwise, should be deported before they are given a fair chance to apply for asylum. We understand that when



immigrants, especially refugees, arrive in this country, it is not easy to take all the right steps to acquire the right documents and papers. Hence, it is understandable that these Indonesian refugees did not immediately take the right steps. Further, we believe that U.S. laws enacted requiring men from “certain predominantly Muslim countries,” to register with our government are discriminatory and encroach of rights of privacy enshrined in our constitution because they presume guilt.

The ACREC is in support of the passage of HR 3590, however, the committee urges the General Assembly not to single out standing with only the Christians immigrants from Indonesia who have found themselves in a punishing situation. The plurality of Muslim men who have had to register with the government of the U.S. and even wear ankle monitors are innocent, law-abiding residents of our society.

As the Scripture verses quoted in the overture itself say, we are called to welcome the stranger (Mt. 25:35). The Leviticus text is more compelling: The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself ... (Lev. 19:33–34). The word of God is not about loving those who share our faith, but calls us to openness to those who are “alien” to us.

For these reasons, ACREC urges the assembly to call for fully supporting the “Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act,” H.R. 3590, without singling out one sub-group of them, in this case, a group of Christians. Special treatment and singling out particular groups of people is the basis for discrimination, which might in some situations lead to racism.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 12-05

*Comment on Item 12-05—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long stood in solidarity with Christians around the world who are persecuted and/or oppressed, and the 219th General Assembly (2010) called again for the just treatment of religious minorities. It is thus appropriate for the General Assembly to call upon Presbyterians to become educated about the plights of our brothers and sisters around the world, as well as to be aware of the way those of minority faith groups are treated in our own communities.

The PC(USA) has also affirmed the need to continue to work for justice for immigrants both in our own nation and abroad. The overture rightly calls for us to “affirm the scriptural call to provide hospitality to strangers, and thus welcome immigrant people to our nation and our church as part of both the history and the future of our nation and our church.”

The situation in Indonesia is complex. While there have been incidences of violence and persecution of Christians, especially during the period of conflict from 1997 to 2004, there are also Christian communities living vibrant, faithful lives alongside their Muslim brothers and sisters. There are more than 270 Christian seminaries openly operating in Indonesia, and the government recognizes Catholicism and Protestantism as two of the six official religions.

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-05

*Comment on Item 12-05—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) are invited to consider Item 12-05 in light of past General Assembly actions that recognize the plight of refugees and encourage the church to assist refugees via direct services and advocacy. In the past, the General Assembly has spoken to and requested Congressional action on specific situations regarding refugees including: (1) the needs of Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees (1975); (2) halting deportations of refugees from El Salvador and Haiti (1981); and (3) the humane treatment of Cubans, Indochinese, Japanese, and Mexicans (1982). This overture is consistent with past General Assembly statements and resolutions that promote ministry with refugees (1975) and urge action from Congress, including the [1982 Statement on the World Refugee Crisis](#) and *Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors* (211th General Assembly (1999)).

Additionally, Item 12-05 is in-line with the church’s call to be Christ’s faithful evangelists (*Book of Order*, F-1.0302d). The overture is also an expression of the church seeking reconciliation through seeking justice and claiming rights for those without power to claim those rights themselves (*Book of Order*, W-7.4002).

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## Item 12-06

**[The assembly answered Item 12-06 by the action taken on Item 12-4. See pp. 55, 59.]**

*On Adopting a Statement and Call to Action Regarding Immigration—From the Synod of the Southwest.*

The Synod of the Southwest overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve and publish the following statement and call to action in regards to immigration.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) calls for the following actions by the General Assembly and by the General Assembly staff:

1. We urge congregations to consider their biblical mandate to love the alien among us, to see Jesus in her/his face, and to re-examine reasons behind the fears that jobs will be taken away by immigrants in our communities.
2. We urge congregations that, in supporting denominational goals toward diversity, efforts be made toward a better understanding of our immigrant sisters and brothers' language and culture.
3. We encourage congregations to practice biblical hospitality to alien groups, particularly those formed for religious or self-help purposes.
4. When selecting venues for church-related activities, consider the safety and freedom from harassment of all who might attend.
5. Draw attention to the human rights crisis along the border region between Mexico and the United States that has led to the deaths of thousands of migrants, and affirm the right of individuals and organizations to provide life-saving humanitarian aid in the border regions and to urge church councils to support humanitarian aid efforts. Join a multitude of other communities of faith in adopting and endorsing the *Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform*<sup>1</sup>, which calls for the administration and Congress to
  - uphold family unity as a priority of all immigration policies;
  - create a process for undocumented immigrants to earn their legal status and eventual permanent residency and right-to-work;
  - provide efficient channels of entry for migrant workers;
  - facilitate immigrant integration;
  - restore due process protections and reform detention policies;
  - align the enforcement of immigration laws with humanitarian values.
6. Urge the Office of the General Assembly to call on Congress to pass legislation comparable to the Dream Act<sup>2</sup> immediately and to urge the administration to provide temporary legal status to Dream Act eligible students.
7. Urge the administration and Congress to enact clear, enforceable detention reforms, including rigorous medical treatment standards and increased access to pastoral care, legal counsel, and legal orientation programs. And to expedite the release of individuals who pose no risk to the community and expand the use of community-based alternatives to detention, which are more humane and cost-effective.
8. Direct the Office of the General Assembly to urge the Border Patrol to cease the practice of lateral repatriation that separates migrant families.
9. Direct the Office of General Assembly to urge the administration<sup>3</sup> to end policies such as Secure Communities<sup>3</sup> and 287g programs that lack oversight and transparency and have led to racial profiling and have undermined the stability of communities and their trust of law enforcement agencies.
10. Appoint a fact-finding team to research and investigate how the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has affected immigration from Mexico to the U.S.A., and to report its findings to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

#### Endnotes

1. <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/interfaith-immigration-platform-2009.pdf>.
2. Passage of the Dream Act would allow for a process towards permanent residency for those who arrived in the United States prior to age 16, have proof of residency for five consecutive years, who are of good moral character, and who are either enrolled in community college, university, or serve in the U.S. military. For more information: <http://www.immigrationforum.org/policy/legislation/the-dream-act-in-the-111th-congress>.
3. <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/secure-communities-fact-sheet>.

#### *Rationale*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has consistently taken actions that have been faithful to the scriptural admonitions to care for the least of these (Mt. 25:31–46) and for the sojourners amongst us (Ex. 22:21), including:

- the adoption of the “Call to Presbyterians to Recommit to Work and Pray for a Just and Compassionate U.S. Immigration Policy” by the 206th General Assembly (1994).

- and the call for a commitment from both Presbyterians and the government to work towards welcoming immigrants into our communities and to provide for just laws that affect those who live and work in the United States in both 1999 and 2004.

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**Concurrence to Item 12-06 from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-06 be answered by the action taken on Item 12-04.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-06.

*Rationale*

Conditions have not improved. The conditions that prompted this resolution are still in existence and in some instances have grown worse because of economic and social conditions.

See Item 12-09, “A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality,” from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-06**

*Comment on Item 12-06—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) are invited to consider Item 12-06 in light of past General Assembly actions calling for a comprehensive approach to “advocacy and welcome” for immigrants and for the United States Senate and House of Representatives to work across party lines to produce comprehensive immigration reform legislation ([217th General Assembly \(2006\)](#)).

Item 12-06 is consistent with the church’s call to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301) by showing hospitality to all neighbors. Additionally, the overture provides tasks to help the church strive to fulfill the Great Ends of the Church, including the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God and the promotions of social righteousness and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (*Book of Order*, F-1.0304).

Commissioners should consider the implications of referring to ourselves and our brothers and sisters as “alien” in Recommendation 3. It seems that this section is encouraging congregations to be open to sharing the property entrusted to their care and stewardship to benefit immigrant groups in their community, not just as worship space but as classroom space for English as Another Language instruction or other such tutoring and mentoring.

Regarding Recommendation 5, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a signatory to the *Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration Reform* because the priorities identified in the document are consistent with policies approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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## Item 12-07

[The assembly approved Item 12-07 with amendment. See pp. 55, 59.]

*On Beginning Active Exploration in Communities to Seek Answers on How to Be Church Together with Immigrant Communities—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.*

**The Presbytery of Hudson River overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:**

1. **Call presbyteries and local congregations to a time of being church together with immigrant brothers and sisters. This call urges presbyteries and local congregations [of all cultures and immigration statuses] to [begin active (more than setting up a committee!) exploration in] [actively connect with immigrants] in their home communities, [seeking to answer] exploring how they can be church together [with immigrant communities] through:**

- **Quarterly worship services centered on immigrant voices and experiences;**
- **Spiritual disciplines that grow our willingness to have our worship and fellowship transformed by the immigrant in our midst;**
- **Prayer meetings with immigrants;**
- **A deepening of relationship - from “Landlord/Tenant” to Spiritual Covenant—in churches hosting immigrant fellowships.**
- **Liturgy that shakes up and expands our vision of *who* is the church;**
- **Gatherings of prayer, worship, dreaming, and planning together among churches and presbyteries that are seeking to stand with immigrant communities; and**
- **Developing best practices that can be shared via a discussion board, blog, or other free social media.**

2. **Provide a space for an accounting of the shared experiences of churches engaged in ministry with immigrants by asking the Office of the General Assembly and the Moderator to craft a [week] [time] of worship that lifts up the “on the ground” stories of this time of exploration during [the “Big Tent” August 1–3, 2013, and] the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

### *Rationale*

*Theological*—Fear is woven through the conversations about immigration in the media, national and global politics, and, frequently, in our churches. We recognize that many churches are held back from being church together with immigrants because of fear. Those fears are manifest in our faith communities when immigration is labeled too “hot” a topic to handle, when cross-cultural worship with immigrant communities is dismissed as too risky or too cumbersome, and when our desire to welcome is limited by our unwillingness to question and reform long-held traditions in our worship and fellowship. Our fear has become a dividing wall leading congregations toward avoidance rather than engagement with their neighbors. If we are to make the movement from fear toward love for immigrant sisters and brothers, we must take steps in the direction of our fears. Our guide is Jesus who “... showed us the greater story of life, which was not about conquering our fear with aggression, nor simply surviving out of our fear of punishment. The greater story of life is not about being afraid of fear, but facing it head on. We are to approach fear as an opening, and as an invitation to mine from it the gifts and treasures buried deep below the surface. ... Buried below our fear is the seed of ministry. Beyond our fear is the hope of resurrection, with new visions for us, our communities, and our nations” (Eric H. F. Law, *Finding Intimacy in a World of Fear*, [St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2007], 64–65). Beyond our fear is the possibility of true relationship as one body in Christ, gathered from many nations.

To be church together with immigrant sisters and brothers is a call to risk and transformation; it is the Scriptural call to move through our fear into God’s abundant and perfect love. The word from 1 John 4:18–21 proclaims, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because [God] first loved us. Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.” As we take this journey within our communities of faith, we also equip ourselves to become agents of reconciliation in the public square, helping transform the current discourse on immigration from fear to hospitality, in the long biblical tradition of welcoming the stranger, and making houses of “prayer for all the nations” (Mk. 11:17, Isa. 56:7).

*Our Perspective*—This overture comes out of our lived experiences in the Hudson River Valley, an area with a burgeoning new immigrant population from numerous countries. We are the Presbytery of Hudson River, a collective of churches and other faith organizations who are in different stages of being church together with immigrants. We are:

- **White Plains Presbyterian Church (White Plains, N.Y.)—A church who celebrates the diversity of cultures in their community and church and looks forward to exploring the call of this overture in the context of their community and immigrant neighbors.**
- **Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco (Mt. Kisco, N.Y.)—A church in Westchester County that continues seeking light for the journey, coming together to worship God, nurture faith, pursue social justice, and share love in the name of Jesus Christ. We are a More Light and Covenant Network Presbyterian Church, and we welcome both an Islamic school and Monte de Sion Iglesia Apostolica, who share our church building.**
- **Hitchcock Presbyterian Church (Scarsdale, N.Y.)—A multiracial, multiethnic congregation that has been involved in multicultural ministry for more than thirty-five years through its “Living In America” program, as well as hosting a Japanese-speaking congregation. It seek to be faithful to its vision statement: “We come to be in the presence of God, so that we can be the presence of God in the world around us.”**

## 12 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES

- **Stony Point Presbyterian Church (Stony Point, N.Y.)**—A church located in Northern Rockland County, committed to having “our minds hearts, and doors open to anyone who seeks God’s glory and love.” We have a strong historical connection with the Stony Point Conference Center, the missionaries, staff, volunteers, and guests who join us in worship and mission. We share our sanctuary with the Spanish-speaking Rockland Emmanuel Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturdays. In recent years, we have begun to ask deeper questions together about how we might live out our calling more intentionally with these many different neighbors. We look forward to expanding that dialogue through this overture.

- **Cross-Cultural Network of Hudson River Presbytery**—A newly formed network of church leaders who, with the support of the cross-cultural network coordinator on presbytery staff, are embodying the vision of being church together across racial, ethnic, and class divides.

- **Stony Point Center (Stony Point, N.Y.)**—A PC(USA) conference center committed to forming community that crosses boundaries, is home to growing number of churches made up of immigrants from around the world. As we hear the stories of those largely excluded by our society, we are repeatedly struck by the ways in which we are enriched by this fuller expression of the community of God, and by God’s call to the church to support the immigrants in our midst.

- **Rural & Migrant Ministries (RMM)**—A statewide, nonprofit organization in covenant with Hudson River Presbytery, which serves the rural and migrant communities through: nurturing leadership, standing with the disenfranchised, especially farmworkers and rural workers, and changing unjust systems and structures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 12-07 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

As its title suggests, this overture calls presbyteries and local congregations to active exploration of what it means to be church together with immigrant brothers and sisters through shared worship, development of liturgical resources, development of spiritual disciplines, gatherings of churches and presbyteries seeking to stand with immigrant communities, deepening relationships between host and hosted congregations, and development of best practices. It also seeks a space for an accounting of the shared experiences of congregations and presbyteries engaged in ministry with migrants, specifically in worship services crafted by the Office of the General Assembly and the Moderator for the 221st General Assembly (2014), that lift up experiences in ministries “on the ground,” such as those examples listed in the overture’s rationale.

The ACSWP’s rationale echoes the rationale of the overture as it calls for a countering of the fear underlying many hurtful attitudes and actions towards immigrants by facing it head on. Beyond the fear that is faced in faith there can be transformation. Numerous actions of past General Assemblies, such as [Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/encounter-with-new-neighbors-1999.pdf) (211th GA, 1999) [<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/encounter-with-new-neighbors-1999.pdf>], clearly provide a theological rationale for the active exploration envisioned by the overture. Such actions as it advocates are surely to be expected and encouraged if the biblical mandate of hospitality to the stranger is to be given more than lip service.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-07.

#### *Rationale*

Conditions have not improved. The conditions that prompted this resolution are still in existence and in some instances have grown worse because of economic and social conditions.

See Item 12-09, “A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality,” from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

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### OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-07

*Comment on Item 12-07—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) are invited to consider Item 12-07 in light of the 218th General Assembly resolution (2008) to [Grow Christ’s Church Deep and Wide](#), which calls for the church to participate in God’s ac-

tivity of transforming the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Item 12-07 is consistent with this resolution in that it recognizes the church's call to reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of God's people. Further, Item 12-07 is in-line with the calling of the church to be a community of faith, hope, love, and witness (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301), seeking to include all people (*Book of Order*, F-1.0302a). The overture provides practical tasks to help the church be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, by seeking reform and fresh direction so as to be transformed by the will God (*Book of Order*, F-1.0401). The worship and ministry of the church within the community of faith and in the world will bear a witness to this transformation as the Christian community strives for justice and peace in its own life and in the world (*Book of Order*, W-7.4001).

Further, this overture provides a new and helpful perspective on *Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors* (211th General Assembly (1999)).

Commissioners are encouraged to review the language of the overture to ensure that it reflects the reality of our congregations and urges all congregations, whatever the predominant immigration status of its members, to reach out beyond their congregation to worship and pray together. Further as the overture notes, church members may gain deeper insight and inspiration from the stories of immigrant Presbyterian churches that invite pastors, elders, and members of other local Presbyterian congregations, which are comprised of mostly citizen members, in order to share immigration stories.

## Item 12-08

[The assembly approved Item 12-08 with amendment. See pp. 55, 59–60.]

*On Adopting a Statement Urging Congregations to Commit Two Years to Building Relationships with Refugees Living in Our Neighborhoods and Towns—From the Presbytery of Chicago.*

**The Presbytery of Chicago respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) to ~~approve a statement~~ **[urge]** ~~[urging]~~ **congregations to support and serve refugees living in our own neighborhoods, neighboring towns, and cities. This may include ~~[matching]~~ **[setting aside]** monies ~~[already set aside for global mission trips in 2013–2014 or]~~ **[and]** beginning new initiatives that support refugees in the local area.****

**“[The 220th General Assembly (2012) urges congregations to commit two years to building relationships with those who, after fleeing their homelands, now live in the United States, some of whom worship among us. We encourage congregations [to] form relationships of mutuality, by offering hospitality, reaching out to the specific needs of our refugee neighbors, learning about the gifts they offer the community, and how we can be Christ for one another.]”**

### *Rationale*

Jesus himself was a refugee whose family fled for his life to Egypt (Mt. 2:13b–15).

Jesus has called us to serve the stranger in our midst (Lk. 10:25–37).

Jesus modeled a ministry of service that nurtured personal relationships with people he met in his daily walk (Jn. 4:4–42).

God urged the children of Israel to always consider themselves as foreigners so as to care for the foreigners among them as they would care for themselves (Ex. 22:21).

Many of our congregations are engaged in global mission trips that serve those in distant places while 56,424 refugees were admitted to our own nation from Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin American and Caribbean, Near East, and South Asia in 2011 (source: Cultural Orientation Resource Center, <http://www.cal.org/co/refugee/statistics/index.html>).

Most adults and children who live as refugees in the United States struggle with language, culture, employment, and basic needs due to the minimal support that the United States government offers them once they seek sanctuary in this country.

Therefore, we call on the 220th General Assembly (2012) to urge congregations to commit two years to building relationships with those who, after fleeing their homelands, now live in the United States among us. You may find information on them at your nearest Office of Refugee Resettlement: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/>. We encourage congregations toward forming relationships of mutuality, offering hospitality, reaching out to the specific needs of our refugee neighbors, learning about the gifts they offer our community, how they can be Christ for us, and connecting to them.

### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-08.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns supports all efforts to promote a culture of inclusion, not only on Sunday mornings, but all through the week. This overture lifts up only a fraction of the many instances in Scripture that call us to welcome the stranger and to serve them in our midst. The ACREC goes further and urges the church to not only be “welcoming to the stranger,” but also, to follow the lead of the Waldensian Church and turn to the new theology of “Being Church Together.” This theology holds the refugees not as strangers in perpetuity, but brings them into the fold where we can be enriched by their depth of experience.

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 12-08**

*Comment on Item 12-08—From the Office of the General Assembly.*

Commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) are invited to consider Item 12-08 in light of the 1999 statement, [\*Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounter with New Neighbors\*](#). The 1999 statement encouraged the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to commit to rediscovering its identity as a church of the stranger and reminded the church of its call to ministry with refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants. This ministry is described in the 1999 statement as one that is pastoral, compassionate, educational, and prophetic. Item 12-08 is in-line with this statement.

The second sentence of this resolution appears to refer to the financial resources congregations and presbyteries utilize to participate in foreign mission trips.

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**Item 12-09**

**[The assembly approved Item 12-09 with amendment. See pp. 55, 60.]**

*A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

**The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

~~[1.—Recognize denominational support for “A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need.”]~~

**[2.] Direct the Office of Immigration Issues and the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to collaborate in the development of accessible worship and study resources that will assist Presbyterians in understanding, engaging, and integrating an ecclesiology of ‘Being Church Together.’**

~~[3.—Call for the passage of the DREAM Act, and direct the Office of Public Witness to advocate for its passage.]~~

*Rationale*

Presbyterians have engaged in advocacy regarding U.S. immigration policy and reform since at least 1953. In that year, the PC(USA) General Assembly (GA) called for a comprehensive review of the nation’s immigration policies, and the next year, the GA called for legislation to provide for the needs of migrant workers. Presbyterians have continued to call for immigration justice, most recently in 2006 (Call to Presbyterians to Work and Pray for a Just and Compassionate U.S. Immigration Policy), in 2008 (A Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States; A Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking; a Resolution on Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally; A Resolution on Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws That Adversely Affect Local Congregations), and in 2010 (A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need).

Presbyterians have been clear and consistent in calling for justice in immigration policies and practice. Recent change and increased injustice call us again to action and renewed commitment. The Secure Communities program of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is promoted as a simple initiative targeting criminal aliens for deportation. Instead, Secure Communities has been shown to encourage abuse in the identification of persons not engaged in criminal activity, many of whom are paying taxes as productive members of U.S. society, resulting in disruption of family life for many when a parent is deported. The program has also assisted in the significant growth of the private prison industry, particularly those companies contracted to construct and run immigrant detention centers. With increased numbers of detainees, who lack the right to due process guaranteed to citizens, gross abuses have been documented in many facilities. These abuses have encouraged some falsely-accused and held detainees to plead guilty in order to escape the conditions of detention facilities. Pleading guilty has resulted in those persons, some of whom are falsely-accused, being deported.

A. *“A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need”*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved “A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of Need,” which resulted in GA policy of refraining from holding national meetings in states where Presbyterians might be subjected to harassment due to the adoption of laws similar to Arizona Law SB 1070/HB2162. Since then, Alabama and Georgia have passed similar legislation, and other states are considering such statutes. (We stand with North Alabama, Sheppards and Lapsley, and South Alabama presbyteries in calling for the repeal of the Alabama statute.) Enforcement of these laws drain community resources to combat crime, making it more difficult for law-enforcement officials and departments to make communities safe. Additionally, there continues to be momentum around state enforced immigration laws, therefore we need to be vigilant to foster an environment where we can grow the church deep and wide by ensuring all Presbyterians feel welcome and safe at national meetings.

B. *The DREAM Act*

Additionally, the inability to pass the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (known as the DREAM Act) is stifling the future for many young people brought here as infants or children, who are ready to serve, have served, and are serving in the military or attend higher education. Passage of the act would equip these young people to participate in the building of communities across the nation. For young people brought to the U.S. before their sixteenth birthday who have lived in the U.S. for five years or more, who earn their high school diploma or GED and complete two years of college or military service, the DREAM Act offers life, hope, and the opportunity to take part meaningfully in the social fabric of education, work, and service in and for the U.S. It is because of the life-giving and transformative potential in passage of the DREAM Act that we urge the General Assembly to make support for the act part of our policy.

C. *Being Church Together*

The image of “welcoming the stranger” has been prominent in our immigration thought, policy, and theology. We welcome people into our house, but our house does not become the guest’s or the stranger’s house as a result of our welcome. While welcoming is a pleasant activity (and certainly preferable to spurning, dismissing, or discounting), the power issues raised are not conducive to relationships between brothers and sisters in Christ. It is time for reframing the way we relate as a church to immigrants, many of whom come to the U.S. as fellow disciples of Jesus with us.

Additionally, some of those who have been “welcomed as strangers” by our church have included people from lands in the Caribbean, Mexico, and other parts of Central and South America, whose ancestors entered what is now U.S. territory as citizens of Spain, France, or Mexico. These people are not “strangers;” instead, they are returning to lands their ancestors called home. A theological and ecclesiological foundation of “welcoming the stranger” does not adequately serve the church in this time.

The Waldensian Church’s program of “Being Church Together” provides a model for us, as we reflect on relationships within the human community between those who have lived in the U.S. for years or generations and others who are newer to our shores. Conversations between representatives of the Waldensian Church and GA staff and GA committee members have already provoked deep thought and conversation on the current operative models of being church. As we learn from the scriptural witness, immigration and migration often happens not as an accident but as a movement of people in response to the will and plan of God. How can we be open to human movement as part of God’s plan? What can we learn from this? How do we go about “being church” if this is the foundational reality? If human movement could come to be understood as the norm and as a positive, constructive part of God’s intention for the world and the church, we could learn ways not only to accept but also to greet with joy the cultural change that comes with building community with people who are different from each other. We must discern models for the church that help us serve God and neighbor both in the current reality and in a projected future, and develop, engage, and live into foundational theology and ecclesiology documents that interpret these models creatively and faithfully.

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**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 12-09**

*Comment on Item 12-09—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Recommendation 2 directs the Office of Immigration Issues and the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to collaborate in the development of accessible worship and study resources related to “Being Church Together.” “Being Church Together” (<http://tinyurl.com/6lnl7ok>; <https://www.rca.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=6454>) is an effort of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy (FCEI). The PC(USA) has a strong link to the FCEI through our historic relationship with the Waldensian Church (the largest member church of the FCEI). The FCEI has developed “Being Church Together” as a ground-breaking way of understanding and practicing church through the integration of new immigrants and immigrant churches. Because this is new to the PC(USA), developing a similar approach for the PC(USA) will require people and resources, and thus there would be financial implications.



Recommendation 3 calls for the Office of Public Witness to advocate for the passage of the DREAM act. This work is already underway. The GAMC, through OPW and in partnership with the Office of Immigration Issues, advocates for comprehensive immigration policy reform, and for the DREAM Act as an important step in that direction, when relevant legislation is under consideration in Congress, based on General Assembly statements from 1990, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2008.

## Item 12-10

[The assembly approved Item 12-10 with amendment. See pp. 55, 60.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. Regarding Safe Communities for Everyone.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), concerned about dangers to immigrant rights in the absence of meaningful immigration reform**

1. **requests the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries section, with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and other appropriate offices, to address the civil liberties, racial profiling, security, and due process concerns related to the arrest and detention of immigrants through the Secure Communities program**[drawing on the 2010 Human Rights Report section on immigrant detention prepared by the Presbyterian Immigration Issues office];

2. **directs the Stated Clerk and the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., to communicate to President Obama, Director of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Director of Immigration, Customs and Enforcement John Morton, and the United States Congress, calling for the terminaton of the S-Comm program, detailing the detrimental impact of S-Comm on the security of our families and our communities (as instanced in the rationale below);**

3. **encourages the Stated Clerk, the Office on Immigration Issues, and the Advisory Committee on Litigation to consider participation in amicus curiae (friend of court) briefs in cases seeking to ameliorate or end S-Comm or other practices contrary to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policies on immigration; and**

4. **directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to inform our national ecumenical partners of this action and call upon them to join us in raising concern with our elected and appointed officials.**

### *Rationale*

We are called to welcome and to not oppress the stranger: “You shall not oppress a stranger, since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Ex. 23:9, NASB). Jesus himself admonishes us when he said, “... I was a stranger and you invited me in ...” (Mt. 25:35, NASB). The immigrants among us are Christ among us; we must not turn our backs on them. And again in the Letter to the Hebrews: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb. 13:2).

According to a report issued by Berkeley Law School<sup>1</sup>, well over half of the people deported through S-Comm had either no criminal conviction or were convicted of minor offenses such as traffic violations. Latino males represent by far the largest demographic of those caught in S-Comm's net at 93 percent even though Latinos comprise only 16 percent of the population, which raises serious concerns about racial or at least poverty profiling. Consequently, S-Comm is unnecessarily sweeping up unintended members of our communities. The recent Supreme Court ruling regarding Arizona state immigration policies does not inhibit the implementation of S-Comm.

Despite the claims of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the individuals who are detained through S-Comm have limited due-process rights that cut them off from communication with family and friends as well as making it more difficult to obtain legal assistance. Furthermore, 90 percent of those detained by ICE are incarcerated until they are deported, which means that they have no opportunity to get their affairs in order, collect belongings, or even say goodbye to family or friends.<sup>2</sup> This is a cruel system that should not be tolerated.

Although the report cites that 39 percent of deportees say that they were leaving behind a spouse and/or children, data suggests that this is the result of underreporting since immigrants would likely fear the negative consequences for revealing too much. This data also suggests that tens of thousands of families are being impacted by this policy that affects their psychological and physical health, education, and employment placing the families under financial strain, and undoubtedly results in poverty, loss of homes, and the breakup of families.

There is considerable anecdotal evidence that immigrants have been arrested and deported for reporting crimes, for being the victim of a crime, and even for stopping a crime.<sup>3</sup> While the program has been linked to and in part justified as a response to the “war on drugs,” those persons arrested, detained, and deported under S-Comm have only rarely been found to have any connection to drug trafficking, much less to other security concerns. In one instance in the Presbytery of San Jose, an undocumented member of the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto community was being battered by her husband. When

she called for help, the police officers arrested the victim and placed her in detention awaiting deportation. It was only through the intervention of other members of our community that she avoided deportation.

Furthermore, because S-Comm is effectively deputizing local law enforcement agencies as immigration officers, S-Comm has created a mistrust of local law enforcement agencies that is resulting in the immigrant community's reluctance to contact or cooperate with these agencies. According to Ron Hampton, president of Black Law Enforcement in America, "Secure Communities' program is incompatible with community policing."<sup>4</sup> In addition, former Los Angeles Police Chief William J. Bratton succinctly explained the risks of an increased police role in immigration enforcement: "Criminals are the biggest benefactors when immigrants fear the police. We can't solve crimes that aren't reported because the victims are afraid to come forward to the police."<sup>5</sup> Michael Hennessey, Police Chief of San Francisco, explains,

As the sheriff of San Francisco for more than 30 years, I know that maintaining public safety requires earning community trust. We rely heavily on the trust and cooperation of all community members—including immigrants—to come forward and report crimes, either as victims or as witnesses. Otherwise, crimes go unreported—and this affects everyone, citizens and noncitizens alike. It also leads to "street justice," in which, residents who are too afraid to go to the police decide to take justice into their own hands, often with deadly result...the Secure Communities program violates this hard-earned trust with immigrant residents.<sup>6</sup>

This resolution builds upon the 2008 commissioners' resolution approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), "On Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws that Adversely Affect Local Congregations." It addresses similar negative impacts on the immigrant community as it was referencing the impact of 287g, the predecessor program to S-Comm.

Inasmuch as our nation desperately needs comprehensive immigration reform (defined as a combination of securing the border and providing a path to citizenship for law-abiding, out of status immigrants who are already here), in order to secure the health and well being of all of our families and our communities, we must reject the politics and policies of xenophobia.

#### Endnotes

1. Please see: [http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Secure\\_Communities\\_by\\_the\\_Numbers.pdf](http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Secure_Communities_by_the_Numbers.pdf).
2. Ibid, p. 7.
3. Please see: <http://altopolimigra.com/2011/08/16/the-real-impact-of-police-ice-collaboration/> For more detailed accounts, please see the report, "Restoring Community, A National Advisory Report on ICE's Failed "Secure Communities" Program: <http://altopolimigra.com/documents/FINAL-Shadow-Report-regular-print.pdf>.
4. <http://altopolimigra.com/documents/FINAL-Shadow-Report-regular-print.pdf> , p. 4.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid, p. 5.

Annie Rawlings, Presbytery of New York City  
 Judi Johnson, Presbytery of San Jose

#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-10.

#### *Rationale*

S-Comm is causing danger to immigrant rights that are contrary to the PC(USA) policies on immigration. The ACREC concurs with encouraging the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to call for either ameliorating or ending S-Comm.

The ACREC also concurs with the request of the joint efforts of the committees on Peace and Justice, GAMC, ACSWP, and the ecumenical partners to address the civil liberties, racial profiling, and due process concerns related to the arrest and detention of immigrants.

#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The ACSWP advises that Item 12-10 be approved, and referred to the Office of Immigration Issues for possible consolidation with the action taken on Items 12-04 and 12-06.

#### *Rationale*

This overture concerning the problems with the Safe Communities program is supported not only by the rationale offered by the commissioners' resolution itself, but also by the ACSWP rationales for Items 12-04 and 12-06, both of which refer to the Safe Communities program and others with similar detrimental effects in their general treatments of immigration reform.

## Item 12-11

[The assembly approved Item 12-11 with amendment. See pp. 55, 60.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith.*

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) urges our church to take the following actions concerning the plight of immigrant people in our neighborhoods and communities of faith:

1. Renew our commitment to the “Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States” (216th General Assembly [2004]) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, pp. 737ff.)

2. Renew our commitment to the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) on “Advocacy and Welcome for All Immigrants” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 880 ff).

3. Renew our commitment to the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) regarding a call to stand with immigrant Presbyterians in their hour of need (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 879–81).

~~[3.]~~ [4.] Mindful that the problems addressed in the actions above have continued and in many cases been exacerbated since 2006, we recommend that our church councils be called upon to act in the following ways:

a. To address the plight of students who are undocumented and therefore unable to access many of the benefits of our educational institutions, specifically by advocating for the passage of the DREAM Act.

b. To address the rapid growth of detention centers and the violation of human rights by overcrowding, poor medical service, lack of access to legal aid, and inhumane treatment, specifically by urging the federal government to adopt enforceable standards of care.

c. To address the separation of families through long incarcerations in detention centers, and the imprisonment of many who have no criminal record, specifically by advocating for greater use of alternatives to detention.

d. To address the indiscriminate deportation of hundreds of thousands of persons through the merger of the criminal justice system with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), specifically by advocating for an end to the cooperation between federal immigration officials with state and local law enforcement in the following forms: (1) the 287(g) contracts with state and local police, (2) the Secure Communities (S-Comm), (3) the Criminal Alien Program (CAP) and (4) similar programs that might emerge in the future. These programs have adversely affected community safety, increased racial profiling, stigmatized persons as criminal aliens, created fear in our communities, and resulted in denial of due process and unnecessarily separated families.

e. To address the confusion created by enforcement-only laws by several states, like Alabama, Arizona, and Georgia, specifically by calling for an acknowledgement that comprehensive immigration reform needs to take place at the federal rather than at state and local levels.

f. To direct the PC(USA) [~~Washington office~~] [Office of Public Witness] to make immigration reform one of the top policy issues in their work with members of congress and the White House.

g. To direct the PC(USA) [~~Washington office~~] [Office of Public Witness] and PC(USA) related agencies to actively seek and engage denominational partners and faith-based organizations that are working on immigration reform.

h. To direct the GAMC and related agencies to work together with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Office of Immigration Issues, and PC(USA) racial ethnic caucuses in a coordinated strategy with interested presbyteries to create political will towards immigration reform.

### *Rationale*

The resounding testimony of Scripture is that people of faith are called by God to show hospitality toward the immigrant and pursue justice on their behalf. In God’s eyes, the chosen people are themselves “but aliens and tenants” in the land (Lev. 25:23). They are a people well acquainted with the immigrant experience, having been “strangers in the land of Egypt,” (Deut. 10: 19) and so have a profound empathy for and compassion towards the immigrant. The Torah and the Prophets call upon people of faith to treat the sojourner in your midst with dignity and justice (Deut. 24:14, Jer. 22:3). They are to regard the alien as a “citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself” (Lev. 19:34).

This commitment to the immigrant’s welfare is emphasized by Jesus, who commended those who welcomed him in the guise of a stranger (Mt. 25:35–46) and condemned those who did not. The story Jesus told of the Good Samaritan (Lk.

10:25–37) called upon his listeners to care for the migrant in need by the side of the road. And the central command Jesus articulates in Matthew 22:39, “... love your neighbor as yourself,” reflects a core Christian ethic of treating immigrants and all our “neighbors” with the love, care, concern and respect we would hope to receive ourselves. Following Jesus’ teaching, the New Testament epistles commend showing hospitality to strangers (Rom. 12:13), and compare such practices to “entertaining angels” (Heb. 13:2).

Because our current immigration system makes it virtually impossible for many to enter the United States legally, and because undocumented immigrants are particularly vulnerable to abuse and deprivation, the call of Scripture to pursue justice for the immigrant and show hospitality seems especially apt for that community of persons. Undocumented migrants represent that category of people our Scriptures call “sojourners” or “aliens”—individuals who migrate to a new land, but lack the rights and privileges of long-term residents. Our Scriptures do not make the distinction between “legal” and “illegal” when it comes to identifying those immigrants deserving of the Christian community’s compassion, hospitality, and our justice advocacy. People of faith are called instead to seek the well-being of all immigrants, love them as our neighbors, and demonstrate in our ministry towards them our Lord’s compassion for the stranger and the vulnerable.

Given the millions of recent immigrants currently residing in the United States legally, and the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants also living in our country, ministry towards the immigrant population specifically represents a true “cutting edge” of the church’s future. This historic moment represents an opportunity to witness boldly to Christian love put into practice, not only in our church outreach ministries towards immigrants, but in our public advocacy on their behalf.

Matthew Colwell, Presbytery of San Gabriel  
Beverly Stokes, Presbytery of San Fernando

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 12-11.

##### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has engaged in advocacy regarding U.S. immigration policy and reform since at least 1953.

This recommendation supports Item 12-09, “A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.”

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 12-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 12-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The ACSWP advises that Item 12-11 be approved and referred to the Office of Immigration Issues for possible consolidation with the action taken on Items 12-04 and 12-06.

##### *Rationale*

The ACSWP offers the same rationale previously provided for Items 12-04 and 12-06, which also deal with comprehensive immigration reform and are very similar in their coverage.

## Item 13-01

[The assembly answered Item 13-01 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]

*On Amending W-4.9000 to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.*

The Presbytery of East Iowa respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall W-4.9000 of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows:

1. Amend W-4.90001 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9001  
“Christian Marriage

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. ~~Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.~~ For Christians marriage is a covenant through which ~~a man and a woman~~ *two people* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made ~~by a woman and a man to each other~~ *between two people*, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.”

2. Amend W-4.9002a as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder† shall provide for a discussion with the ~~man and the woman~~ *two people to be married* concerning”

3. Amend W-4.9004 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9004  
“Form and Order of Service

“The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The ~~man and the woman~~ *two people to be married* shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the teaching elder† shall declare publicly that the ~~woman and the man~~ *two people* are now joined in marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.”

4. Amend W-4.9006 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9006  
“Recognizing Civil Marriage

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested ~~by the couple~~. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the ~~husband and wife~~ *two people*, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that the ~~woman and man~~ *two people* are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.”

### *Rationale*

Since April 2009, Iowa has been allowing two people of the same gender to marry. Although some Iowa pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage but the church tells them to fear prosecution. Such prosecutions have already placed tremendous financial burden on presbyteries, diminishing the church’s ability to effectively evangelize and perform necessary mission work.

*We Are Called to Make Disciples*

According to the *Book of Order*, we declare,

“The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people. . . . proclaiming the Lord’s favor upon all creation. . . . In Christ, the Church participates in God’s mission. . . . by proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God’s mission” (F-1.01).

“... No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. The Gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the Gospel” (G-1.0302).

“The invitation to the Lord’s Supper is extended to all who have been baptized, remembering that access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving . . .” (W-2.4011).

According to this, Presbyterians call all people to discipleship in Christ, live to glorify God, extend the fellowship of Christ to all people, and recognize that none of us earn or deserve God’s grace.

*The Marriage Ceremony Is Worship*

In our order for worship, we listen to the Word, proclaim the Word, and respond to the Word. Responding to the Word is a demonstration of the love of God for God’s people.

“The response to the proclamation of the Word is expressed in an affirmation of faith and commitment. . . . Response to the Word also involves acts of commitment and recognition . . . acts of commitment which may appropriately be included as response to the Word are (a) Christian marriage, . . .” (W-3.3500, W-3.3502, W-3.3503).

According to this, Presbyterians view Christian marriage as an act of worship.

*Our Polity*

One part of our current Presbyterian polity specifically excludes a group of people when it comes to worship: those people in loving, committed, Christian relationships who are also of the same gender and wish to marry. However, elsewhere in our polity, we hold up the words of Jesus Christ:

“... There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise’ (Gal. 3:27–29). . . . The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. . . .” (F-1.0403)

*Conclusion*

We are all trying to discern God’s Word for us. And as surely as we are all unique creations of the loving God, we will each of us disagree from time to time. But if we profess to call all people to Christ, to call all people to proclaim God’s love for us in worship, to guarantee full participation in worship to all persons, we must give teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose to recognize the covenant of Christian marriage for two people of the same gender just as we allow teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose otherwise. To do anything else unfairly denies this group of our membership the opportunity to fully worship our God.

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**Concurrence to Item 13-01 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore, Des Moines, and Utica.**

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**Concurrence to Item 13-01 from the Presbytery of Heartland (with Additional Rationale).**

*Rationale*

In six states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont) and in the District of Columbia it is not factually true that “marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman”, exclusively. This error in the Directory for Worship creates an untenable situation for teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders whose conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform marriages between same-gender loving couples while the church tells them to fear prosecution if they do so. Such prosecutions place tremendous financial burden on presbyteries and faithful elders, and diminish the church’s ability to extend its mission and ministry to all persons.

1. *We Are Called to Make Disciples*

In the *Book of Order*, we declare,

“The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people. . . . proclaiming the Lord’s favor upon all creation. . . . In Christ, the Church participates in God’s mission. . . . by proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God’s mission (F-1.01).”

“No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. The Gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the Gospel (G-1.0302).”

“The invitation to the Lord’s Supper is extended to all who have been baptized, remembering that access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving . . .” (W-2.4011).”

According to this, Presbyterians call all people to discipleship in Christ, live to glorify God, extend the fellowship of Christ to all people, and recognize that none of us earns or deserves God’s grace.

2. *The Marriage Ceremony Is Worship*

In our order for worship, we listen to the Word, proclaim the Word, and respond to the Word. Responding to the Word is a demonstration of the love of God for God’s people.

“The response to the proclamation of the Word is expressed in an affirmation of faith and commitment. . . . Response to the Word also involves acts of commitment and recognition. . . . acts of commitment which may appropriately be included as response to the Word are (a) Christian marriage, . . . (W-3.3501, W-3.3502, W-3.3503).”

According to this, Presbyterians view Christian marriage as an act of worship.

3. *Our Polity*

One part of our current Presbyterian polity specifically excludes a group of people when it comes to worship: those people in loving, committed, Christian relationships who are also of the same gender and wish to marry. However, elsewhere in our polity, we hold up the words of Jesus Christ:

“‘There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise’ (Gal. 3:27–29). . . . The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership (F-1.0403).”

4. *Biblical Reflection*

There is no consistent biblical model for marriage. The Old Testament patriarchs and kings were polygamists (Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon). Jesus was unmarried himself, and preached indifference to earthly attachments as one’s primary love, including family (Lk. 9:60; Mt. 12:46–50; Mt. 22:30). Paul cited marriage as the lesser option (to celibacy) for those unable to contain their carnal desire (1 Cor. 7:8–9). Nowhere does the Bible expressly define marriage as between one man and one woman. Neither does the Bible serve us well as a how-to manual on modern marriage.

Several Scriptures that may seem to provide biblical injunction against same-gender marriage are not about marriage at all, but are focused on specific sex acts, and appear in the larger context of a range of abusive, violent, exploitive, debasing, and perverse ancient pagan practices. These bear no resemblance to the situation of modern-day, Christian, same-gender loving adults who freely wish to commit themselves to the covenant of marriage with the blessing of their church.

These isolated texts address the evils of rape (Genesis 19, Judges 19, Deut. 22:25, 2 Samuel 13); prostitution (Deut. 23:17, 1 Kings 14:24, 22:46, 2 Kings 23:7, 1 Cor. 6:9); and pagan practices or promiscuous behavior (Lev. 18:22, 20:13, Rom. 1:26–27, Jude 7), things far different from love.

They also neglect the wider sweep of significant and defining biblical themes such as Christ’s all encompassing love (John 4, Gal. 3:27–29); the value of commitment in relationships (Ruth 1:16–17, 1 Sam. 18:1–4); God’s creation of each person in God’s own image (Gen. 1:26–27); and God’s full knowledge and acceptance of our whole selves (Psalm 139, Jn. 4:29, Acts 10:34, 1 Cor. 13:12–13).

A Reformed interpretation of Scripture insists on a wider lens, as stated in the Second Helvetic Confession “... we hold that interpretation of the Scripture to be orthodox and genuine which is gleaned from the Scriptures themselves (from the

nature of the language in which they were written, likewise according to the circumstances in which they were set down, and expounded in the light of like and unlike passages and of many and clearer passages) and which agree with the rule of faith and love, and contributes much to the glory of God and [our] salvation” (*The Book of Confessions*, 5.010).

### 5. *Conclusion*

We are all trying to discern God’s Word for us. And as surely as we are all unique creations of the loving God, we will each of us disagree from time to time. But if we profess to call all people to Christ, to call all people to proclaim God’s love for us in worship, to guarantee full participation in worship to all persons, we must give teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose, according to their conscience, to recognize the covenant of Christian marriage for two people of the same gender just as we allow teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose otherwise. To do anything else denies one group within our membership the opportunity to fully worship God.

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## ACC ADVICE ON

### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling el-



ders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church's position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church's understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God's very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider

approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

*B. Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

*C. Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

#### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that "... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive." Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language ("shall," "is to be," "are to be") in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language "between a man and a woman" "... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ..."

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. "Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions" (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

*D. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church's constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of "a man and a woman," "a woman and a man to each other," "woman and a man," "a woman and a man to each other," "woman and a man," "husband and wife," with the words "two people," or "two people to be married," or "between two people." The overture also strikes the phrase, "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man" in W-4.9001, and strikes "by the couple" in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of "a man and a woman," "husband and wife," with the words "two people" or "two people to be married," "they," "to be married" as well as striking the phrase "is made by a woman and a man to each other," striking "civil contract" and inserting "covenant," as well as adding "and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract." For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word "couple" in the proposed amendment be changed to "two people" to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of "a man and a woman" with the words "two people" or "two people to be married," as well as striking the phrase "service of Christian marriage" and inserting "worship service of marriage," as well as striking "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man." and moving the phrase "For Christians" to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase "by the couple" in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of "a man and a woman" with the words "two people" or "two people to be married" and the language of "husband and wife" with "the couple." The overture also seeks to strike the phrase "civil contract" in W-4.9001 and inserting "covenant," and at the end of that same sentence, inserting "and according to the

laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, AND 13-11

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 from the presbyteries of East Iowa, Hudson River, New York City, and Redwoods overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend W-4.9000 to redefine Christian marriage to include covenants between persons of the same gender.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations.

#### *Rationale*

The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the following resolution: “Affirming the Presbyterian church’s historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman, yet recognizing that committed same-sex partners seek equal civil liberties in a contractual relationship with all the civil rights of married couples, we urge the Office of the Stated Clerk to explore the feasibility of entering friend-of-the-court briefs and supporting legislation in favor of giving civil rights to same-sex partners” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p.122).

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy *Transforming Families*. In its historical analysis, the policy points out that Scripture contains several forms of marriage and family, none of which is a “precise equivalent of contemporary marriage and family life” (C.1). It notes that the development of monogamous marriage took place over time in Hebrew (and other) societies. And it points out that “the Reformed tradition embraced marriage as a good for all in society, Christian or not” (C.1). As the *Book of Order* states, “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family” (W-4.9001).

*Transforming Families* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/transforming-families/>) also states that while the marital-biological family is a basic form of family, it is neither “exhaustive nor exclusive” as a family form, and “it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life” (2). Moreover, the policy recognizes that the forms and purposes of family have evolved as God’s ordering of equal gender relationships has become clearer. In these ways, the church has acknowledged that forms of marriage and family are shaped by of historical and cultural developments. Today we would find some of the previous forms and some of the interpersonal relationships that they embodied falling short of our understanding of God’s will for humankind and human well being.

Having said this, this policy did not address specifically the question of same-gender marriage and family. It assumed without comment the previous policies of the church that called for the same protections and civil rights for same-gender families that are equal to those of married heterosexual families. Equality under the law is one principle. But the church also recognizes the importance of these protections and rights to the capacity of such families to do what good families do: nurturing children, deepening love, providing material support, caring for the young and the sick and the aged, and creating a context for growth in faith. The church has understood that same-gender couples, and homosexual persons, have the same need and desire for the pastoral care of the church. Thus, it offers the blessing of the church on same-gender unions and committed itself to the wellbeing of children in same-gender unions as it has to all children (*Transforming Families*, p. 31).

Finally, *Transforming Families* ends with a vision of a church and society “which welcomes and nurtures all persons regardless of their family circumstances” and a church that rejects “attitudes or practices that value some more highly than others - based on gender, age, class, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any outward condition” (Recommendations, #2).

However, these policies did not include same-gender couples in the church's understanding of marriage. The intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 is to embody in the church itself an equal recognition that same-gender faithful and committed relationships are included in the gift of marriage God intends for humankind. These items set before the 220th General Assembly (2012) the question of whether the church's commitment to equality of civil rights for same-gender persons is possible if the church itself does not receive such relationships into its body on an equal basis with opposite-gender relationships.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-01.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as "too feminine," and lesbian women are perceived as "too masculine."

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### **ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from "a woman and a man" to "two people"; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)'s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)'s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship" (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).



In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-02

[The assembly answered Item 13-02 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.*

The Presbytery of East Iowa overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000:

“Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may exercise pastoral discretion when asked to officiate at such a ceremony for two people who have obtained a civil marriage license, and sessions may permit the use of church property for such services. Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders may refuse to conduct such services, and sessions may refuse to permit the use of church property for such purposes.”

### *Rationale*

In long-standing Christian tradition, civil authority has played a primary role in the regulation of marriage. Christians in the Reformed Tradition view marriage not as a sacrament mediated by the church but as a blessing that two people seek on a contract they are entering under auspices of the state. This blessing is a moment of great joy in the church and in the lives of those on whom it is conferred, but Christian marriage does not change the status of those two people. Marriages that are not blessed by the church are nevertheless recognized in Presbyterian churches.

Because of the integral connection between civil and Christian marriage, the church must contend with the fact that states are now passing legislation or operating under judicial rulings that make legal marriage equality an option for two people of the same gender. Since April 2009, Iowa has been allowing two people of the same gender to marry. There are now at least five states and the District of Columbia who also allow same-gender marriage. This complicates pastoral care options. The issue comes to a head in the decision about whether teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders will officiate at marriage ceremonies of two people who have legally obtained a marriage license and whether the session will permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Although some Iowa pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage but the church tells them to fear prosecution. Such prosecutions have already placed tremendous financial burden on presbyteries, diminishing the church’s ability to effectively evangelize and perform necessary mission work.

The issue is critical because worship is the central context of pastoral care for Christians. In our order for worship, we listen to the Word, proclaim the Word, and respond to the Word. Responding to the Word is a demonstration of the love of God for God’s people.

“The response to the proclamation of the Word is expressed in an affirmation of faith and commitment. ... Response to the Word also involves acts of commitment and recognition ... acts of commitment which may appropriately be included as response to the Word are (a) Christian marriage,...” (W-3.3500, W-3.3502, W-3.3503).

The church has defined marriage, first, as “... a gift God has given to all humankind ...” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001) and at the same time said, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” (*Ibid.* W-4.9001). In at least five states and

the District of Columbia, this civil definition is no longer true. At the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution stated,

“At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, ‘The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community...’ (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 886)

Teaching elders and sessions need the General Assembly’s assurance of their pastoral discretion to provide the care that their members require. This is based on the same principle as W-4.9002b, which provides that pastors are free, as their judgment dictates, not to officiate at marriages their members and others are contracting. In the absence of mandatory language in the *Book of Order* that would prohibit a service of Christian marriage for any two people who are legally permitted to marry, the assembly should give such assurance in the form of the proposed authoritative interpretation. The authoritative interpretation will prevent deep grief to church members who might otherwise be denied the pastoral care of the church; it will protect pastors and sessions from judicial challenge for exercising their pastoral responsibilities; in the spirit of mutual forbearance widely urged in recent years by General Assemblies and their task forces, it will promote the peace, unity, and purity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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**Concurrence to Item 13-02 from the Presbyteries of Chicago, Des Moines, Heartland, New York City, and Utica.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ's will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit" (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to "two people," to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from "a woman and a man" to "two people" as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God's gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, "marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family."

Second, "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man."

Third, "For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship."

Finally, "Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith."

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of "woman and a man" descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God's gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church's practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of "... civil contract ..." becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586). This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender

(See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or

GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

*B. Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which

states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

*Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.



*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

#### *Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation

of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church's life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-02.

#### *Rationale*

While ACWC does believe that allowing teaching elders to conduct marriage ceremonies of same-sex couples is a movement in the direction of progress in the church (See ACWC's rationale for Item 13-09), we hesitate to endorse an authoritative interpretation that explicitly states also the allowance of refusal to conduct services or give use of church property. The authoritative interpretation ACWC has chosen to support in Item 13-09 certainly does allow for refusal to conduct a ceremony, as no teaching elder is forced to conduct any marriage ceremony, regardless of the sex of the couple. It simply is not explicitly stated. As the church continues to make progress on this issue as state-by-state we see acceptance of same-sex marriage increasing widely, leaving the allowance for refusal unstated will make for easier movement toward full access for same-sex couples to marriage in the church in the long run.

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from "a woman and a man" to "two people"; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)'s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)'s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship" (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, "1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God's gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-03

[The assembly answered Item 13-03 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Boston.*

The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of Section W-4.9000 in the PC(USA) Constitution:

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) declares that in the states and other jurisdictions that authorize same-gender marriage, teaching elders (ministers of the Word and Sacrament) and ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service (where jurisdictions allow) may officiate at such marriages in the context of Christian worship, and sessions may permit the use of church property for such services. This authorization does not oblige anyone to act contrary to their judgment or conscience.”

### *Rationale*

The 218th General Assembly (2008) voted overwhelmingly (516 to 151) to “request the Stated Clerk, the General Assembly Council, and other representatives of the PC(USA) to urge state legislatures and the federal government to apply the principle of equal protection to same-gender couples and their children” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 48, 49, 258, 259). In the same vote they determined to “support congregations, sessions, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are seeking to extend pastoral care as well as outreach and evangelism to same-gender couples and their nontraditional families who are more and more our neighbors on our streets and our fellow members in our pews” (*Ibid.*) In states where the equal protection principle includes marriage for same-gender couples, it would run counter to the direction mandated by the 218th General Assembly (2008) if the state were to provide more protection than the church is willing to extend to its own members and neighbors.

Where same-gender marriage is recognized under the law, it is neither fair nor pastoral to exclude members of a congregation by declining to perform their marriage on the grounds of gender alone. In practical terms, what this authoritative interpretation means is that clergy and commissioned lay pastors will be able to exercise their pastoral responsibilities without running the risk of prosecution by the church. Such prosecutions have placed a formidable financial and spiritual burden on councils of the church.

### Concurrence to Item 13-03 from the Presbytery of Long Island.

#### ACC ADVICE ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is

clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, (*Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586). This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

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- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “. . . ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

### II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

#### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two

GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of



same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil

contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

#### *Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of

achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church’s life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-03.

##### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-09 is applicable here as well:

The ACWC concurs with the rationale given in Item 13-09 and understands implementing this authoritative interpretation to be a movement in the direction of progress in the church for fair and equal treatment of all people regardless of sexual orientation. While we advise approval, we do so with an understanding that this is only one step in moving toward a truly just approach to same-sex couples in the church. The ACWC would still advocate for full access to the covenant of marriage blessed by the church for all couples, regardless of the law of individual states. In all things, we believe the church is called to be ahead of the government when it comes to implementing just policies.

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-04

**[The assembly answered Item 13-04 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]**

*On Amending W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Presbytery of Hudson River*

The Presbytery of Hudson River overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Amend W-4.9001 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a ~~civil contract~~ *covenant between a woman and a man two people, and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.* For Christians marriage is a covenant through which ~~a man and a woman~~ *two people* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage, *two people make* a lifelong commitment ~~is made by a woman and a man to each other,~~ publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.”

2. Amend W-4.9002 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder† shall provide for a discussion with the ~~man and the woman~~ *two people to be married* concerning” [The remainder of this section remains the same.]

3. Amend W-4.9004 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The ~~man and the woman~~ *two people to be married* shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the teaching elder† shall declare publicly that ~~the woman and the man~~ *they* are now joined in marriage.” [The remainder of this paragraph remains the same.]

4. Amend W-4.9006 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of vows by the ~~husband and wife~~ *two people*, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that ~~the woman and man~~ *they* are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.”

### *Rationale*

Marriage is beyond gender. It refers to the commitment of two people to live beside each other with a love expressed as tenderness and justice. It refers to the deep promise to live together through the thick and thin of their journey together through the years. It refers to the mystery in which the love of God meets, is joined to and made manifest in the love of two people whose hearts are a home place to each other. The notion of marriage is demeaned by any lesser definition. Recognizing this, some states are already ahead of the church in moving the legal definition of marriage beyond gender.

Changing the definition of marriage in the Directory of Worship would allow the church and its officers the option of also recognizing the lifelong, same gender commitments that many of our members are now choosing to make. It would make it possible for the church to celebrate the love of God as it is embodied in their love for each other. In states like the six, along with the District of Columbia, which already permit gay marriage, teaching and ruling elders would be relieved of the fear of ecclesiastical charges and would be able to respond equitably and pastorally to marriage requests by all, not just some, members of their congregations. No teaching elder or session would be required to perform services of marriage that would violate conscience. Changing the Directory for Worship in this way would move the church away from fear and reprisal, and closer to its own teaching on the hospitality of God and the welcome which that implies.

The proposed change allows us to step more fully in line with the Bible and The Book of Confessions and to be the church that both our Scripture and our Constitution have continually imagined, a church open to changes that support love of God and one another (Mk. 12:28–34; Lk. 10:25–37). We join those in the early church by stepping into line behind people like Philip, who, in his encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch, was moved to overturn his previously narrow perceptions and prejudices and make the circle of God’s family much wider than his previous religious upbringing had allowed him to imagine (Acts 8:26–38) and Peter, who was given a vision that the lines he had previously drawn between clean and unclean were too narrow and had to be abandoned to embody God’s loving way (Acts 10:9–22). And we join those who, throughout the history of our denomination, have recognized the need to move away from previous barriers in the direction of love and care.

“In [God’s] reconciling love, [God] overcomes the barriers between brothers [and sisters] and breaks down every form of discrimination... The church is called to bring all men [and women] to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, *marriage, family*, church, and the exercise of political rights.... Congregations, individuals, or groups of Christians who exclude, dominate, or patronize their fellowmen, however subtly, resist the Spirit of God and bring contempt on the faith which they profess (*The Book of Confessions*, 9:44, emphasis added).

The proposed changes would grant all loving couples the right to have their marriages performed in our congregations, strengthening all our communities and families, gay and straight, since they allow us to recognize the love of two hearts declaring themselves to be a home to each other, before God, with gratitude.

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### **Concurrence to Item 13-04 from the Presbyteries of New York City and Western New York.**

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#### **ACC ADVICE ON**

#### **ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God's gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church's practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of "... civil contract ..." becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: "In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage." This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for "civil unions"—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church's liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church's faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination's struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church's concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1-6; 16:1-16; 21:1-7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18-24 and 1 Sam. 1:1-28);

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- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

### II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

#### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by



amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of

same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two

people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, AND 13-11

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 from the presbyteries of East Iowa, Hudson River, New York City, and Redwoods overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend W-4.9000 to redefine Christian marriage to include covenants between persons of the same gender.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations.

#### *Rationale*

The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the following resolution: “Affirming the Presbyterian church’s historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman, yet recognizing that committed same-sex partners seek equal civil liberties in a contractual relationship with all the civil rights of married couples, we urge the Office of the Stated

Clerk to explore the feasibility of entering friend-of-the-court briefs and supporting legislation in favor of giving civil rights to same-sex partners” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p.122).

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy *Transforming Families*. In its historical analysis, the policy points out that Scripture contains several forms of marriage and family, none of which is a “precise equivalent of contemporary marriage and family life” (C.1). It notes that the development of monogamous marriage took place over time in Hebrew (and other) societies. And it points out that “the Reformed tradition embraced marriage as a good for all in society, Christian or not” (C.1). As the *Book of Order* states, “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family” (W-4.9001).

*Transforming Families* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/transforming-families/>) also states that while the marital-biological family is a basic form of family, it is neither “exhaustive nor exclusive” as a family form, and “it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life” (2). Moreover, the policy recognizes that the forms and purposes of family have evolved as God’s ordering of equal gender relationships has become clearer. In these ways, the church has acknowledged that forms of marriage and family are shaped by of historical and cultural developments. Today we would find some of the previous forms and some of the interpersonal relationships that they embodied falling short of our understanding of God’s will for humankind and human well being.

Having said this, this policy did not address specifically the question of same-gender marriage and family. It assumed without comment the previous policies of the church that called for the same protections and civil rights for same-gender families that are equal to those of married heterosexual families. Equality under the law is one principle. But the church also recognizes the importance of these protections and rights to the capacity of such families to do what good families do: nurturing children, deepening love, providing material support, caring for the young and the sick and the aged, and creating a context for growth in faith. The church has understood that same-gender couples, and homosexual persons, have the same need and desire for the pastoral care of the church. Thus, it offers the blessing of the church on same-gender unions and committed itself to the wellbeing of children in same-gender unions as it has to all children (*Transforming Families*, p. 31).

Finally, *Transforming Families* ends with a vision of a church and society “which welcomes and nurtures all persons regardless of their family circumstances” and a church that rejects “attitudes or practices that value some more highly than others - based on gender, age, class, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any outward condition” (Recommendations, #2).

However, these policies did not include same-gender couples in the church’s understanding of marriage. The intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 is to embody in the church itself an equal recognition that same-gender faithful and committed relationships are included in the gift of marriage God intends for humankind. These items set before the 220th General Assembly (2012) the question of whether the church’s commitment to equality of civil rights for same-gender persons is possible if the church itself does not receive such relationships into its body on an equal basis with opposite-gender relationships.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-04.

##### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as “too feminine,” and lesbian women are perceived as “too masculine.”

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

**GAMC COMMENT ON****ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

**Item 13-05**

**[The assembly answered Item 13-05 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]**

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Ensure Pastoral Discretion—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.*

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000:

“Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders authorized to conduct services of marriage, may, at their sole discretion, following the discussion required in W-4.9002a, officiate at a service of Christian marriage for two persons who meet the legal requirements of the state and whom the elder determines demonstrate sufficient commitment, responsibility, maturity, and Christian understanding. Sessions may permit the use of church property for such services. Teaching elders and com-

missioned ruling elders may decline to conduct such services, and sessions may decline to permit the use of church property for such purposes.”

### *Rationale*

On July 24, 2011, the State of New York extended the right to marry to couples of the same gender, joining Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, and the District of Columbia. More states are expected to follow suit. Many Presbyterian churches, some in our presbytery, are receiving requests to celebrate their marriages in the Christian community from their lesbian and gay congregants, who expect to be afforded the pastoral care provided to other members.

The Directory for Worship acknowledges that marriage is a “civil contract” and therefore regulated by the state. It was written before the possibility of civil marriage between persons of the same sex was contemplated. Likewise, the 1991 General Assembly authoritative interpretation that distinguished between a “same-sex ceremony” and a marriage, the 2000 *Benton* decision of the GAPJC, and the 2008 *Spahr* decision were all addressing ceremonies that were not legal civil marriages. In this interim, when the definition of civil marriage is changing, the Constitution requires interpretation to be applied to a variety of circumstances. One of the most pressing is the pastoral crisis that results when same-sex couples ask the teaching and ruling elders of their congregation to permit and participate in their marriage services under Presbyterian church auspices, and those elders must hesitate for fear of challenge in church courts.

Worship is the central context of pastoral care for Christians:

“The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in the faith” (*Book of Order*, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3010).

Lesbian and gay Presbyterian seeking the care of their church do not wish to provoke controversy, endanger their pastors, or embroil their congregations in judicial proceedings. Like heterosexual couples, they simply want the support of their faith community as they undertake the commitments and responsibilities of marriage. When the possibility of prosecution looms over pastors who are endeavoring to fulfill their promise to “pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), anguish extends to the couple, the pastor, the congregation, and eventually the whole church.

Therefore we propose an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to clarify the ambiguities it contains. Much of the section is written in permissive or advisory language. The Preface to the *Book of Order* states that “SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated” while “SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended” and “MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required.” The Preface to the Directory for Worship (section b) states: “In addition to the [above] terms defined in the Preface to the *Book of Order*, this [Worship] directory also uses language about worship which is simply descriptive.” For example there is a logical conflict between the description of “Christian marriage” as an expression of “Christian commitment” and the allowance that one of the partners might not even be “a professing Christian” (W-4.9002a.(1)). The descriptions of Christian marriage, if prohibitive of ceremonies in which every detail does not conform to the descriptions, would forbid elders from officiating at interfaith marriages because they might, among other things, “Diminish the Christian understanding of marriage.” If W-4.9000 was intended to set normative mandatory, exclusive standards for what the PC(USA) considers marriage, then those who conduct marriages would also be at risk for allowing music that fails to “[direct] attention to God and express the faith of the church” (W-4.9005). or for allowing “flowers, decorations, and other appointments” (Ibid) that do not “reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life” (Ibid). There is nothing in the text of W-4.9000 that makes the “man and woman” description mandatory and the other details not mandatory. If officiating at the marriage of a same-gender couple is an offense, then any ceremony not conforming to every detail of W-4.9000, even a heterosexual marriage, is likewise an offense.

The comments of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2001: “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254). There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals.

The enactment of laws that make it possible for same-sex couples to enter into a civil contract raises the question then whether the key to the performance of marriage ceremonies, authorized by sessions, to be held in a church, and conducted by ministers or commissioned lay pastors, is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional distinctions held by the PC(USA) are no longer as clear.

Pastors and sessions need the General Assembly’s assurance of their freedom and discretion to provide the pastoral care that their members require. This freedom is based on the same principle as W-4.9002b, which provides that pastors are free, as their judgment dictates, *not* to officiate at marriages their members and others are contracting.

In the absence of mandatory language in the *Book of Order* that would prohibit a service of Christian marriage for any couple that is legally permitted to marry, the assembly should give such assurance in the form of the proposed authoritative interpre-

tation. The authoritative interpretation will prevent deep grief to church members who might otherwise be denied the pastoral care of the church, and it will protect pastors and sessions from judicial challenge for exercising their pastoral responsibilities.

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**Concurrence to Item 13-05 from the Presbytery of Albany.**

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**Concurrence to Item 13-05 from the Presbytery of Southern New England (With Additional Rationale).**

***Rationale***

At this time, more than 11 percent of the United States' population live in states or districts that permit same-gender marriage. Around 10 percent of PC(USA) congregations are located in those places. Additional states continue to consider expanding their definition of marriage to include same-gender couples.

Decisions by our denomination's General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission appear to permit teaching elders to lead and otherwise participate in worship services that celebrate same-gender relationships that are not called marriages. Thus, it seems it is permitted to bless a "civil union" in those states and jurisdictions where civil law provides this, but teaching elders may not perform same-gender marriages in the places where that is available.

There is an acute dilemma for teaching elders, for congregations, and for same-gender couples that are members of PC(USA) congregations. As the Synod of the Northeast PJC decision in *Boston v. Southard* notes, "While the action of the Reverend Southard to join a same gender couple in 'Christian marriage' is a violation of the Constitution of the PC(USA), failure to do so might be viewed as a violation of other provisions of the Constitution, e.g. G-3-0401 [new F-1.0404]."

This goes to the heart of ministry, pastoral care, and Christian community:

- Individuals seeking the support of their communities of faith for their most significant personal relationships may be denied that support.
- Congregations may experience significant hurt and loss when beloved friends and neighbors are forced to turn either to churches of other denominations that will perform their marriage, to abandon the idea of marriage in the church altogether and forego the blessings of building the relationship in Christian community, or even to leave church altogether.
- Teaching elders seeking to fulfill their pastoral obligations as they in good conscience understand them may face disciplinary charges for actions authorized by the civil authority.

The requested authoritative interpretation maintains the traditional role of teaching elder in exercising discretion about the suitability of a given relationship. Recognizing that both the civil and religious understandings of marriage have entered a time of flux and transition, the hope embodied in the requested authoritative interpretation is that individuals, sessions, and congregations be allowed to seek God's leading in the matter of marriage without fear of disciplinary reprisal, trusting them to act in good conscience, acknowledging the human potential for error.

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**ACC ADVICE ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that



the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by

the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of "... civil contract ..." becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: "In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage." This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for "civil unions"—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church's liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church's faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination's struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church's concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and

- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, "Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of "marriage" seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make "civil definition of marriage" ["... civil contract between a woman and a man ..."] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as "a civil contract between a woman and a man." In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, "since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony."

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

#### *Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing

these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church’s life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-05.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-02 is applicable here as well:

While ACWC does believe that allowing teaching elders to conduct marriage ceremonies of same-sex couples is a movement in the direction of progress in the church (See ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-09), we hesitate to endorse an authoritative interpretation that explicitly states also the allowance of refusal to conduct services or give use of church property. The authoritative interpretation ACWC has chosen to support in Item 13-09 certainly does allow for refusal to conduct a ceremony, as no teaching elder is forced to conduct any marriage ceremony, regardless of the sex of the couple. It simply is not explicitly stated. As the church continues to make progress on this issue as state-by-state we see acceptance of same-sex marriage increasing widely, leaving the allowance for refusal unstated will make for easier movement toward full access for same-sex couples to marriage in the church in the long run.

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.



There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-06

**[The assembly answered Item 13-06 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]**

*On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of New York City.*

The Presbytery of New York City respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall W-4.9000 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9000 9. Marriage

“W-4.9001 Christian Marriage

*For Christians, ~~Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, Marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman~~ two people are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a worship service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made ~~by a woman and a man~~ between two people, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.*

“W-4.9002 Preparing for Marriage

“a. In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder† shall provide for a discussion with ~~the man and the woman~~ two people to be married concerning

“(1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,

“(2) the legal requirements of the state,

“(3) the privileges and responsibilities of ~~Christian~~ marriage,

... [The rest of W-4.9002 remains the same.]

“W-4.9003 Time and Place of the Service

“~~Christian~~ ~~m~~ *Marriage service* should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the teaching elder† and the supervision of the session. (W-1.4004–.4006) The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life. ... [The rest of W-4.9003 remains the same.]

“W-4.9004 Form and Order of Service

“The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The ~~man and the woman~~ *two people to be married* shall declare their intention to enter into ~~Christian~~ marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. ... In the name of the triune God the teaching elder† shall declare publicly that the ~~woman and the man~~ *two people* are now joined in marriage. ... [The rest of W-4.9004 and all of W-4.9005 remains the same.]

“W-4.9006 Recognizing Civil Marriage

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested ~~by the couple~~. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the ~~husband and wife~~ *two people*, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that the ~~woman and man~~ *two people* are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.”

### ***Rationale***

Several states have authorized the marriage of two people of the same gender. Although some pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage.

The biblical tradition does not present one single model of marriage. Biblical testimony and clear commandments concerning marriage are outdated (unless we want to resurrect polygamy in tribal society or the even more obscure institution of levirate marriage).

The Reformers emphatically declared and defended the civil nature of institution of marriage. They dismissed the notion of the sacramental nature of marriage. Thus within the protestant theology the use of the term “Christian marriage” represents a clear example of incoherent language.

Civil authorities in several states make it legal for the same gender couples to marry. The *Book of Order* should respect and reflect this change in society and make appropriate changes in its language thus:

1. Following the biblical tradition in its mirroring of the development in a society and
2. Embracing the reformation principle of regarding the civil nature of institution of marriage.

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### **ACC ADVICE ON**

#### **ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that

was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a

civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to

do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach

to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.



*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, AND 13-11

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 from the presbyteries of East Iowa, Hudson River, New York City, and Redwoods overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend W-4.9000 to redefine Christian marriage to include covenants between persons of the same gender.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations.

#### *Rationale*

The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the following resolution: “Affirming the Presbyterian church’s historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman, yet recognizing that committed same-sex partners seek equal civil liberties in a contractual relationship with all the civil rights of married couples, we urge the Office of the Stated Clerk to explore the feasibility of entering friend-of-the-court briefs and supporting legislation in favor of giving civil rights to same-sex partners” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p.122).

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy *Transforming Families*. In its historical analysis, the policy points out that Scripture contains several forms of marriage and family, none of which is a “precise equivalent of contemporary marriage and family life” (C.1). It notes that the development of monogamous marriage took place over time in Hebrew (and other) societies. And it points out that “the Reformed tradition embraced marriage as a good for all in society, Christian or not” (C.1). As the *Book of Order* states, “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family” (W-4.9001).

*Transforming Families* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/transforming-families/>) also states that while the marital-biological family is a basic form of family, it is neither “exhaustive nor exclusive” as a family form, and “it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life” (2). Moreover, the policy recognizes that the forms and purposes of family have evolved as God’s ordering of equal gender relationships has become clearer. In these ways, the church has acknowledged that forms of marriage and family are shaped by of historical and cultural developments. Today we would find some of the previous forms and some of the interpersonal relationships that they embodied falling short of our understanding of God’s will for humankind and human well being.

Having said this, this policy did not address specifically the question of same-gender marriage and family. It assumed without comment the previous policies of the church that called for the same protections and civil rights for same-gender families that are equal to those of married heterosexual families. Equality under the law is one principle. But the church also recognizes the importance of these protections and rights to the capacity of such families to do what good families do: nurturing children, deepening love, providing material support, caring for the young and the sick and the aged, and creating a context for growth in faith. The church has understood that same-gender couples, and homosexual persons, have the same need and desire for the pastoral care of the church. Thus, it offers the blessing of the church on same-gender unions and committed itself to the wellbeing of children in same-gender unions as it has to all children (*Transforming Families*, p. 31).

Finally, *Transforming Families* ends with a vision of a church and society “which welcomes and nurtures all persons regardless of their family circumstances” and a church that rejects “attitudes or practices that value some more highly than others - based on gender, age, class, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any outward condition” (Recommendations, #2).

However, these policies did not include same-gender couples in the church’s understanding of marriage. The intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 is to embody in the church itself an equal recognition that same-gender faithful and committed relationships are included in the gift of marriage God intends for humankind. These items set before the 220th General Assembly (2012) the question of whether the church’s commitment to equality of civil rights for same-gender persons is possible if the church itself does not receive such relationships into its body on an equal basis with opposite-gender relationships.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-06.

##### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as “too feminine,” and lesbian women are perceived as “too masculine.”

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

## GAMC COMMENT ON

## ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-07

**[The assembly answered Item 13-07 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46.]**

*On an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9001, Christian Marriage—From the Presbytery of Mississippi.*

The Presbytery of Mississippi overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001:

“When W-4.9001 speaks of marriage, it is expounding how marriage is defined and understood by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), under the authority of the Scriptures and guided by the confessions. It is not merely describing how marriage was practiced in any particular society at any particular time. Therefore, this definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship is binding upon teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders authorized to perform Christian marriages. “Officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not state, imply, or represent that a

same sex ceremony is a marriage because under W-4.9001 a same sex ceremony is not and cannot be a marriage” (*Spahr v. Presbytery of Redwoods*, 2008). A change in the definition of civil marriage under state law does not alter the definition of marriage under the PC(USA) Constitution (*Southard v. Presbytery of Boston*, 2011). The church’s definition of marriage may be changed only through amendment of both W-4.9001 and the confessional passages upon which it is based.”

### ***Rationale***

The church traces its understanding of marriage especially to the words of Jesus in Matthew 19:4–6/Mark 10:6–8. Asked a question regarding divorce, Jesus pointed back to passages in Genesis 1 and 2 and expounded God’s design for marriage: “Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mt. 19:4–6).

This divine design for marriage is prior to the existence of any church or any state. The church is bound to this understanding of marriage that comes from Jesus, its Lord. States may choose to grant legal benefits of marriage to various combinations of persons; however, no state has the power to redefine marriage as God designed it. Nor can any state action alter the church’s understanding of marriage, which derives from God’s Word rather than state law.

The Second Helvetic Confession (5.246) states: “For marriage (which is the medicine of incontinency, and continency itself) was instituted by the Lord God himself, who blessed it most bountifully, and willed man and woman to cleave one to the other inseparably, and to live together in complete love and concord (Matt. 19:4 ff).”

The Westminster Confession of Faith (6.131) teaches, “Christian marriage is an institution ordained of God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, established and sanctified for the happiness and welfare of mankind, into which spiritual and physical union one man and one woman enter . . . .” It also affirms, “Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live” (6.133).

The Confession of 1967 (9.47) declares: “The relationship between man and woman exemplifies in a basic way God’s ordering of the interpersonal life for which he created mankind. Anarchy in sexual relationships is a symptom of man’s alienation from God, his neighbor, and himself.” It instructs, “The church, as the household of God, is called to lead men out of this alienation into the responsible freedom of the new life in Christ. Reconciled to God, each person has joy in and respect for his own humanity and that of other persons; a man and a woman are enabled to marry, to commit themselves to a mutually shared life, and to respond to each other in sensitive and lifelong concern; parents receive the grace to care for children in love and to nurture their individuality. The church comes under the judgment of God and invites rejection by man when it fails to lead men and women into the full meaning of life together, or withholds the compassion of Christ from those caught in the moral confusion of our time.”

Based on these confessional teachings, the *Book of Order* (W-4.9001) defines marriage thus: “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith” (W-4.9001).

This definition is far more than a neutral description of social reality—what marriage may have been in a particular society at a particular point in history. It is a normative description of what marriage is intended to be, according to God’s design.

This passage in the Directory for Worship reflects distinctive Reformed teaching that stood and stands in conscious contrast to other extant understandings of marriage. Contrary to Roman Catholics, the Reformers insisted that marriage should be a civil contract under the jurisdiction of civil courts, rather than a sacrament under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts. Contrary to some radical Anabaptists, the Reformers maintained that marriage could only be between one husband and one wife—not multiple wives.

In opposition to those who might view marriage as a narrowly Christian phenomenon, the Reformers saw marriage as a gift of God’s common grace revealed in every society. In opposition to those who might reduce marriage to a merely human contract, they esteemed it also as a covenant before God. In opposition to those who might regard marriage as simply a private bond between two individuals, the Reformers saw it as a social institution lived out in the community that witnessed the vows.

Likewise, the repetition of the phrase “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man” in W-4.9001 reflects the understanding that the “one flesh” union of the two created sexes is an essential feature of marriage as God designed. The Reformers, with every previous and subsequent generation of Christians, would have placed relationships between members of the same sex under the category of friendship rather than marriage.

A series of authoritative interpretations of the PC(USA) Constitution reinforces these same distinctions between marriage and other relationships. A 1991 authoritative interpretation of the General Assembly stated that “it would not be proper

for a minister of Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

A 2000 General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) decision (*Benton v. Presbytery of Hudson River*) allowed same-sex union ceremonies, but with the proviso: “Ministers should not appropriate specific liturgical forms from services of Christian marriage or services recognizing civil marriage in the conduct of such ceremonies. They should also instruct same-sex couples that the service to be conducted does not constitute a marriage and should not be held out as such.”

In 2008, the GAPJC ruled (*Spahr v. Presbytery of Redwoods*): “Officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not state, imply, or represent that a same sex ceremony is a marriage because under W-4.9001 a same sex ceremony is not and cannot be a marriage.”

A 2011 GAPJC decision concerned a PC(USA) minister officiating at a ceremony between two women in Massachusetts, where their union was recognized as a marriage under civil law. The GAPJC ruled unanimously: “The question before this Commission, then, is whether the Massachusetts law defining this relationship as a legal marriage changes the impact of the definitions in W-4.9001. This Commission holds that it does not. While the PC(USA) is free to amend its definition of marriage, a change in state law does not amend the *Book of Order*. It is the responsibility of the church, following the processes provided in the Constitution for amendment, to define what the PC(USA) recognizes as a ‘Christian marriage.’ Consequently, *Spahr*’s holding, ‘By the definition in W-4.9001, a same sex ceremony can never be a marriage,’ remains in effect.”

Since the PC(USA)’s definition of marriage is expressed in both parts of its constitution, *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*, any attempt to change that definition would necessarily involve amendments to both parts. Changing one part without making corresponding changes in the other part would generate contradictions, confusion, and disorder that would ill serve the church. A change of any magnitude in the church’s doctrine of marriage should occur only through the rigorous process of confessional amendment, requiring careful deliberation at multiple General Assemblies and in every presbytery.

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**Concurrence to Item 13-07 from the Presbyteries of Cherokee and New Harmony.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

## I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ's will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit" (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to "two people," to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from "a woman and a man" to "two people" as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God's gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, "marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family."

Second, "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man."

Third, "For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship."

Finally, "Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith."

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of "woman and a man" descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God's gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church's practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of "... civil contract ..." becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue,

and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church's position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to "allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license"; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending "a man and a woman" to "two people."

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church's understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered "behaviorally binding" upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the "constitutional definition" presently in the Directory for Worship as well as "any current authoritative interpretations" of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence ("... a man and a woman ...") controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that "[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship."

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God's very order and design defines the institution of marriage.



Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

*Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church's constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each

other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-07, 13-12, AND 13-13**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13, from the Presbyteries of Mississippi, Charleston Atlantic, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take actions affirming the church’s definition of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001; Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9001 and require a super-majority vote by presbyteries to change W-4.9001.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Section W-4.9000 already and clearly defines marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Therefore, there is no need for the actions being proposed. To support the intent of these items, commissioners need to disapprove other overtures that would expand or change the definition of marriage.

Item 13-13 seeks to make any amendments to W-4.9001 subject to a super majority vote of two-thirds of the presbyteries. This would subject one part of the *Book of Order* to a standard not required by other parts, such as, for example, the constitutional questions for ordination. In fact, it would elevate this issue to the same two-thirds majority required for adopting new confessions of the church. Such a change violates our historical understanding of majority rule. As the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has stated, the issue of using a super majority vote for amending various provisions of the Constitution has arisen and been disapproved a number of times in the past. It is likely that acceptance of such a standard in this case, or other cases, would lead inevitably to the desire of others to apply a super majority standard to other constitutional

provisions they prefer, leading to the weakening, or abandonment, of the fundamental principle of majority rule in the Reformed Tradition.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-07.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as “too feminine,” and lesbian women are perceived as “too masculine.”

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.nesl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergird-

ing, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-08

[The assembly answered Item 13-08 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See p. 46. ]

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse.*

The Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000:

“Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may exercise pastoral discretion when asked to officiate at such a ceremony for two people who have obtained a civil marriage license, and sessions may permit the use of church property for such services. This authorization does not oblige any elder to act contrary to his or her judgment or conscience.”

### *Rationale*

At issue is the Presbyterian understanding of the nature of Christian marriage and a pastor’s and session’s ability to extend appropriate pastoral care. The report of the Special Committee on Civil Union and Christian Marriage, which the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved and commended to the church, offers important background to the biblical, theological, historical, cultural, and pastoral issues involved here.

The following brief observations support the authoritative interpretation requested above:

- The Bible reflects many patterns and forms of legal, religiously approved marital relationships.<sup>1</sup> The nostalgically remembered pattern of marriage of 1940s America cannot be taken as normative from a biblical or theological point of view.
- The understanding of marriage has changed through the years and was often geared more to property rights or political advantage than to a mutual, loving relationship.<sup>2</sup>
- Marriage is a contract regulated and licensed by the state.<sup>3</sup> This was recognized in the ancient church and in Protestant churches since the Reformation.<sup>4</sup>
- There are legitimate differences of interpretation of the passages regarding homosexual relationship in the Bible.<sup>5</sup> The present regulation forces Presbyterian elders to act based on one interpretation, with which many disagree as a matter of conscience.
- Jesus, in his public ministry, broke down the barriers that separated people. He identified with those who were outcasts and marginalized by society. The gays and lesbians are considered outsiders by many today. The church needs to witness to the inclusive love of Jesus for all people.<sup>6</sup>
- To prohibit clergy and congregations from fulfilling a legitimate request for pastoral services binds the conscience of clergy and prevents them from fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities.
- In 2010, the presbyteries approved Amendment A allowing persons in same-sex relationships to be ordained. These church members should be allowed to be married if the state issues them a marriage license and their teaching elder determines that their marriage is advisable.

• The statement restricting marriage to “one man and one woman”<sup>7</sup> addresses polygamy in 17th century England. The statement that marriage is “between a man and a woman”<sup>8</sup> reflects conventions of the mid 20th century and is descriptive, not prescriptive.

In light of the above we believe positive action on this overture is warranted.

#### Endnotes

1. Report of the Special Committee on Civil Union and Christian Marriage, pp. 1–2 and 25–27.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 3 and 27.
3. *Book of Order*, Directory for Worship, W-4.9000 “Marriage is a civil contract ... .”
4. Report of the Special Committee on Civil Union and Christian Marriage, pp. 3–4 and 27–28.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 13 (Item 3), and 20–21.
6. *The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.44 and 9.47; Foundations of Presbyterian Polity F-1.0302c, F-1.0404, and F-1.0405.
7. *The Book of Confessions*, Westminster Confession, 6.131.
8. *Book of Order*, Directory for Worship, W-4.9000.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)



*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil

marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church's position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church's understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God's very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution ad-

vises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

*B. Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

#### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.

- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of

marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

*Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church's life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-08.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 13-02 is applicable here as well:

While ACWC does believe that allowing teaching elders to conduct marriage ceremonies of same-sex couples is a movement in the direction of progress in the church (See ACWC's rationale for Item 13-09), we hesitate to endorse an authoritative interpretation that explicitly states also the allowance of refusal to conduct services or give use of church property. The authoritative interpretation ACWC has chosen to support in Item 13-09 certainly does allow for refusal to conduct a ceremony, as no teaching elder is forced to conduct any marriage ceremony, regardless of the sex of the couple. It simply is not explicitly stated. As the church continues to make progress on this issue as state-by-state we see acceptance of same-sex marriage increasing widely, leaving the allowance for refusal unstated will make for easier movement toward full access for same-sex couples to marriage in the church in the long run.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from "a woman and a man" to "two people"; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)'s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)'s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship" (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, "1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God's gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-09

[The assembly answered Item 13-09 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]

*On Approving an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore hereby overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000:

“The Constitution of the PC(USA) refers to marriage as involving ‘a couple,’ ‘a man and a woman,’ and ‘a woman and a man’ (all in W-4.9000). This wording was chosen when all legal marriages in the United States involved a couple that was, in fact, a man and a woman. However, the first sentence of W-4.9001 makes it clear that: ‘Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.’ That section continues with ‘Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.’ That statement, in a number of jurisdictions in the United States, and in a number of other nations, is no longer correct. Marriage may be a civil contract between a man and a man or between a woman and a woman, just as it may be a contract between a man and a woman. It is clear in the second sentence of W-4.9001 that the PC(USA) recognizes the importance of the civil definition of marriage. As such, in those jurisdictions that recognize same-sex marriage, the *Book of Order* must be understood to mean two persons who may be legally married.”

### *Rationale*

From the earliest days of the Christian church we have tried to balance spiritual authority with civil authority. In Mark 12:17 Jesus guides us with the words: “Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s and to God the things that are God’s.” Further on in the New Testament, we find the Apostle Paul offering guidance to the early Christians who are still struggling with this issue as they faced a hostile Roman Empire: “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment” (Rom. 13:1–2). Even this does not provide easy answers when we are faced with a government whose values may be very different and even antagonistic to our Christian values. Nevertheless, the scriptural direction seems to be towards being subject to the laws of the state as much as we are able.

As we seek to live peacefully and productively together on this side of the Kingdom of God, we know that civil authority is a necessity. And so we try to find a balance: we try to honor and respect civil authority as we continually work to advance God’s will in those areas of life where civil authority may seem to work against God’s intention.

Our Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Constitution strikes this balance in several different places, including within the definition of marriage. It defines marriage as both a “gift from God for all humankind” and “a civil contract.” Further, the case could be made that, as it stands now in the *Book of Order*, there is no marriage without a civil contract. Participation by ministers of the Word and Sacrament and local congregations will add necessary value to a Christian marriage through prayer, through witness by the community of faith, and through continuing pastoral care. But without the civil contract there is no marriage.

At this point in our history, we need a meaningful and authoritative interpretation regarding the definition of marriage by civil authorities as compared to the definition of marriage by the church. How do we strike the balance between spiritual and civil authority that is so strongly encouraged by Jesus and the Apostle Paul?

Currently, marriage licenses are issued to same gender couples in six U.S. states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont) and the District of Columbia. In other states, civil union licenses are issued to same-gender couples. The congregations and pastors in these places find themselves trying to balance honor of civil authority (which defines marriage as between any two people) and the requirements of church law. Even more importantly, these congregations and pastors seek to balance civil and religious laws with compassionate and genuine pastoral care for members of their congregation. Same-gender couples are coming to our churches with state-issued marriage licenses in hand, asking us to



give to them an equal level of respect and pastoral care as we give to the opposite-gender couples in our congregations. They are asking us to honor our baptismal vows to support and nurture them in their life together.

As the civil definition of marriage rapidly changes beneath our feet, there has been an assumption by some in the church that we balance civil and religious authorities best when we insist that religious tradition trumps civil law. Unfortunately, that assumption is neither pastoral nor biblical. This authoritative interpretation seeks to offer a balance that is more in line with changing civil laws regarding marriage. Let us provide a thoughtful, biblical, and compassionate interpretation for a section of the *Book of Order* that no longer accurately reflects civil law in our country.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14,

seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment . . . made by a woman and a man . . . publicly witnessed . . . by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “. . . civil contract . . .” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

. . . since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination's struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church's concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1-6; 16:1-16; 21:1-7, and 29:1-30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18-24 and 1 Sam. 1:1-28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10-31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17-27; 19:11-17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13-15; 6:16-23; and 1 Kings 11:1-4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as "a civil contract between a woman and a man" (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on "a" rather than "man and woman."]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession's original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time." The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: "...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church's position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

#### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W-4.9000 to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

#### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to

be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil

marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

#### *Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church’s life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-09

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-09.



*Rationale*

The ACWC concurs with the rationale given in Item 13-09 and understands implementing this authoritative interpretation to be a movement in the direction of progress in the church for fair and equal treatment of all people regardless of sexual orientation. While we advise approval, we do so with an understanding that this is only one step in moving toward a truly just approach to same-sex couples in the church. The ACWC would still advocate for full access to the covenant of marriage blessed by the church for all couples, regardless of the law of individual states. In all things, we believe the church is called to be ahead of the government when it comes to implementing just policies.

**GAMC COMMENT ON****ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

**Item 13-10**

**[The assembly answered Item 13-10 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]**

*On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000—From the Presbytery of Redwoods.*

The Presbytery of the Redwoods overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide the following authoritative interpretation of the provisions of W-4.9000:

“The provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage (W-4.9001 and following) by their terms do not prohibit a teaching elder (also referred to as a minister of Word and Sacrament) from officiating at a marriage service of a same-gender couple.”

### *Rationale*

This overture clarifies that the provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage—by their terms—do not prohibit a teaching elder/minister of Word and Sacrament from officiating at a marriage service of a same-gender couple. The overture seeks to provide clarity in response to disciplinary proceedings that have been brought against faithful teaching elders/ ministers of Word and Sacrament who have celebrated the marriages of same-gender couples, consistent with their constitutional responsibilities of pastoral care, inclusion, and non-discrimination, and consistent with their understanding of the Gospel. Those disciplinary proceedings have invoked W-4.9001 as a disciplinary offense, even though that section contains no mandatory or prohibitive language. The cost to the church is the prosecution—with no basis in the plain language of the Constitution—of pastors who are faithfully living into their responsibilities under the Constitution and Gospel.

The provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage are descriptive, and not prohibitive. As five members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission have recently explained, “W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for the whole section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture. Its content serves to establish a progression of four theological claims (gift, civil contract, covenant, commitment) as a foundation for the church’s general understanding of marriage.” See *Southard v. Presbytery of Boston* (GAPJC, February 7, 2011). They have further explained that “the language in [the marriage provisions] is not obviously legislative, in the sense of providing regulatory lines that define or proscribe behavior.”

Section W-4.9001 contains four descriptive statements describing marriage as a gift, a civil contract, a covenant, and a lifelong commitment.<sup>1</sup> None of these descriptive statements contains or constitutes a prohibition or mandatory standard. Section W-4.9001 is neither a mandatory nor a prohibitive directive. Moreover, this section of the Directory for Worship does not mention or address the marriage of same-gender couples. Neither does it prohibit a minister of Word and Sacrament from celebrating a legally sanctioned marriage in a service of Christian worship.

Section W-4.9001 contains none of the language that the *Book of Order* instructs must be present to set forth a mandate or a prohibition. Because this principle is so fundamental, it is captured on the first pages of the *Book of Order*: “In this *Book of Order* (1) SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated; (2) SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended; (3) IS APPROPRIATE signifies practice that is commended as suitable; (4) MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required” (*Book of Order*, Preface, [emphasis and caps in original]). Indeed, the GAPJC not long ago affirmed that the phrase “should not” in our polity “is not prohibitive” (*Session of Second Presbyterian Church v. Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery*, Remedial Case 217-5, at p. 4).

With respect to the performance of same-gender marriages, the Directory for Worship contains no injunction, such as “marriages ARE TO BE performed only between a man and a woman” or “ministers SHALL NOT perform same gender marriages.” Indeed, all efforts to amend the Constitution to add such prohibitory language—and there have been many such attempts<sup>2</sup>—have been voted down by the majority of commissioners or presbyteries. At the 219th General Assembly (2010), the assembly declined to consider such prohibitory language, along with all other overtures that sought to amend or clarify the language of the Directory of Worship’s marriage provisions.

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does assign to teaching elders/ ministers of Word and Sacrament the responsibility for pastoral care, and repeatedly advocates and mandates inclusion and the full participation of all people in the life and care of the church. Prohibiting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) women and men from celebrating their marriages in services of Christian worship cuts them off from the pastoral care of the community that is required by our faith and our Constitution. This overture asks the General Assembly to clarify that the plain language of the provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage (W-4.9001 and following) do not prohibit this pastoral care—and specifically, that they do not prohibit a teaching elder (also referred to as a minister of Word and Sacrament) from officiating at a marriage service of a same-gender couple, as the couple and their families seek to celebrate marriage as a gift from God honored in Christian community.

### Endnotes

1. The entire section states: “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.”
2. Such efforts, for example, included a 1994 proposed amendment to W-4.9001 to say it was “not permitted for ministers to participate in the blessing of any same sex unions”; and similar failed amendments regarding the definition of marriage in 1995, 2000, 2006 and 2008.

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### ACC ADVICE ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Mar-

riage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church's understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered "behaviorally binding" upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the "constitutional definition" presently in the Directory for Worship as well as "any current authoritative interpretations" of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence ("... a man and a woman ...") controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that "[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship."

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God's very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 "binding," quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean "behaviorally binding (practice)," or "binding on the conscience"; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm "the constitutional definition"—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W-4.9000 to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence "Marriage is between one man and one woman" a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of "one man and one woman" resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to "one man and one woman," then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were ad-

dressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

*Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church



and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church's constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, AND 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 permitting clergy and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at services of Christian marriage for same-gendered persons in those states where such marriages are legal.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10.

*Rationale*

The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently called for equal civil rights for homosexual persons, including the same rights for same-gender couples as are enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. In both cases, the church has also called for the same responsibility of covenantal fidelity. Thus, the church has supported civil unions as one means of achieving this equality. Within its own membership, the church has offered pastoral care to same-gender couples by blessing these unions in a service of worship. However, it maintained a distinction between marriage that conferred a new status on the couple and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to the blessing.

Because, in fact, civil unions have not guaranteed same-gender couples equal civil rights, the quest for civil marriage for same-gender couples continues. The legalization of same-gender marriage in eight states and the District of Columbia now blurs the distinction the church maintained as marriage licenses are issued to same-gender couples. Church members in same-gender, committed relationships turn to their churches and pastors to receive the same gift of marriage that the church has said “God [gives] to all humankind” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP advises that all Christians, but especially seminary professors in theology, ethics, and practical theology, study the experiences of churches in those states that have legalized same-gender marriages. We advise that seminaries host informed discussions about the meaning and consequences of achieving or denying marriage equality in the church. Whether or not commissioners feel that it is time in the church’s life for either an authoritative interpretation or a change in the definition of marriage, we hope that such substantial theological work can go forward.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-10**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-10.

*Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-09 is applicable here as well:

The ACWC concurs with the rationale given in Item 13-09 and understands implementing this authoritative interpretation to be a movement in the direction of progress in the church for fair and equal treatment of all people regardless of sexual orientation. While we advise approval, we do so with an understanding that this is only one step in moving toward a truly just approach to same-sex couples in the church. The ACWC would still advocate for full access to the covenant of marriage blessed by the church for all couples, regardless of the law of individual states. In all things, we believe the church is called to be ahead of the government when it comes to implementing just policies.

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**GAMC COMMENT ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Mar-

riage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-11

**[The assembly answered Item 13-11 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]**

*On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage—From the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

The Presbytery of the Redwoods overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Amend W-4.9000 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9000 9. Marriage

“W-4.9001 Christian Marriage

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a ~~civil contract~~ *covenant between a woman and a man two people and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.* For Christians marriage is a covenant through which ~~a man and a woman~~ *two people* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made ~~by a woman and a man to each other~~ *between two people*, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

“W-4.9002 Preparing for Marriage

“a. In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder† shall provide for a discussion with the ~~man and the woman~~ *two people* concerning

“[The remainder of this section W-4.9003 remains the same.]

## “W-4.9004 Form and Order of Service

“The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The ~~man and the woman~~ *two people* shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the teaching elder† shall declare publicly that the ~~woman and the man~~ *two people* are now joined in marriage. [The remainder of this paragraph remains the same.]

“[Section W-4.9005 remains unchanged.]

## “W-4.9006 Recognizing Civil Marriage

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage *or civil union* and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of vows by the ~~husband and wife~~ *couple*, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that the ~~woman and man~~ *two people* are already ~~married to one another~~ *united* according to the laws of the state.”

### ***Rationale***

Currently in our churches and communities, same-gender couples are living together in loving, committed, monogamous relationships. They are raising children, caring for aging parents, and making positive contributions to their communities. These couples include new and longtime members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Their relationships are equivalent to a marriage in every way but formal recognition by the church and by most states in which they live, though some states are recognizing their relationships as marriages or civil unions.

By changing the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship we would recognize committed, lifelong relationships that are already being lived out by our members. We would honor and support the love and commitment they practice in their lives every day. We would bear witness to the love of God as it is expressed between these couples and as we offer that love to them on behalf of the church.

In addition, as the legal recognition of same-gender relationships goes through transitions throughout the country, PC(USA) clergy and sessions are faced with complex decisions regarding ecclesiastical authority and property use. Teaching elders/ministers of Word and Sacrament currently can face ecclesiastical charges if they perform marriage ceremonies or civil unions that may be legal in their state. Same-gender couples who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can come to their minister and request that minister to perform their marriage as an agent of the state, only to be denied that important time of pastoral care and ministry because of church law. *These marriages create certain privileges and responsibilities for the married couple and their families within the community and the church that cannot be ignored. Among other things, civil marriage bestows a new status on this couple and designates them as a unique social unit; it delineates their family structure and makes the other their next of kin; it establishes parental and societal rights and responsibilities for them; and establishes their rights of inheritance along with creating larger familial relationships. All of these issues affect this new family and their lives in the church.* Broadening the language to offer marriage to any two people removes the religious barriers faced by ministers, sessions, church members, and other Christians while continuing to honor the laws of each state. Changing the language in this way emphasizes that the Directory for Worship defines marriage within the bounds of our denomination and does not determine what is legal or illegal in civil law. This overture recognizes that the civil, legal definition of marriage is in transition within and among the states. This overture honors the dignity of all same-gender couples and their families throughout the PC(USA).

The 219th General Assembly (2010) failed to act on the substantive marriage-related overtures that were before it, suggesting that presbyteries continue in discussion for another two years. Now, two years later, it is even more clear that this constitutional amendment is necessary to recognize the full dignity of same-gender couples and their families.

In recent permanent judicial commission proceedings, the Presbytery of the Redwoods has listened to the testimony of a number of same-gender couples who were married when the marriage of same-gender couples was legal in the State of California. They have testified to the importance of marriage in their lives and in their families, and how marriage relates to and nourishes their lives of faith. We have been moved by their testimony. Here is some of what the couples have shared with our presbytery, when asked questions like, “Why did you want to get married?”

- “Marriage was a sacred vow of commitment for us, a covenant between the two of us, between the two of us and with our community and bringing God into our marriage where God still resides as a part and parcel of our marriage and family.”
- “As I’ve been thinking about that question and listening to some of the answers—it takes me to asking the question I wonder if non-gay couples ever ask themselves do we want marriage or do we want a domestic partnership or a civil union, or a blessing.”

“And of course it’s marriage. It’s what we know as what two people do when you know that you’ve met your mate. And listening to [expert testimony] about what is marriage, monogamy, yes, a long-term commitment, yes. That’s what I want with [my wife], that’s what we have now. ... It’s a union of equals, of independence, maybe too independent sometimes, but that’s what we have and that’s what it is.”

- “Well, I come from a family, my parents were married for 55 years, my grandparents were married for 50 years, it means to me that you have found the person you love, the person you’re going to spend the rest of your life with, and it’s a conclusion in bringing that union together, it recognizes that union to the community, to your family, to your friends.”
- “Marriage is what we are teaching our children to strive for as the ultimate covenant between two loving people, so our getting married is simply a reflection of what we hope they will move on to should they find lifelong partners some day in their life.”
- “It’s the ultimate commitment, it’s the ultimate promise of a life together forever, there is no going back just because you might have a little problem, it means together in love forever.”
- “I wanted to be exactly as married as everybody else, I didn’t want to pretend or [have a] second best kind of a marriage. I’m married. I wanted to be exactly as married as everybody was married.”
- “It absolutely seemed like the natural progression of our love deepening. And I have always, you know, as a pastor in terms of the weddings I have done, always thought of marriage as an incredible gift. ... At the time we had young daughters, and it was very important to us that they know that we are a family and that we are their parents, and so marriage was a way also to bring all that together.”

Moved by this testimony, the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of the Redwoods (1) gave thanks “for the courageous and heartrending testimonies of the married couples who shared with us their great hurt through the policies of our church ... [and] for the joy in marriage they shared with us”; (2) asked “for forgiveness for the harm that has been, and continues to be, done to them in the name of Jesus Christ” and (3) has implored the General Assembly “to listen to these testimonies, which are now part of this record, to take them to heart, and to do what needs to be done to move us as a church forward on this journey of reconciliation.” See Decision of the PJC of the Presbytery of the Redwoods, dated August 24, 2010. Similarly, in the recent GAPJC decision, *Southard v. Presbytery of Boston*, February 4, 2010, five member of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission expressly recognized that the current language of the Constitution with regard to marriage is at odds with numerous other provisions mandating “the acceptance of our gay, lesbian, and bisexual brothers and sisters into the full fellowship of the church,” and “urged the General Assembly to amend the constitution to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples in the PC(USA) and otherwise welcome gay, lesbian, and bisexual people into the full fellowship of the church.”

For the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and for the good of loving, monogamous same-gender couples in our church and for the community and for the greater ministry of our clergy, sessions and churches we propose these changes to the Directory for Worship.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of

marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was

defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

### II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

#### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.



Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

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The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, AND 13-11**

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 from the presbyteries of East Iowa, Hudson River, New York City, and Redwoods overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend W-4.9000 to redefine Christian marriage to include covenants between persons of the same gender.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy counsels the following considerations.

#### *Rationale*

The 208th General Assembly (1996) approved the following resolution: “Affirming the Presbyterian church’s historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a man and a woman, yet recognizing that committed same-sex partners seek equal civil liberties in a contractual relationship with all the civil rights of married couples, we urge the Office of the Stated Clerk to explore the feasibility of entering friend-of-the-court briefs and supporting legislation in favor of giving civil rights to same-sex partners” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p.122).

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy *Transforming Families*. In its historical analysis, the policy points out that Scripture contains several forms of marriage and family, none of which is a “precise equivalent of contemporary marriage and family life” (C.1). It notes that the development of monogamous marriage took place over time in Hebrew (and other) societies. And it points out that “the Reformed tradition embraced marriage as a good for all in society, Christian or not” (C.1). As the *Book of Order* states, “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family” (W-4.9001).

*Transforming Families* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/transforming-families/>) also states that while the marital-biological family is a basic form of family, it is neither “exhaustive nor exclusive” as a family form, and “it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life” (2). Moreover, the policy recognizes that the forms and purposes of family have evolved as God’s ordering of equal gender relationships has become clearer. In these ways, the church has acknowledged that forms of marriage and family are shaped by of historical and cultural developments. Today we would find some of the previous forms and some of the interpersonal relationships that they embodied falling short of our understanding of God’s will for humankind and human well being.

Having said this, this policy did not address specifically the question of same-gender marriage and family. It assumed without comment the previous policies of the church that called for the same protections and civil rights for same-gender families that are equal to those of married heterosexual families. Equality under the law is one principle. But the church also recognizes the importance of these protections and rights to the capacity of such families to do what good families do: nurturing children, deepening love, providing material support, caring for the young and the sick and the aged, and creating a context for growth in faith. The church has understood that same-gender couples, and homosexual persons, have the same need and desire for the pastoral care of the church. Thus, it offers the blessing of the church on same-gender unions and committed itself to the wellbeing of children in same-gender unions as it has to all children (*Transforming Families*, p. 31).

Finally, *Transforming Families* ends with a vision of a church and society “which welcomes and nurtures all persons regardless of their family circumstances” and a church that rejects “attitudes or practices that value some more highly than others - based on gender, age, class, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any outward condition” (Recommendations, #2).

However, these policies did not include same-gender couples in the church’s understanding of marriage. The intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 is to embody in the church itself an equal recognition that same-gender faithful and committed relationships are included in the gift of marriage God intends for humankind. These items set before the 220th General Assembly (2012) the question of whether the church’s commitment to equality of civil rights for same-gender persons is possible if the church itself does not receive such relationships into its body on an equal basis with opposite-gender relationships.

#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 13-11.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as “too feminine,” and lesbian women are perceived as “too masculine.”

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

#### GAMC COMMENT ON

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-12

[The assembly answered Item 13-12 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]

*On Confirming the Current Definition of Marriage and Any Current Authoritative Interpretations of Marriage in W-4.9000–9001—From the Presbytery of Charleston Atlantic.*

The Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to

1. confirm the constitutional definition of marriage currently at W-4.9000–9001 in the *Book of Order*; and
2. confirm current authoritative interpretations, if any, regarding W-4.9000–9001 in the *Book of Order*.

### ACC ADVICE ON

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, (*Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586). This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitution-



al implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleannessse. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOO&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.

- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

#### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14 Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

#### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitu-

tionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-07, 13-12, AND 13-13

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13, from the Presbyteries of Mississippi, Charleston Atlantic, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take actions affirming the church's definition of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001; Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9001 and require a super-majority vote by presbyteries to change W-4.9001.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Section W-4.9000 already and clearly defines marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Therefore, there is no need for the actions being proposed. To support the intent of these items, commissioners need to disapprove other overtures that would expand or change the definition of marriage.

Item 13-13 seeks to make any amendments to W-4.9001 subject to a super majority vote of two-thirds of the presbyteries. This would subject one part of the *Book of Order* to a standard not required by other parts, such as, for example, the constitutional questions for ordination. In fact, it would elevate this issue to the same two-thirds majority required for adopting new confessions of the church. Such a change violates our historical understanding of majority rule. As the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has stated, the issue of using a super majority vote for amending various provisions of the Constitution has arisen and been disapproved a number of times in the past. It is likely that acceptance of such a standard in this case, or other cases, would lead inevitably to the desire of others to apply a super majority standard to other constitutional provisions they prefer, leading to the weakening, or abandonment, of the fundamental principle of majority rule in the Reformed Tradition.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-12.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC's rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as "too feminine," and lesbian women are perceived as "too masculine."

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

## Item 13-13

[The assembly answered Item 13-13 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]

*On Amending W-4.9001 Regarding Marriage and G-4.0208 Regarding Exceptions—From the Presbytery of the Foothills.*

The Presbytery of the Foothills overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

1. Shall W-4.9001 of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be inserted or added is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9001 Christian Marriage

“a. *Marriage is between one man and one woman.*

“b. Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.”

2. Shall G-6.05 of the *Book of Order* be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be inserted or added is shown as italic.]

“G-6.05 EXCEPTIONS

“a. The provisions of G-4.0208 of this Constitution shall not be amended.

“b. *Amendments to the provisions of W-4.9001 shall receive approval by a 2/3 vote of the presbyteries.*”

***Rationale***

Changes in state laws regarding marriage have made it imperative for the church to enunciate with clarity the Christian understanding of marriage as found in Scripture and the Confessions of the church.

There is already significant concern and division in the church about recent changes in the Form of Government regarding ordination standards.

This amendment unequivocally states that marriage is between a man and a woman, and requires a super majority vote of the presbyteries to change in the Directory of Worship what is a clear teaching of the Confessions.

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**ACC ADVICE ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

**I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items**

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.



Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River*, (*Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 586). This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the

trium God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (loc. cit.)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Rec-*

reation in Colonial New England (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.]  
[http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church's position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church's understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God's very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to

affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W-4.9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

*Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in de-

cluding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14, Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

#### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a

marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

*D. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church’s constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two peo-

ple to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 13-07, 13-12, AND 13-13

*Advice and Counsel on Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13, from the Presbyteries of Mississippi, Charleston Atlantic, and Foothills, respectively, overture the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take actions affirming the church’s definition of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001; Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9001 and require a super-majority vote by presbyteries to change W-4.9001.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

Section W-4.9000 already and clearly defines marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman. Therefore, there is no need for the actions being proposed. To support the intent of these items, commissioners need to disapprove other overtures that would expand or change the definition of marriage.

Item 13-13 seeks to make any amendments to W-4.9001 subject to a super majority vote of two-thirds of the presbyteries. This would subject one part of the *Book of Order* to a standard not required by other parts, such as, for example, the constitutional questions for ordination. In fact, it would elevate this issue to the same two-thirds majority required for adopting new confessions of the church. Such a change violates our historical understanding of majority rule. As the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has stated, the issue of using a super majority vote for amending various provisions of the Constitution has arisen and been disapproved a number of times in the past. It is likely that acceptance of such a standard in this case, or other cases, would lead inevitably to the desire of others to apply a super majority standard to other constitutional provisions they prefer, leading to the weakening, or abandonment, of the fundamental principle of majority rule in the Reformed Tradition.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-13

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 13-13.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC’s rationale for Item 13-11 is applicable here as well:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture. The practice of excluding people who are gay and lesbian from marriage has its roots in the persistence of patriarchal standards for the lives of women and men. The notion that men and maleness are superior dictates that men and women behave in particular ways that abide by the constructed rules their sex has been assigned. For this reason, same-gender loving women and men are perceived as a direct threat to the norms that patriarchy lays out, as they, in their loving, challenge the models of prescribed masculinity and femininity determined by patriarchy. Gay men are a threat as they are often perceived as “too feminine,” and lesbian women are perceived as “too masculine.”

In withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding this patriarchal standard for humanity. As a group committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to the commitment and covenant of marriage to same-gender loving women and men in the PC(USA). The ACWC draws particular attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women in this exclusion, as they find themselves in this and many situations excluded and marginalized both for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

As we watch as state by state people in the U.S. are standing against this form of discrimination, we challenge the church to act now with a prophetic voice that joins in this justice movement, rather than responding after marriage equality has been established across the country.

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON

#### ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13

*Comment on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people”; Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10 seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral latitude in presiding at services, particularly in states where gay marriage or civil unions are legal; and Items 13-07, 13-12, and 13-13 seek to reaffirm the PC(USA)’s current marriage standards and practices.

Proposals to modify the PC(USA)’s position and practices of marriage have come before the General Assembly in the past, most notably to the 218th General Assembly (2008). In response the assembly appointed a Special Committee on Marriage and Civil Unions. That special committee reported back to the 219th General Assembly (2010). The General Assembly neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Commissioners would do well to review these two reports in preparation for dealing with similar issues at this assembly (Report of the special committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>; minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>).

These overtures have theological, ethical, cultural, legal, and liturgical implications.

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a patchwork of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state). The marriage standards of the PC(USA) have historically assumed a congruity that no longer exists between the definition of marriage by the state and by the church: “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship” (*Book of Order*, W-4.9001).

In Reformed and Presbyterian history there has been a consistent affirmation that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Westminster Confession states, “1. Marriage is a union between one man and one woman, designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. 2. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character; for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.133-134. See also 6.131) This is also the understanding of marriage held by the overwhelming majority of global partner churches.

There has been more variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of our global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century.

The current forms of the marriage liturgy reflect and shape a particular theology of marriage. *The Book of Common Worship* describes marriage as a gift of God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. It grounds God’s gift of marriage in the creation of human beings as male and female. Thus, marriage is the proper context for the full expression of love between a man and a woman, an aid to faithful living, the environment for the birth and nurture of children, an element in the well-being of society, a holy mystery uniting a man and a woman, and a calling into a new way of life. (See *Book of Common Worship*, p. 842.)

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## Item 13-14

**[The assembly answered Item 13-14 by the action taken on Item 13-NB. See pp. 46, 47.]**

*Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Session, Rutgers Presbyterian Church, New York, New York.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) answer this request with its advice on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13.



***Questions Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution***

This request from the Session of Rutgers Presbyterian Church in New York City, presents the following questions upon which it seeks authoritative interpretation:

The Session of Rutgers Presbyterian Church in New York City requests that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommend the assembly approve the following authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000, Marriage:

“Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders authorized to conduct services of marriage may exercise pastoral discretion when asked to officiate at such a ceremony for two people who have obtained a civil marriage license, and sessions may permit the use of church property for such services. Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders may refuse to conduct such services, and sessions may refuse to permit the use of church property for such purposes.”

*Rationale:* Since the earliest stories in Scripture, marriage has played an ever-changing role in the life of God's people. Throughout the pages of the Bible, there are varieties of marital relationships and functions. The Bible has no single point-of-view on marriage, and the complexity of what we find in Scripture is particularly challenging from a 21st century perspective—from multiple wives and concubines (1 Kings 11 :3), to property-based exchanges (Deuteronomy 22), to coerced or forced marriages (Genesis 29, 2 Samuel 11). In the New Testament marriage is often discouraged (Matthew 19: 10, 1 Corinthians 7). It can be argued that only one marriage in Scripture is truly pure and holy -the metaphorical marriage between Christ and the Church -and it is a marriage that defies all our definitions (Revelation 21, also Isaiah 62:5).

In the reformation times reformers explicitly and intentionally liberated the institution of marriage from the oppressive and manipulative control of the over-reaching church, excluding the marriage institution from the list of church sacraments. (For instance J. Calvin: Institutes, book IV, chapter 19, §§ 34-37) with one voice emphatically asserting the civil nature of this institution and delegating it under civil supervision. This reformed understanding of marriage is also mirrored in the Book of Order where marriage is declared to be a "civil contract."

Civil authorities are fully competent and appropriate institutions for regulating this civil institution by legislating, issuing certificates, registering marriages and establishing family courts. The church officers should be allowed to use their discretion within the limits allowed by the civil law.

This AI attempts to limit confusion out of the quandary placed before us in the highly inconsistent language of the *Book of Order*.

If adopted, this Authoritative Interpretation would not end the conversation in the Church. Rather, this AI would provide the needed space for pastoral discretion in those places where civil laws differ from ecclesiastical guidelines.

Most of all this AI will protect the legal integrity of marriages, which have been already conducted and are being conducted in PCUSA churches. This AI takes away the considerable danger of potential legal challenges to the legality of the whole category of marriages conducted in PCUSA churches, which otherwise would be perfectly legal and legally unassailable (strong and secure).

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**ACC ADVICE ON**

**ITEMS 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13**

*Advice on Item 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, 13-13—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Items 13-01, 13-02, 13-03, 13-04, 13-05, 13-06, 13-07, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, 13-11, 13-12, and 13-13. The ACC is also asking that this advice answer Item 13-14 seeking to amend or interpret W-4.9000 ff.

1. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-07 and 13-12 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the language of Item 13-07, but advises that the final sentence of the item should be stricken as it is inconsistent with constitutional provisions regarding authoritative interpretations and amendments.

2. If the assembly wishes to approve the intent of Item 13-13 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of the first part of the proposed amendment is clear and consistent with the Constitution but that the second part raises serious constitutional issues such that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the second part not be approved.

3. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14 [authoritative interpretations], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-05 is the most consistent constitutionally, but that if the assembly seeks to amend the definition of

marriage in W-4.9000, it would be more appropriate to amend the language by approving one of the overtures in the following paragraph.

4. If the assembly wishes to accomplish the intent of Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, 13-11 [constitutional amendment], the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that the language of Item 13-04 is the most clearly worded and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

[Editorial Note: Except in direct quotes, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has chosen solely for the sake of consistency to use the term “same-gender” rather than “same sex.”]

#### I. Rationale Introduction on Marriage Items

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity reminds us that

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203).

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures.

Fourteen items of business come to the 220th General Assembly (2012) seeking some modification or interpretation of marriage, as defined in W-4.9000. These overtures range in effect from proposed amendments that would change the definition of marriage to “two people,” to overtures asking for a reaffirmation of the definition of marriage as it currently exists, to a group of overtures seeking authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 seek authoritative interpretation to affirm the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s current marriage language as standards, and Item 13-13 seeks a constitutional amendment to make clear that the current marriage language is proscriptive rather than descriptive. Six items and a request, Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-05, 13-08, 13-09, 13-10, and Item 13-14, seek authoritative interpretations that allow pastoral discretion in presiding at services in states where same-gender marriage is legal. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 seek to amend the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship from “a woman and a man” to “two people” as well as related changes.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) on the understanding of Christian marriage as set forth in W-4.9001:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

This definition of marriage identifies four distinct contexts in which God’s gift of marriage is articulated, each of which lays a claim on the church to provide a faithful response.

First, “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

Second, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.”

Third, “For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Finally, “Christian marriage [is] a lifelong commitment ... made by a woman and a man ... publicly witnessed ... by the community of faith.”

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was

defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “... civil contract ...” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), on the basis of its historic interpretation of the biblical and confessional standards of its faith, has drawn a distinction between same-gender unions, which it has permitted within the church, and same-gender marriage, which it has not. This distinction was affirmed in our polity by the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of *Benton, et al. v. Presbytery of Hudson River, (Remedial Case 212-11, Minutes, 2000, Part I, p. 586)*. This decision relied on a 1991 authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, which reads (in part):

... since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same sex union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony (*Minutes, 1991, Part I, pp. 55, 57, 395*)

*Benton* then drew an important distinction between same-gender unions and marriages:

A determinative distinction between a permissible same-sex ceremony and a marriage ceremony is that the latter confers a new status whereas the former blesses an existing relationship. The *Book of Order* makes this theological distinction concerning marriage in W-4.9004: “In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage.” This and similar pronouncements declaring a new status are to be reserved for services of marriage. (*loc. cit.*)

In this regard, then, the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.

Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters.

The Final Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage to the 219th General Assembly (2010) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings a useful perspective to the discussion of the overtures before the assembly on this topic. The 219th General Assembly (2010) neither approved or disapproved that report, but instead attached a minority report and sent both to the church for study. Although the report of the special committee is not within the purview of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and thus the ACC made no recommendations with respect to the constitutional implications of the study, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the report of the special committee may be helpful as an overview of the issues. (Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3333&promoID=168>, Minority report from the General Assembly committee: <https://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3335&promoID=169>)

As an example of its usefulness, lines 64 through 73 provide scriptural references to marriage:

The Old Testament assumes an ancient Semitic understanding of marriage as the basis for the family, the fundamental unit of Hebrew society. Marriage provides four benefits to humanity:

- The birth and nurture of children (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; 15:1–6; 16:1–16; 21:1–7, and 29:1—30:24);
- Companionship, mutual support, and affection (Gen. 2:18–24 and 1 Sam. 1:1–28);
- Economic partnership, providing financial support for the family (Prov. 31:10–31 and the book of Ruth); and
- A political tool to form alliances between nations and advance political ambitions (1 Sam. 18:17–27; 19:11–17; 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:13–15; 6:16–23; and 1 Kings 11:1–4).

The report also traces historic understandings from *The Book of Confessions*. For instance, our current language defining marriage as “a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001) reflects language from The Westminster Confession of Faith, but noting that the particular problem that was being addressed was polygamy, not same-gender relationships [Line 232 through 240 of the report]. [Thus, the emphasis is on “a” rather than “man and woman.”]

The Westminster Confession of Faith addressed the excesses that abounded in England between 1640 and 1660, attacking polygamy and spousal desertion to consort with another, both advanced on religious grounds. The Westminster Confession’s original provision on marriage indicated that polygamy was the issue of concern for the Westminster divines rather than same-gender relationships: Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman: neither is it lawful for any Man to have more than one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more than one Husband; at the same time.” The confession then outlined the purposes of marriage: “...ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife, for the increase of man-kinde with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed and, for preventing of uncleanness. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.131). (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 884-85 of the electronic version, Report of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage)

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender (See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/human-services/same-sex-marriage-overview.aspx> for a summary of marriage laws by state).

Historically and culturally, there has been variance in the relation of civil marriage to Christian marriage. Some of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s global partners live in countries where services of Christian marriage occur only after a civil marriage has been established by the state. Interestingly, legal marriage by civil authorities preceding any Christian service was also the pattern practiced by our Puritan forebears in New England until the Anglican practice of a single marriage rite performed by the church became predominant in the late 17th century. [Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans At Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), p. 118.] [http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi\\_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=9ifnsj2zvSMC&pg=PA118&lpg=PA118&dq=1686+puritan+marriage&source=bl&ots=18BF-UdLi_&sig=ZWLXOY7abBDEShgFeHDJpeHGwOQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MxdzT6XnDsLa0QHhiM2wAQ&ved=0CEYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1686%20puritan%20marriage&f=false)

## II. Overview of Business Before the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the Definition of Marriage

There are fourteen items of business regarding the definition of marriage or the church’s position regarding marriage that are before the 220th General Assembly (2012). These items may be grouped by the intent or effect of the overtures and fall within the following categories:

- Requests the General Assembly to provide an Authoritative Interpretation strengthening and affirming that marriage is between one man and one woman (Items 13-07, 13-12);
- Request amending W-4.9000 to clarify and affirm one man and one woman language and require two-thirds (2/3) vote to amend that language (Item 13-13);
- Request the General Assembly to provide an authoritative interpretation of paragraphs in W-4.9000 that would affirm pastoral discretion and responsibility with regards to marrying same-gender couples with civil marriage licenses. Items 13-02, 13-03, 13-08, 13-09, and 13-10, and Item 13-14 propose language to “allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (when authorized to perform marriages), to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license”; and would allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Several also call for protecting the right of pastors not to perform such marriages.
- Request to amend the *Book of Order* to permit same-gender marriages. Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11 propose amending paragraphs in the Directory for Worship that define or describe marriage: W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. Most recommend some variation on amending “a man and a woman” to “two people.”

Each of these groups and the individual overtures within them are discussed in detail in the pages that follow. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly to consider each of the fourteen items of business within the context of the above, the relationship between all of them, and the complex background and issues from which they arise.

### A. *Strengthening and Affirming Current Language of W-4.9000 (Item 13-07 and Item 13-12)*

These two overtures, which concern the church’s understanding of marriage, seek approval of an authoritative interpretation of the Directory of Worship at W-4.9001, requesting the General Assembly to affirm a position that would define the existing language regarding marriage as being only between a man and a woman. Item 13-07 would declare that such definition would be considered “behaviorally binding” upon those authorized to perform marriages. Item 13-07 refers to two GAPJC decisions affirming this position and language and concludes with language intended to require change only by amendment to W-4.9000 and the confessions. Item 13-12 consists of two sentences seeking to confirm/affirm the “constitutional definition” presently in the Directory for Worship as well as “any current authoritative interpretations” of this section.

Items 13-07 and 13-12 would approve the position that the third sentence (“... a man and a woman ...”) controls the weight of meaning of all other sentences in W-4.9001, so that marriage as a gift from God to all humankind and marriage as a

civil contract are aspects of marriage subordinate to the understanding that “[f]or Christians marriage is a covenant through which *a man and a woman* are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.”

Both overtures adopt a position that only heterosexual marriage is consistent with biblical and confessional standards. The overtures do not challenge the language regarding civil contracts. The interpretation proposed would affirm that the language of W-4.9001 is not *descriptive* but rather *proscriptive*; God’s very order and design defines the institution of marriage.

Item 13-07 cites in its reference for making the language of W-4.9000 “binding,” quotations from the *Spahr* GAPJC decision of 2008 and the *Southard* GAPJC decision of 2011. This creates two issues: (1) Does this mean “behaviorally binding (practice),” or “binding on the conscience”; and (2) Because parts of GAPJC decisions may themselves be authoritative interpretations, this overture appears to affirm language that is already authoritative interpretation. Finally, the last sentence of Item 13-07 is erroneous in that an authoritative interpretation cannot restrict the ability of later General Assemblies or GAPJCs to modify an authoritative interpretation or that changes to the confessions are required in order to amend the *Book of Order*.

While the first paragraphs of Item 13-07 are a new expression of existing authoritative interpretations, they do not materially strengthen or improve existing interpretations and thus Item 13-07 may be unnecessary. However, if the General Assembly chooses to approve this language as an authoritative interpretation, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the final sentence be deleted because it seeks to create a standard of amending that is not constitutional. Item 13-12 does not actually rise to the level of an authoritative interpretation because of its vagueness in asking the General Assembly to affirm “the constitutional definition”—which is itself what is under debate in these overtures. This overture also asks to affirm existing authoritative interpretations without specifying which of those authoritative interpretations it wishes to have affirmed. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that Item 13-12 be disapproved.

In addition, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that if it believes that the shared intent of the requests in Items 13-07 and 13-12 is appropriate, the General Assembly should consider approving the first part of Item 13-12, which is a proposal to amend W4-9000ff to clarify that marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can only be between one man and one woman. The committee advises that Items 13-07 and 13-12 would then be answered by the response to Item 13-13.

#### B. *Item 13-13—On Amending Existing W-4.9000 and Amending G-6.05 to Require Two-Thirds (2/3) Vote to Change*

Item 13-13 would amend W-4.9000 by making the sentence “Marriage is between one man and one woman” a separate paragraph—4.9001a—and would amend G-6.05 to require a two-thirds (2/3) vote to change W-4.9001.

Separating the language of “one man and one woman” resolves the question of which section of W-4.9000 is controlling of the sentences that follow; doing so makes this language proscriptive and thus behaviorally binding. If it is the will of the assembly to clarify the language and intent of marriage in W-4.9000 as referring solely to “one man and one woman,” then the language of Item 13-13 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overture.

If the General Assembly wishes to approve Item 13-13, then the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove the second part of Item 13-13 regarding amending G-6.05 for the reasons put forth below.

#### *Rationale*

Presenting this section as a restatement of confessional standards, this overture seeks to apply to the Directory for Worship the same two-thirds (2/3) standard for amending the Confessions. Similar overtures regarding super majorities were addressed by the 205th General Assembly (1993) in *Overtures 93-23* and *93-44*, by the 212th General Assembly (2000) in *Overture 98-7*, and by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Item 03-06. In all cases, the recommendations were defeated.

The principle of majority rule is foundational to presbyterian polity. The Historic Principles of Church Government, adopted in the 1790s, established this principle that “This church shall be governed by presbyters ...” (F-3.0202), “... in councils of regular gradation ...” (F-3.0203) and “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). The 11th edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* defines a majority as “more than half” (p. 400), that is, a simple majority. The proposed amendment to G-6.05 would create a higher standard for amending one section of the *Book of Order* that would create precedence for making this the standard for amending the *Book of Order*. This would weaken the principle of majority rule, which is one of the fundamental principles of presbyterian polity.

In 1983, the newly united PC(USA) General Assembly received the report of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, which states in part,

The responsibility of the majority to govern must be seen in the context of the requirement that the whole governs the parts. Majority rule is not a mystical or abstract concept. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the whole church, as it acts, can do only that which most of the church is willing to do. When through the violation or short circuit of proper procedure the will of a minority is imposed on a judicatory or on the church, seriously divisive conflict is often the result. ...

## 13 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

The clear intent of the rule of the majority is to preserve, except in the most foundational matters, the judgment and will of the simple majority against that of an unwilling minority. To amend this principle would involve a substantial change in the governing philosophy of the Presbyterian church, and should not be adopted without considerable study and review (*Minutes*, 1983, Part I, p. 153).

Parliamentary procedure provides a mechanism by which minorities can seek to persuade the majority that a particular action would be injurious to the church, or to modify the action in order to increase support in the church. In addition, the *Manual of the General Assembly* provides for consensus processes prior to a vote that may persuade a majority to amend or defer an action in view of the concerns of the minority. Finally, it should be noted that currently the *Book of Order* contains no specific provision requiring a majority vote of the assembly to approve an overture, but is governed by G-3.0105, which states, “Meetings [of councils] shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution (*Book of Order*, 3.0105).

Should the assembly concur with the intent of the first part of this overture, the language proposed is clear and adequate to achieve its intent. But the concluding section on requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote is inconsistent with our historical understanding of majority rule.

### C. *Authoritative Interpretation to Provide Pastoral Discretion and Responsibility*

The third group of business related to the issue of “marriage” seeks authoritative interpretations of W-4.9000 that would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders when authorized to perform marriages to use pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at ceremonies for couples who have obtained a civil marriage license - and to allow sessions to permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. These are the overtures:

Item 13-02, East Iowa, to ensure pastoral discretion in services of Christian marriage

Item 13-03, Boston, to ensure pastoral discretion in marriages

Item 13-05, Genesee Valley, includes language related to 4.9002a, who meet legal requirements of the state, and demonstrate Christian commitment

Item 13-08, Cayuga-Syracuse, to exercise pastoral discretion regarding ceremonies involving two people who have obtained a civil marriage license—and does not oblige anyone to act against their conscience

Item 13-09, Baltimore, would make “civil definition of marriage” [“... civil contract between a woman and a man ...”] the controlling definition—and if a state provides for marriage as a civil contract between same-gender couples, then the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would recognize them

Item 13-10, Redwoods, language does not prohibit officiating at marriage of same-gender couple

Item 13-14 Rutgers Presbyterian Church. This is actually a concurrence with Item 13-02; language is identical except for one word

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it wishes to accomplish the intent of these overtures, Item 13-05 provides that language which is most clear, complete, and applicable as an authoritative interpretation. However, if the will of the assembly is to modify the basic understanding of marriage itself, the assembly should consider approving one of the overtures that proposes amending the language of W-4.9000.

### *Rationale*

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 254) There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all

individuals. The Marriage Task Force Report indicates that at least five states now declare relationships between same-gender couples to constitute marriages. This change complicates the pastoral care options in at least those five states.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

The *Benton* and *Spahr* cases and the 1991 authoritative interpretation rest on the following distinctions:

- Ceremonies for same-gender couples could not use liturgies for Christian marriage or liturgies for the recognition of civil marriage.
- Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are not allowed to perform a ceremony that they consider or represent to be the same as a marriage ceremony; nor is a session allowed to permit their facilities to be used for any such ceremony.
- Pastoral care for same-gender couples may be provided in the form of worship services that “celebrate a loving, caring, and committed relationship” such as civil unions for same-gender couples, but such couples must be advised that such a service does not constitute a marriage and may not be held out as such.

In *Spahr*, the PJC concluded,

This Commission has addressed the issue of same-sex unions and marriages since that time (1991) in other cases. The issue is not simply the same-sex ceremony. It is the misrepresentation that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the ceremony and the resulting relationship to be a marriage in the eyes of the church. By the definition of W-4.9001, such a result cannot be. So the critical question is not whether the definitional language creates proscribed conduct, it is whether it is permissible to represent that one is doing something which one cannot constitutionally do. The SPJC correctly stated that the term “marriage” in the charge relates to “Christian marriage” (or “ecclesiastical marriage” as that term is used in Southard), since that is the only marriage ceremony over which the PC(USA) has authority.

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “... this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. *Spahr*) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “... set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and ... councils. ...”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (*Book of Order*, F-3.03).

#### D. *Items 13-01, 13-04, 13-06, and 13-11, On Amending the Book of Order, W-4.9000ff*

All four overtures seek to amend W-4.9000 and related paragraphs in the Directory for Worship by redefining or re-describing marriage or Christian marriage. There is currently a tension between the definition of marriage between the church and some states. Currently six states and the District of Columbia recognize same-gender marriages as legal unions; these overtures would allow teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders to perform same-gender marriages in these states. Any change in the definition of marriage in state law does not amend the church's constitution.

*Item 13-01; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, to Uphold Session and Pastoral Discretion in Their Responsibility for the Covenant of Marriage from the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Item 13-01 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “a woman and a man to each other,” “woman and a man,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people,” or “two people to be married,” or “between two people.” The overture also strikes the phrase, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” in W-4.9001, and strikes “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-04; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006, Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of Hudson River*

Item 13-04 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman,” “husband and wife,” with the words “two people”

or “two people to be married,” “they,” “to be married” as well as striking the phrase “is made by a woman and a man to each other,” striking “civil contract” and inserting “covenant,” as well as adding “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment be changed to “two people” to allow the language to be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

*Item 13-06; On Amending W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of New York City.*

Item 13-06 would amend five paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married,” as well as striking the phrase “service of Christian marriage” and inserting “worship service of marriage,” as well as striking “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” and moving the phrase “For Christians” to the beginning of W-4.9001 and striking the phrase “by the couple” in W-4.9006. For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

*Item 13-11; On Amending W-4.9000 Regarding Marriage from the Presbytery of the Redwoods.*

Item 13-11 would amend four paragraphs in the Directory for Worship—W-4.9001, W-4.9002, W-4.9004, and W-4.9006. This overture would replace the current language of “a man and a woman” with the words “two people” or “two people to be married” and the language of “husband and wife” with “the couple.” The overture also seeks to strike the phrase “civil contract” in W-4.9001 and inserting “covenant,” and at the end of that same sentence, inserting “and according to the laws of the state also constitutes a civil contract.” The overture also seeks to strike “by a woman and a man to each other” and inserting “between two people.” In W-4.9006, the overture seeks to insert the phrase “or civil union” after the phrase “a civil marriage” and striking the phrase “married to one another” and inserting “united.” For overall discussions of all marriage related overtures, see the overview at the beginning of this advice as it applies to all marriage overtures.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the word “couple” in the proposed amendment Item 13-11 be changed to “two people” to allow the language be clearly translated in other languages for other racial ethnic groups in the church.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes these four overtures all seek to amend W-4.9000 and following. None of the four overtures propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind”; rather, the overtures seek to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of approving the proposed language would be that it might be challenged on the basis that it is inconsistent with Scriptures and the Confessions.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that if it is the intent of the assembly to amend the definition of marriage, the language of Item 13-04 is clear and consistent with the intent of the overtures.

## 13-NB

[The assembly approved Item 13-NB with amendment. See pp. 46, 47.]

**Amendment: All other items in this committee are answered by the action taken on Item 13-NB.**

**That the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following resolution:**

**“In a desire to promote the peace, unity, and purity of the church, we move the whole Presbyterian Church U.S.A. enter into a season of serious study and discernment concerning its meaning of Christian marriage in the two-year period between the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the 221st General Assembly (2014). We would further move the Office of Theology and Worship prepare and distribute educational materials to all presbyteries and congregations. These materials should include the relevant Scriptures, key methods of biblical interpretations, current understandings of our Constitution, and some suggested guidance for prayerful and reconnecting ways of listening to one another.**

**“We would ask that all presbyteries report to the Office of the General Assembly on how this was conducted in their congregations at least three months prior to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

**“This motion is offered in the hope and trust that such discernment will genuinely seek the rule and will of God be done in our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as it is in Heaven under the guidance of the Triune of God.”**

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$500—GAMC—Unrestricted]



## Item 14-01

[The assembly approved Item 14-01 with amendment. See pp. 61, 62–63.]

*On Supporting the United Nations—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. ~~[Acknowledge]~~ **[Affirm]** the church's historic support for the United Nations as an instrument of peacemaking and peace building and a guarantor of the human and legal rights of people and nations.

2. Commend the United Nations for its efforts to address global poverty, hunger, and unemployment; work for economic development; expand educational opportunities; care for creation; improve the health of the human family; combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other diseases; and enhance the status of women, children, indigenous peoples, people of color, and others who are all too often marginalized.

3. ~~[Call upon Presbyterians individually and collectively to pray for the efforts of the United Nations; learn about the United Nations and its work; and urge our national leaders to support fully the United Nations.]~~ **[Give thanks for the engagement of Presbyterians with the United Nations from its creation forward.]**

**[4. Commend the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations for its long-standing witness through educational seminars, congregational programs, ecumenical and interfaith cooperation, strategic reflection, and advocacy for international justice and peace.**

**[5. Encourage Presbyterians individually, and as congregations, mid councils, and other groups to learn about, pray for, support, and make use of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations in its work to inspire, equip, and connect Presbyterians, Presbyterian mission personnel, and our partners for ministry as faithful disciples of Jesus in the global community and to witness to the United Nations community in the name of Jesus Christ, based on the policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies.]**

~~[4.]~~ **[6.]** Urge seminaries, universities, colleges, and campus ministries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide opportunity for faculty and students to learn about the purposes and mission of the United Nations.

~~[5.]~~ **[7.]** Call upon the United States government to

- a. foster peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force;
- b. support efforts to strengthen the United Nations and the rule of international law;
- c. assure that its financial obligations to the United Nations are adequately and promptly met;
- d. overturn laws that mandate an automatic cut-off of U.S. support to UN agencies that allow Palestine as a member; and
- e. show its commitments to the extension of international order by the ratification of major international treaties still pending action in the U.S., including the Law of the Sea Treaty; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

~~[6.]~~ **[8.]** Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this resolution to the church, and to the president of the United States, the secretary of state of the United States, every member of Congress, the secretary general of the United Nations, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, and all missions to the United Nations.

### *Rationale*

Inspired by Isaiah's vision of a "peaceable kingdom," the church must honor the dignity of every person and the intrinsic value of every creature. It is our sacred calling to pray and work for the day when none "labor in vain, or bear children for calamity" (Isa. 65:23). We do so as disciples of the One who came "that [all] may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). We do so based on the directions of peacemaking among all nations in the Confession of 1967, which is grounded in God's covenant of grace. Responding to our Creator, we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child, all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth. Remembering that Jesus taught, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt. 5:9), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms that peacemaking is the believers' calling.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor denominations have long recognized the need to honor the deep connections within our human family and to awaken a new spirit of international community. They have seen the United Nations playing a key role in that regard. The 155th General Assembly (1943) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America adopted a Statement of Principles on a Just Peace, two of which spoke of the need for world organization:

“We believe that international cooperation should be organized to preserve peace, maintain international law, provide adaptations to changing conditions, and that it should be directed towards cultivating the will to peace and progress” (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1943, Part I, p. 167).

“We believe that by expanded collaboration of the United Nations an international conference, representative of all sovereign peoples, should be convened to work out with deliberation a comprehensive plan for a dynamic peace” (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1943, Part I, p. 168).

The 156th General Assembly (1944) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America expanded this understanding:

“The usefulness, of international organization in preventing recourse to force in the settlement of international disputes will depend greatly upon the scope of responsibility entrusted to it. Such a world organization must be given responsibility broad enough to exercise a constructive influence upon the life of the nations ... international organization should likewise be endowed with curative and creative responsibilities commensurate with at least the most pressing issues that arise in the relations between nations . . . . The provisions of peace must rest upon justice among the several races and of [humanity]” (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1944, Part I, pp. 226-27).

General Assemblies since that time have reaffirmed support for the United Nations, and called for a strong United States commitment to and participation in the United Nations.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds special consultative status through the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations inspires, equips, and connects Presbyterians for ministry as faithful disciples of Jesus in the global community. The ministry advocates for peace and justice to the United Nations, based on the policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies.

As the 207th General Assembly (1995) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) notes: “The commitments of the church have been grounded not only on its encounter with the world, in witness and service, but in its theological understanding of the sovereignty and love of God, and the redeeming, reconciling, peace-bringing ministry of Jesus the Christ” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 489).

#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 14-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) concur with the Advocacy Committee on Women’s Concerns Advice and Counsel on Item 14-01.

#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 14-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 14-01 with amendments as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1. [Affirm] ~~[Acknowledge]~~ the church’s historic support ... [rest of sentence remains unchanged]

“2. Commend the United Nations ... [text remains unchanged])

“3. ~~[Call upon Presbyterians individually and collectively to pray for the efforts of the United Nations; learn about the United Nations and its work; and urge our national leaders to support fully the United Nations.]~~[Give thanks for the engagement of Presbyterians with the United Nations from its creation forward.]

“[4. Commend the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations for its long-standing witness through educational seminars, congregational programs, ecumenical and interfaith cooperation, strategic reflection and advocacy for international justice and peace.]

“[5. Encourage Presbyterians individually, and as congregations, mid councils, and other groups to learn about, support, and make use of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations in its work to inspire, equip, and connect Presbyterians, Presbyterian mission personnel, and our partners for ministry as faithful disciples of Jesus in the global community and to

witness to the United Nations community in the name of Jesus Christ, based on the policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies.]

“~~[4-]~~ ~~[6.]~~ Urge seminaries ... [Text same as Recommendation 4 from original.]”

“~~[5-]~~ ~~[7.]~~ Call upon the United States government to ... [Text same as Recommendation 5a.–e. from original.]”

“~~[6-]~~ ~~[8.]~~ Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate ... [Text same as Recommendation 6 from original.]”

#### *Rationale*

Given ACWC’s yearly participation in the United Nations Commission of the Status of Women and the outstanding hosting and resourcing provided for Presbyterians at this event by the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, it stood out to us that this ministry of the PC(USA) was not mentioned in this item. For this reason along with our general appreciation for the good work done by the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, we would advise amending the item as above.

As further rationale for this advice and counsel, we cite the comment by the General Assembly Mission Council. We note the policy grounding of the overture in *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling, the Social Creed for the 21st Century* and other policies indicating support for the UN’s purposes and support for its creation.

#### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 14-01**

*Comment on Item 14-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Presbyterians have engaged with the United Nations from its beginning. We do so for theological, ecclesiastical, and practical reasons.

Reformed theology affirms God’s sovereignty and God calls us to live our faith in all aspects of life. Following the Calvin’s example, Reformed Christians, Presbyterians among them, have engaged in ministry in public life that includes serving as elected officials and engaging in advocacy that seeks to live out the church’s responsibility to assist government to become what God requires it to be.

The Body of Christ extends around the world. Our connection to our sisters and brothers calls us to active concern on their behalf. As we partner in witness to Christ around the world, events and policies impinge on our mission and call us to respond.

We live in a web of relationships. Life is bound together. As the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us, what affects one person or place directly, affects all people and places indirectly.

Rooted in this theology, expressing this ecclesiology, and recognizing this practical reality, Presbyterians have long supported international cooperation and institutions.

Even as World War II began, Presbyterians joined conversations about how to shape the world after the war. Presbyterian Elder John Foster Dulles chaired the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council of Churches. The commission made a number of recommendations about the United Nations that was to come including that it should emphasize justice, human welfare, and human rights including religious freedom. It also called for membership for all countries, a commission to oversee the progress of colonies to freedom, and the limitation and reduction of arms.<sup>1</sup> In 1943, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America called for the creation of an international organization that would serve humanity.<sup>2</sup>

As post-war plans continued, the Presbyterians engaged in a campaign of education and advocacy that included conferences in sixty cities. When the conference on international organization that created the UN Charter met in San Francisco in April 1945, Presbyterians across the United States were called to prayer.<sup>3</sup> John Foster Dulles served as an advisor to the U.S. delegation at that conference. He and others from the faith-based and secular NGO community helped draft the preamble to the UN Charter and worked to ensure a role for NGOs in relation to the UN.<sup>4</sup>

Through the years, Presbyterian ministries have related to the UN as individuals, as congregations, middle governing bodies, and as a denomination. We have prayed for the UN, the nations of the world, and issues of international import. General Assemblies have passed resolutions concerning the UN’s work. Today, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds special consultative status to the UN through the UN Economic and Social Council. This allows our voice to be heard by a truly global audience and to contribute to its agenda by attending international conferences and events, making written and oral statements at these events, organizing side events at these events, and taking part in advocacy and networking.

The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations currently represents the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the UN. The ministry inspires, equips, and connects Presbyterians for ministry as faithful disciples of Jesus in the global community. The ministry advocates for peace and justice to the United Nations, based on policies of Presbyterian General Assemblies.

In partnership with other NGOs, many of them faith-based, the ministry works on issues related to human trafficking, food and hunger, peace and security through the Security Council, religious freedom, Israel-Palestine, justice for women, and many country specific concerns. Meetings for mission partners and mission co-workers are arranged with staff members of UN programs and national missions to the UN. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations partners with appropriate programs of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly in this work. The ministry facilitates the attendance of PC(USA) staff members at international events.

The ministry provides seminars on international issues for congregations, presbyteries, seminaries, and other groups. Sixteen groups held seminars in 2011. Every other year, the ministry cosponsors a January Term Doctor of Ministry course in partnership with Columbia Theological Seminary.

Working with Presbyterian Women, Women's Leadership Development, the National Network of Presbyterian College Women, and Racial Ethnic Young Women Together, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations facilitated the participation of forty-four Presbyterians in the 56th Commission on the Status of Women. The commission is the sole global-policymaking body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women. The Presbyterians worked with ecumenical partners to advocate on issues related to women living in rural areas around the world and their role in hunger and poverty eradication, development. This advocacy was based on policies of Presbyterian General Assemblies and input from our mission partners and co-workers as well as our partners in the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations helps Presbyterians take part in concrete acts of global discipleship. Prayers for people and events around the world are provided. Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF, a project created by Presbyterians, is promoted, as is the UNICEF Tap Project that helps provide clean water for children around the world. In partnership with the Office of Child Advocacy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the ministry organizes Presbyterian participation in the Red Hands Campaign that addresses the use of children in situations in armed conflict. Since Presbyterians joined this international effort, eleven nations have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. This international treaty helps establish a consensus that children are children, not soldiers.

Central to our Reformed heritage is the understanding that following Jesus involves a deep public spiritual life: taking our faith into the world to help shape the policies that guide our life together in our communities, our country, and the global neighborhood. Presbyterians live that public life as we engage with the United Nations in the name of Jesus.

#### Endnotes

1. Mia Adjali and Deborah Storms, *The Community of Nations*, Friendship Press: New York, New York, 1995), pp. 9–10.
2. *Minutes*, PCUSA, 1943, Part I, pp. 167–68.
3. Robert F. Smylie, "Toward a World Community," *Church & Society* (September/October 1994: Volume 85, Number 1), p. 13.
4. Smylie, *op. cit.*

## Item 14-02

[The assembly approved Item 14-02 with amendment. See pp. 61, 63.]

*On Support for the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)—From the Presbytery of Boston.*

**The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the following actions:**

**1. Direct the Stated Clerk to call upon the United States Securities and Exchange Commission to develop and enforce regulations that fully implement the original intent of the Dodd-Frank Act's Sections 1502 [~~and 1504~~], which require companies engaged in the extraction or use of the Congo's minerals and resources to disclose their sources and to disclose the amounts paid to the government for access to the minerals and resources.**

**2. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate to the president of the United States, the U.S. State Department, and appropriate congressional leaders the need to ensure that the fundamental human rights and the political will of the Congolese people are fully respected by the strengthening of transparent, accountable, and effective democratic institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and, to that end, to call upon the government of the United States to do the following:**

**a. Join other nations and religious and humanitarian organizations in calling for a process that will assess the integrity of the 2011 DRC electoral processes and the extent to which the announced results accurately reflect the will of the Congolese people.**

b. **Join other nations and religious and humanitarian organizations in calling for the DRC government to investigate and prosecute all cases of election-related violence and to implement mechanisms to prevent further violence.**

c. **Work vigorously and in cooperation with the United Nations and other international agencies to stop violence against women and, in particular, the use of rape as a strategy of war.**

**[d. Guided by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, reaffirm the important role of Congolese women and children in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stress the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.]**

**[d-].[e.] Fully fund and implement all provisions of Public Law: 109-456 “Democratic Republic of Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Act of 2006.”**

**[e-].[f.] Provide encouragement and financial and technical support to the Congolese government to provide quality education for its children and youth in order for them to become informed, active, and responsible citizens.**

**[f-].[g.] Urge the Congolese government to**

**(1) Provide adequate funding for the education of all primary and secondary students;**

**(2) Institute free primary and secondary education for all students;**

**(3) Pay teachers adequate living wages and provide health insurance for them; and**

**(4) Incorporate civic and electoral education into the school curriculum in order for democratic decision-making and election processes to be understood.**

**3. Direct the Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to advocate for public policy that**

**a. Protects the human rights of the Congolese people;**

**b. Promotes transparent, accountable, and effective democracy in the DRC and foster conditions conducive to free, fair, and credible elections;**

**c. Promotes transparency in extractive industries, monitors trade in potentially conflict minerals, and minimizes the potential for the profits of natural resources to be used to finance aggression against civilians; and**

**d. Promotes quality primary and secondary education in the DRC.**

**4. Encourage presbyteries, congregations, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to**

**a. Pray with the people of the Congo for justice, peace, and popular sovereignty in the DRC;**

**b. Learn about the history and current situation of the DRC and its people in order to forge stronger bonds with our partner churches in the DRC and to become more knowledgeable and effective advocates for justice and peace in the Congo; and**

**c. Engage in advocacy with U.S. public officials and policymakers to promote U.S. and international policies that foster democracy, peace, and just use of natural resources in the DRC.**

**[d. Contribute to the “Build Congo Schools Project” to rebuild the Presbyterian schools thru the Medical Benevolence Foundation and provide support for books, scholarships, vehicles, and teacher training thru the PC(USA)’s Congo ECO’s (E047897, E051843).]**

#### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian churches of the Congo, with membership numbering more than two million, trace their roots to the 1891 missionary efforts of the U.S. Presbyterians, the Reverend William Shepherd and the Reverend Samuel Lapsley. From the outset, Presbyterian missions in the Congo modeled a holistic approach, and Presbyterians have had a particular concern for the rights, freedom, dignity, and well-being of the Congolese people. Today, as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) partners with the Presbyterian Community of Congo, the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa, and the Eglise du Christ au Congo (the Church of Christ in the Congo), it is continually concerned by the cries of its sisters and brothers in the Congo who face violence, exploitation, and political oppression.

God has blessed the Congo with a wealth of mineral and natural resources, many of which are in high demand today as essential components in a wide range of electronic devices. Despite this great wealth, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains one of the poorest nations on earth. For more than 120 years, foreign powers and a domestic elite have systematically exploited the Congo's riches, while the vast majority of the Congolese people realize little if any benefit. Today, much of the trade in these valuable resources continues to be controlled by other countries and illegal militias. The profits that they derive from the sale of "conflict minerals" are used to finance a violent struggle for territory and power that has claimed as many as six million lives in the past twelve years and has inflicted disease, poverty, and gross violations of human rights on millions more. Women remain the primary victims of this protracted conflict, especially in the war-torn northeast region, and rape continues to be practiced with impunity as a strategy of war and subjugation. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved a Resolution on Just Globalization that expressed its concern for the impact of global commerce on the integrity of creation, trade justice, and human rights and called, among other things, for action by U.S. agencies to promote transparency in international financial transactions. The subsequent 218th General Assembly (2008) endorsed the "Publish What You Pay" campaign for transparency in extractive industries.

Although the Congo gained independence from Belgian colonial rule in 1960, its people have never had an opportunity to taste the fruits of freedom and self-rule. The Congo quickly became a pawn in the emerging Cold War. Foreign powers, eager for access to the Congo's immense resources, exploited regional and ethnic divisions to destabilize Congo's first democratic government and to clear the way for the corrupt and autocratic rule of Mobutu Sese Seko. A coalition of foreign armies and local militias eventually toppled the aging Mobutu in 1997, but it was not until 2006 when the Congolese people, with the support of the United States and other nations, eventually realized their democratic aspirations by staging the country's first free, fair, and transparent election since 1960; however, the recent election held in November 2011 was found by electoral observers from the Congolese Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Carter Center and the European Union to be so seriously flawed that the announced results lacked credibility. Consequently, Congo advocates around the world, including the Congo Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), have joined the Congolese Catholic Bishops and human rights groups in calling for a review of the recent election processes and their results. Both the 213th General Assembly (2001) and the 217th General Assembly (2006) called upon the U.S. government to commit resources to promote free and fair elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Moreover, in the wake of the election, human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and the Center for Forced Migration Studies at Northwestern University, have recorded and validated numerous incidents of post-election violence, including assault, kidnapping, arbitrary detention, and murder. (Reports of these human rights violations can be found on the websites: [www.drc.ushahidi.com](http://www.drc.ushahidi.com) and [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org).)

In the midst of this pain, there are new shoots of hope. The Millennium Declaration issued by the United Nations member governments in 2000 urged that primary education become universally free and available. As a result, the Congo's government has made first through fourth grades tuition free. Also, the Presbyterian churches of the Congo are helping to lay the foundation for an effectively functioning democracy and economy by providing education for 206,000 children and youth in 835 primary and secondary schools and in several tertiary education institutions.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the global community have an opportunity to support initiatives such as those of the Congolese Presbyterian churches to foster a new generation of Congolese people with an active commitment to participatory democracy, peace, and accountable governance.

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**Concurrence to Item 14-02 from the Presbyteries of Chicago, Eastern Virginia, and Sheppards and Lapsley.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 14-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

This overture addresses the sources of political instability, human rights abuses, and truncated development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It offers recommendations to review election processes in the DRC and institute measures to reduce violence and criminal corruption in mineral mining that are the means for maintaining rapacious political and paramilitary groups. It also proposes expanded education of the DRC population, support for its efforts as a democracy, and elimination of the criminal element from mining (by eliminating their sources of funding) so that the DRC's ample resources can be used for the benefit of its people.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved.

*Rationale*

The General Assembly has previously extended its support to the DRC in 2001 when it approved a resolution to ask the United States government to commit resources for free and fair elections (213th General Assembly [2001]), and again in 2006 for similar purposes (217th General Assembly [2006]). Yet, in spite of these efforts and similar initiatives by other

church groups such as the Congo Mission Network, human rights organizations, and concerned governments, the situation remains essentially unchanged. Its per capita income of \$199 makes it one of the poorest countries in the world.<sup>1</sup> Amnesty International states, “Throughout 2010 government forces and armed groups continued to commit serious human rights violations across the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including extrajudicial executions, rapes and arbitrary detentions.” A long-term climate of violence has produced nearly six million deaths since 1998 and displaced more than 300,000 persons.<sup>2</sup> In terms of governance, the DRC is ranked in the bottom 10 percent of the world’s countries on the 2011 Index of Perceived Corruption produced annually by Transparency International.<sup>3</sup>

Corruption flourishes when there is a lack of accountability. The overture proposes a reasonable, three-pronged strategy to improve this situation. In the short-term, it seeks General Assembly support for efforts to strangle the cash cow that sustains corrupt and violent groups with illicit income from mineral wealth by calling for enforcement of the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010, which compels U.S. companies to report on the sources of minerals they utilize and prices paid to obtain them. This is one manifestation of the “Publish What You Pay” mechanism endorsed by the 218th General Assembly (2008). At the same time, the overture calls for U.S. government and United Nations assistance in building democratic institutions, protecting human rights, and ensuring free and fair elections. In the longer term, it calls upon the General Assembly to ask the U.S. government to finance the expansion of primary and secondary education in the country in order to generate over time a more informed electorate.

#### Endnotes

1. World Bank Development Indicators, 2010.
2. This ‘silent genocide’ compares with the more widely publicized Rwanda genocide of 1994 which produced one million deaths.
3. <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/#CountryResults>.

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### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 14-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 14-02 with amendment by inserting new text as Item 2.d. and re-letter 2.d.–f. as 2.e.–g. New Item 2.d. shall read as follows:

“[d. Guided by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, reaffirm the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stress the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.]”

#### Rationale

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns supports this and all resolutions requesting support for peacemaking. Citing a concern from the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (adopted in 2000), ACWC notes that amongst civilians, women and children “account for the vast majority of those affected by armed conflict.”<sup>1</sup> It is a well-known fact that this is the case in the DRC.

Unfortunately, what is missing from this report is the important role that women play in the peacemaking process. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 cites the importance of: “*Reaffirming* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.”<sup>2</sup>

The ACWC would advise the insertion of this quotation (changing verbs to “reaffirm,” “stress,” etc.) as letter d. under Recommendation 2.

It is essential that we acknowledge (as our global leaders have) not only the victimization of women in this situation, but also the incredible abilities women have to contribute to peace in this situation if afforded the power to make decisions.

#### Endnotes

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). ([http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf))
2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). ([http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf))

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 14-02**

*Comment on Item 14-02—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations partner in a variety of ways with our colleagues in World Mission and the Congo Mission Network to advocate for policies that pursue justice and peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Both ministries involve Presbyterians in these efforts as appropriate. The Office of Public Witness advocated for, and helped Presbyterians advocate for, the Publish What You Pay campaign that calls for transparency in extractive industries and for the Conflict Minerals Act. The Office of Public Witness is leading an initiative to bring the faith community together to address the implementation of that act as well as other issues related to the DRC. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations works with other NGOs to educate about and advocate for human rights, including free, fair and credible elections, with representatives of missions of Member States and in other parts the UN community. Both ministries provide Presbyterians with information about the DRC and opportunities for engagement in issues related to the DRC through their electronic media sources.

**Item 14-03**

[The assembly approved Item 14-03. See pp. 61, 63.]

*For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

Acting from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s long commitments to democracy, religious freedom, and human rights, believing these to be rooted in God’s promised reign of justice for all people, and responding to the wave of democratic changes in the Arab world begun in 2011, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

**1. Approve the following affirmations and directions for its mission and witness:**

a. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), represented by its General Assembly, honors the courageous witness of millions of Tunisians, Egyptians, Libyans, Syrians, Yemenis, Bahrainis, Palestinians, and others who are seeking a major transition to democracy—sometimes despite violence and distortions—lifting up in particular commitment to peaceful change based in shared moral conviction and spiritual discipline. Movements for democratic change will continue to face obstacles (described below), reinforcing the need for wise international policies to encourage genuine self-determination, independence, and protection of minorities.

b. “As Christians we dare not be oblivious to the erosion of human freedom wherever or to whomever it occurs. Nor dare we feel detached from the courageous actions of fellow Christians who risk life, liberty and reputation in witnessing to truth and justice in their own societies. ‘If one suffers, all suffer.’” This affirmation from “Christian Social Witness in Repressive Societies and United States Responsibility,” of the 186th General Assembly (1974) of the PCUSA, pp 160, 598, continues to represent the commitment undergirding the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s support for the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (1948).

c. In mission and ecumenical partnerships with indigenous Christians, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to continue its educational, medical, religious, and justice work in ways that support the fulfillment of human aspirations and the freedom of all citizens to worship without discrimination, including ancient Christian communities and other religious minorities. In this service, the church will continue to differentiate its mission, even in humanitarian relief, from the work of the United States military and other governmental agencies.

d. As a Christian community based in the United States, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms our heritage of separating government from religious control and yet allowing faith communities to witness for fair and wise public policies. In the Arab world, and the larger Muslim world, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) supports practices of mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding based on principles of international law and diplomacy. Aware of historic differences between Muslim and Christian understandings, the church sees these addressed best through dialogue, diplomacy, and respectful presence that recognize the importance of religion in societies. This approach is to give religious leaders standing in public debate without making religion an instrument of the state, or vice versa.

e. Particularly in light of widespread resentment resulting from U.S. governmental support for undemocratic regimes, the church confirms its opposition to policies that support dictatorships, repress populations, and enable religious or ethnic discrimination. Such policies involve costly military aid (including security training and shared surveillance) that enables indefinite imprisonment without due process, torture of citizens and immigrants, and arrangements for military bases that exploit local weaknesses and compromise our country’s values. This approach rec-



ognizes that privileged alliances with the militaries of other nations may weaken civilian democracy in those nations and here at home, and that one people's stability should never be sustained by another people's subjugation.

f. The significant role of women in movements for democratic change is notable, welcome, and appropriate. Given the abuse of women that has occurred in protests and the government crackdowns on demonstrators, the church should maintain vigilance and commitment to equal rights, social protections, and access to reproductive health treatment for women in the Middle East and elsewhere, recognizing that respect for human dignity can be expressed in a range of religious and cultural forms.

g. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) finds the refusal of the United States to accept jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court to be inconsistent with respect for law, detrimental to global leadership, and destructive of human rights standards. U.S. security and policy officials, as well as the military, covert, and contractor agents of those policies, should be subject to legal accountability for abusive or criminal activities in all countries where they serve, precisely to discourage unilateral uses of force that are both costly and counterproductive.

h. Grieving the last decade of war and distraction from economic and ecological realities, the General Assembly affirms the need for extensive public debate and greater transparency on decisions to use military force. The assembly affirms the national and international legal processes of the War Powers Act and the United Nations Security Council to ensure that military intervention of any kind is undertaken as a "last resort" and reflects a high consensus among democratic nations that it may serve a "just peace." The practices of undeclared war, including cyber attack, targeted killing by drone aircraft and other means, covert infiltration and "false flag" operations (that set up others for blame), expand government power, and threaten civil liberties as well as the national sovereignty of other nations. This recognizes that General Assemblies have supported humanitarian military intervention to prevent genocide (as in 1998), while favoring non-military intervention insofar as possible.

i. Threats of terrorism should be addressed primarily as matters of international policing and as part of the civilian criminal justice system, given the dangers of military overreaction, indefinite counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, and possible abuse of due process. The denial of due process to anyone, anywhere, makes everyone, everywhere, vulnerable to abuses in the name of national security.

j. In determining legitimate U.S. national interests amid changing regional alliances and shifts in power, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms that human rights standards are vital to our national identity and purpose, as well as rooted in our Reformed awareness of sin and historical complexity. Support for democratic freedoms is of greater long-term value than guaranteeing access to cheap labor or resources by military alliances and bases. Greater security is likely from an environmentally proactive strategy to minimize global disruptions due to famine, extreme weather events, forced migrations, ethnic or religious cleansing, land seizures, and states with failed governance.

2. Based on the preceding affirmations, approve the following measures:

a. For study and action by members and congregations:

(1) Members and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are encouraged to consider prayerfully the biblical message as it relates to the behavior of nations and the role of the church in influencing government policy, understanding that Reformed Christians have consistently sought to reform society as part of their witness to God's justice in the world. In their reflection on this resolution, members and congregations are encouraged to familiarize themselves further on the democratic and Islamist struggles across Northern Africa, the Middle East, and SW-Central Asia, and to consider appropriate forms of solidarity with Christian communities in these regions.

(2) Church councils (sessions) and presbyteries that develop partnerships with churches and ministries in other countries are encouraged to consult with Presbyterian World Mission personnel and to consider the justice implications of travel and other arrangements. Presbyterians are encouraged to consider travel in predominantly or partly Arab and Muslim countries, taking into account justice and security concerns, and connecting when possible with Christians in those nations. The World Mission ministry area is requested to provide appropriate regional travel guidance and advice on how not to jeopardize church partners.

(3) Members and congregations, and the church as a whole, are encouraged to consider what an "awakening" might mean for the United States, whether in counting the costs of recent wars, recognizing or memorializing all those dead and wounded in order to honor and learn from their sacrifices, or supporting social movements that deepen our own democratic processes and strengthen moral values.

b. In conjunction with the Peace Discernment process authorized by the 219th General Assembly (2010), and in relation to U.S. foreign and military experience and policy:

(1) Members and friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), particularly those with experience in Arab and/or Muslim countries, are encouraged to share their responses to this resolution and other reflections on their work

or service. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is directed to provide a suitable web posting of all respectful viewpoints ([www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp); a section of [www.justiceUnbound.org](http://www.justiceUnbound.org) may also be devoted to this discussion).

(2) Members, congregations, agencies, and ecumenical bodies are encouraged to consider new options in foreign policy and to support efforts of the United Nations Security Council and Department of Peace-Keeping Operations to implement alternative forms of peacebuilding, including unarmed civilian peacekeeping and nonviolent intervention, public initiatives of mutual forgiveness, and truth and reconciliation commissions, and to share their reflections on the work of these bodies and initiatives.

(3) Presbyterian elected officials, diplomats, and administrators in areas addressed in this resolution are invited to respond to the affirmations and background statement and to participate in briefings, seminars, and adult education programs. The General Assembly recognizes the moral pressure that concerns for human rights, security, self-determination, and political survival put upon all participants in the U.S. political process.

(4) Presbyterian military leaders and civilian defense officials are invited to consider and respond to the concerns of the church in light of their understanding of the complex and changing threats to the United States, its allies, and other nations. Chaplains and others teaching and supporting military or security personnel are encouraged to explore methods that work with conscience and trauma (including “soul repair”).<sup>1</sup> Such new approaches to reconciliation may prevent abuses of human rights (including women in the military itself) and spiritual damage to soldiers (whose addiction and suicide rates have been increasing).

**c. For action by agencies of the General Assembly:**

(1) The Office of the General Assembly is directed to support the reflection and action of members by making the text of this resolution available electronically and in a limited print run suitable for sharing with elected representatives, military leaders, and ecumenical partners in the United States and overseas.

(2) The Office of Public Witness, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, and other ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency/GAMC are directed to represent and advocate for policies consistent with the affirmations above, including measures to expand the role and funding of international diplomacy, peace-keeping, and peace-building; to encourage the protection of human rights and civil liberties, for all citizens and communities; to increase support for nuclear nonproliferation and a nuclear-free Middle East; to advocate for treaties to strengthen international justice systems; to strengthen safeguards over government (and commercial) electronic surveillance and data collection; to develop public guidelines on the use of drone aircraft in targeted killings; to reduce the influence of private contractors on military procurement policy and operation of military bases; and to strengthen ethics, disclosure, and conflict of interest policies for agents of foreign governments and others lobbying and advocating on behalf of foreign interests and military engagement.

(3) The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations and other ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are encouraged to observe Interfaith Harmony Week in the first week of February and other measures to build understanding and minimize hostility among faiths, in accordance with the General Assembly’s 1997 statement on Respectful Presence.<sup>2</sup> Appropriate PC(USA) bodies are encouraged to cooperate with the Fellowship of the Middle East Evangelical (Protestant) Churches and other partners in assessing such efforts and their implications for the life and witness of Middle Eastern Christians.

**[Financial Implication: (2013) \$1,000—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

*Rationale*

*Summary:*

This is a U.S. Christian response to the outpouring of hope that has challenged dictatorships in the Middle East, Africa, and several Asian countries. Along with hope, there has also been rage at injustice, sometimes misdirected, and desire for better material life. Each country has its own particularities, and our partners within these countries differ by age and institutional perspective, with younger Arab Christians often expressing more optimism. Overall this movement has changed assumptions about Arab and Muslim religion and politics, and called into question foreign policies that have too often enabled authoritarian leaders or accommodated oligarchies. The church’s traditional support for democracy and human rights is applied to this new context, with sensitivity to Christian-Muslim relations and advocacy for the rights of religious minorities—Christian in many cases. Military and political leaders have underestimated religious and ethnic dynamics, such as the assertion of Shia identity across many nations. One objective is to provide guidance to members and councils of the church that moves beyond the common image that Muslims-are-dangerous-and-undemocratic. Yet, we must acknowledge that public opinion of the U.S. in the Arab world is strongly negative<sup>3</sup> and that some groups gaining power by democratic means may not be committed to religious freedom, equal rights for women, and other human rights.

This resolution thus encourages stronger U.S. support for democratic transitions and a recovery of a clearer respect for human rights. This means shifting diplomatic, aid, and military policies to back fundamental human aspirations and not sacrificing them to stability and access to oil. With the advance of their own healthy forms of democracy, and with more positive relationships between the Arab world and the Western powers, we can have realistic hope that war and terrorism will lessen and pressure on Christian and other religious minorities will diminish—though not overnight, or without risk of continued suffering. Because this calls for a significant transition in U.S. foreign policy, this background rationale summarizes some of the major recent policy debates about U.S. force projection in and beyond the Iraq and Afghan wars.

*Historical Context:*

The “Arab Awakening” of 2011 that has brought new leaders to power in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and elsewhere has revealed a long-suppressed thirst for freedom and democracy across the Arab world and beyond. Despite the efforts of dictators and their security forces, much of the new social mobilization has been peaceful, nonviolent, and committed to freedom of press, assembly, and other forms of open communication. This widespread movement has altered power relations fundamentally even in states whose leaders remain in place and violence is used, such as Syria, and is affecting international alliances in an equally profound way. The 2011 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to three women, one from Yemen and two from Liberia, lifting up their work for democratic change in their countries and implicitly encouraging the further spread of peaceful methods. These women are Tawakkol Karman, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and Leymah Gbowee.<sup>4</sup> The role of a U.S. peace theorist, Gene Sharp, has been widely debated, based on the tactics and ethos of nonviolence used.<sup>5</sup> Overall, we recognize God’s Spirit at work in the countless brave struggles by Muslims, Christians, those of other faiths, and those of no formal faith. We encourage wiser policies by our government to support fundamental human aspirations, free from the lingering yoke of colonialism or empire.

The last ten years of U.S. foreign policy have been deeply marked by two wars of questionable necessity and a growth of security concerns justified by a “war on terror.” The death of Osama Bin Laden and the tenth year anniversary of 9/11 have opened perspectives on new realities and attitudes. The NATO-led air war in support of insurgent forces in Libya underlined the need to shift policies in advance of popular movements; the legacies of long support for foreign militaries can be seen in Egypt as well as Bahrain, and Pakistan;<sup>6</sup> new forms of “low level” warfare with CIA and drones are underway in Yemen and Somalia and elsewhere;<sup>7</sup> reluctance within the U.S. military to end occupation was evident in Iraq even as that military-based effort at nation-building has produced limited democracy, much corruption, and an undercurrent of rage.<sup>8</sup> (Afghanistan, while having some similar governance and counter-insurgency challenges, is a different case beyond this resolution’s focus.) That element of rage and resentment in Iraq assures a continued attraction to terrorism by some, in the absence of a more constructive project built on mutual respect. The emergence of a nation in Southern Sudan, despite massive ongoing tragedy, suggests the need for a stronger United Nations role in raising standards for governance, plebiscites, peace-keeping, and peace-building.<sup>9</sup>

*Church and Interfaith Context:*

Not all change is good change. We recognize how Egyptian, Syrian, and Lebanese Christians are threatened by new developments, especially in light of the score-settling and religious-cleansing that has occurred in Iraq. The U.S. is not responsible for inciting all interreligious violence in the area, but church representatives from the region have agreed that many U.S. policies have not been helpful, heightening vulnerability of indigenous Christians to popular movements and Muslim extremists (as happened already under Mubarak). Although they are not “Western,” Christians in the Arab World are sometimes perceived as proxies of the West and targeted for retaliation for Western foreign policy, particularly U.S. support for Israel’s occupation of Palestine.<sup>10</sup> Through no fault of their own, this leaves Arab Christians in a no-man’s land, not at home in either East or West. In Iran, despite major international tensions, Christians, Jews, and some other religious minorities in Iran have been relatively safe, though freedom to maintain church facilities has been restricted. Zoroastrians and Bahai`i experience significant danger, and the suppression of the “Green movement” in 2009 continues to affect public life.<sup>11</sup>

The *Book of Order* affirms that “the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks new opportunities for conversation and understanding with non-Christian religious entities. . . . and common action with secular organizations and agencies where such approaches show promise of serving the mission of the Church in the world” (*Book of Order*, G-5.0102–0103). General Assemblies provide practical and theological guidance for such efforts. The 209th General Assembly (1997) stated that:

In a world of many bitter divisions to which, sadly, religious differences often contribute, there is an urgent call to all people of faith to seek understanding and cooperation. In response to this vocation, Christians should be eager to seek fellowship with people of other religions, work together with them, and celebrate our common concerns and values, all the while being alert to the great sensitivity this practice requires. (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p. 435)

The 211th General Assembly (1999) affirmed that, “In the spirit of Jesus Christ, we are called to maintain a respectful presence with people of other faiths” (*Minutes*, 1999, Part I, p. 31). The 209th General Assembly (1997) defined respectful presence as “a way to follow Jesus of Nazareth, who met with people of many cultures and religions even as he fulfilled the nature and purpose of his God-given mission” (*Minutes*, 1997, Part I, p. 440). World Interfaith Harmony Week provides an opportunity to practice such respectful presence, which can include interfaith dialogues, shared meals, joint service projects, or praying for peace in the Middle East and around the world.

*Implications in the Democratic Changes in the Arab World for the Church's Hope for a More Just International Order:*

As this paper is written, efforts at regime change and government resistance are threatening intensified violence in Syria. After the removal of Yemen's ruler, and after elections in Egypt and Tunisia, there is a worldwide debate on how much power extreme Islamists will gain in open electoral processes. An early lesson has been that the much-demonized Muslim Brotherhood is not monolithic, whether among its seventy or so national affiliates or within nations, such as Egypt, where government forces and religious extremists have attacked Christian churches and peaceful protests. Clearly, the role of communications and media is crucial for the progressive and sometimes secular forces of change in any country—well understood by Syria's Assad—but even the conservative groups know how important public moral acceptance has become. Regional public outrage against Syria's crackdown has prompted the Arab League to take unprecedented steps to isolate that regime, but on the ground, Christian partners report violence from forces other than the Syrian government and real dangers to religious co-existence in an expanded civil war.

Democratic stirrings have not ended Shi'a/Sunni tensions in places like Bahrain, Iraq, and Pakistan (properly part of Southwestern Asia). Saudi Arabia helped the government of Bahrain—host to the U.S. Fifth Carrier Group—crush a movement of its majority population of Shi'ites who were out in mass, protesting for reforms.<sup>12</sup> King Abdullah of Jordan identifies with concern an “arc” of Iranian-Shi'ite interest across the region to Hezbollah in Lebanon.<sup>13</sup> The memory of the Green Movement in Iran itself is not forgotten, even as the U.S. and Israel in particular exert force that some observers consider covert war, mysterious assassinations, explosions, and cyber warfare (the “stuxnet” virus, virtually claimed by the Israeli government).<sup>14</sup> In early 2012, that cold war is getting hotter. Certainly some of the same people involved in advocating the Iraq war are now urging a more overt Iran war, undeterred by the same ambiguities about national intention and actual threat level.<sup>15</sup> The need for unambiguous antinuclear proliferation on a region-wide basis makes concern for Iranian (and Pakistani) nuclear development selective; the lesson a military might draw from the Libyan revolution is to keep one's nuclear program to prevent intervention rather than give one up as Qaddafi did.

Since World War II, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has been chiefly driven by dependence on oil and concern for our ally, Israel. Both during the Cold War and after 1989, these priorities have put a premium on stability of governments that accept overall U.S. influence in the region, often at the expense of the freedom for the local people. (The U.S. support of the Shah of Iran is a good example.) President Carter's “doctrine,” that the United States had vital security interests in that access to oil, merely formalized a stance that has been confirmed in several wars and the construction of military bases throughout the Persian Gulf. The presence of U.S. forces itself increases tensions with nationalists and Muslim fundamentalists; the worsening situation of the Palestinians increases religious as well as political polarization. Religious extremists take out some of their hostilities on Christian minorities associated with the United States, which is inevitably linked to the policies of Israel's government.

The background statement to a brief resolution can only point to the larger changes in international affairs related to what the Egyptians and Tunisians call their “revolutions.” We have maintained here that the moral dimension in the popular movements is essential to recognize; we have not analyzed the economic desperation and population forces at work as well. Nor does this background statement treat the growing reality of interdependence that increasingly constrains unilateral action, involving Russian and China in Syria and India and other nations in relation to Iran. Turkey, rebuffed by Europe on the European Communities and now glad of it, has turned more of its attention to the Middle East and, with a somewhat more democratic and Islamist Egypt, is likely to play a growing role, with Kurdistan its only Achilles' heel. Along with Iran, Turkey now vies for regional dominance. One challenge is to see this interdependence and the mutual containments it involves as beneficial to peace.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its ecumenical partners have strongly supported the concept of human rights, respect for international law, and the use of diplomacy rather than force in conflict situations. At the same time, the witness of the churches and others for “principle-driven” international relations has not prevented massive military build-up in the Middle East and nuclear proliferation in nearby Pakistan and India, as well as Israel. To understand the differences between “principle-driven” and realist perspectives on the Middle East and more broadly, a debate between John Ikenberry and Stephen Walt, posted on Walt's blog site, may be illuminating.<sup>16</sup> The legacies of the second Iraq war and ensuing occupation, and the Afghanistan engagement, have not built either confidence in U.S. judgment or respect for the morality of U.S. practice. Torture and Guantanamo Bay aside, the increases in drone warfare and covert action raise questions about official U.S. war aims. Cost factors are increasingly raised at home, but overall U.S. military expenditure—apart from money borrowed for the Iraq and Afghan wars—remains almost twice its pre-9/11 levels. It is estimated at 43 percent of world military expenditure.<sup>17</sup> Hence the need for the churches and others to present an alternative vision of a U.S. role that moves “beyond empire,” or into a more multilateral and less military-based framework.

The 2008 paper “commended for study” by that year's General Assembly, “To Repent, To Restore, To Rebuild, and To Reconcile,”<sup>18</sup> supported the action of that assembly to urge an orderly end to the Iraq war and a morally-appropriate contribution to the reconstruction of that country. That paper also addressed matters of “empire,” an understanding of national purpose then current in the George W. Bush administration and among neo-conservative “hawks” in foreign policy. “Full-spectrum dominance” was another expression used to emphasize the unilateral capacity of the United States military to fight at least two major wars and to project force around the globe. “Empire,” understood as a more complex set of dominating

relationships—economic, political, and military—was also presented in the 2004 Accra statement of the World Alliance (now, Communion) of Reformed Churches. Accra’s understanding of hegemony, inequality, and environmental unsustainability has been increasingly seen as prescient given the credit collapse of Fall 2008 and increasing criticism of unregulated globalization as an intensifier of economic inequality within and among countries.<sup>19</sup>

This resolution does not take a particular position on the question of “empire.” It does note the extensive pattern of wars, alliances, and bases—especially in the Middle East—that give rise to the discussion of empire. Two books by Asia scholar Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback* (2000) and *Sorrows of Empire* (2004), have helped popularize the phrase, “blowback,” which comes from military intelligence to refer to the public fallout, anger, and resentment of military action, particularly overseas. This points to perhaps the largest challenge for Presbyterians and other U.S. citizens: the need to understand how we are perceived by others around the world, especially by those from very different cultures and historical experiences. Certainly there are deep resentments, and many efforts to blame outsiders for internal problems. Yet in order to move forward and to face new economic and environmental dilemmas, new approaches are needed. This resolution is an effort to prepare Presbyterians for that new thinking, and to encourage our church to play a constructive role in an often contentious, but essential, public debate.

Beyond, but emphatically including reflection on the Arab democratic movements, is the larger question of the direction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s peace witness overall. In 2010, the General Assembly approved a new process of discernment designed both to encourage members to encounter the nonviolent witness of Jesus in new ways, and to encourage “new thinking” in the church, thirty years after the landmark policy statement, *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*.<sup>20</sup> This resolution explicitly invites thinking about how peaceful reconciliation and democratic social change can be combined, and what (very different) roles our church and our country can and should play. Commissioners are encouraged to discuss this resolution in the context of “peace discernment groups” in their congregations and presbyteries over the coming year. The discernment assignment helps commend study and action on this document in a dialogical and partly on-line way; readers may also find the invitation to the Peace Discernment process of considerable interest. [See the Interim Report of the Peace Discernment Steering Team to the 220th General Assembly (2012).]

#### Endnotes

1. <http://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2011/11/how-do-we-repair-the-souls-of-those-returning-from-iraq-.html>.
2. The statement, “Respectful Presence: an Understanding of Interfaith Prayer and Celebration from a Reformed Christian Perspective” is available at <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/respectful-presence-document/>. The Interfaith Toolkit provides additional ideas and resources at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/interfaith/>. Find prayers for people of other faiths in the *Book of Common Worship* (pages 798 and 815). “Guidelines for Interfaith Celebration of Thanksgiving” in the *Book of Occasional Services* may also prove helpful. Background about World Interfaith Harmony week is available at <http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/>. For our own Christian partners in the region, we relate through the Middle East council of churches and the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical churches. <http://globalministries.org/news/mee/pdfs/FMEEC-final-communicu-Feb-2012.pdf>. This site provides a copy of the communique of the February 13–15, 2012, consultation on Evangelical and Christian Presence in the Middle East in light of the movements for democratic change, in which several PC(USA) members participated.
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## Item 14-04

[The assembly approved Item 14-04 with amendment. See pp. 61, 63.]

### *Human Rights Update 2012—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) bring to the attention of the church significant trends and developments in human rights, particularly in the areas of women’s reproductive health care, workers’ rights and domestic civil liberties by:

1. Directing the Stated Clerk to post on-line this “Human Rights Update 2012,” include it in the General Assembly social witness policy CD, and encourage its study and use in advocacy on matters of Christian ethical concern and General Assembly action;
2. Requesting that “Human Rights Day,” December 10, be included in the program calendar, liturgical resources, web-postings, and public witness activities of appropriate General Assembly Mission Council offices;
3. Requesting that the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy continue to monitor and report on international and domestic trends to help Presbyterians and others understand the context for discipleship and challenges to the Gospel vision of human dignity, which includes human rights, responsibilities, and liberties for all; and
4. Encouraging members, sessions, and other councils of the church to pray for all victims of human rights violations, and for those who persecute them, while also finding ways to act on behalf of those victims.

**[5. Directing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to include forced abortions, gender and disability selection based abortions, and infanticide within its next Human Rights Update study.]**

### *Rationale*

#### Introduction

In this twenty-third Human Rights Update we focus on three areas of domestic concern: access to reproductive health care, the rights of workers, and challenges to civil liberties first guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. In each area, the General Assembly has stated its concerns in the past. Some of that social witness policy is quoted in each case, showing ways that new developments call for continued study and advocacy. It may be that commissioners will want to lift up concerns within these reports for additional action, beyond the suggestions for personal witness that follow each description of current challenges. In these areas and many others, we honor those individuals called to work on safeguarding the rights of others, and defending their own rights, knowing that “the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.” It is also the case, whether the Human Rights Update surveys developments in other nations or in our own, that attacks on human rights in any area diminish us all.

The three focal topics of this update are not today’s only pressing human rights issues. This General Assembly is also receiving a resolution on “Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World” that makes recommendations for how the United States should respond. Past Human Rights Updates have expressed concerns for the many abuses committed by dictatorships in the Arab world, and for restrictions on the rights of Christians and other religious minorities. To mark Human Rights Day 2011, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s internet justice journal, *Unbound*, published a set of short articles on Indigenous Land Rights edited by Carol Robb, professor of Christian Ethics at San Francisco Theological Seminary.<sup>1</sup> Other human rights witness is part of the regular work of the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, as well as part of the commitments to fairness and conscience of thousands of Presbyterians throughout the U.S. legal system.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) focused on human trafficking, torture (the most fundamental violation of human rights), and detention policies, primarily those governing immigrants and asylum seekers in the United States. That General Assembly also authorized the formation of a new network of Presbyterian advocates for restorative justice in the criminal justice system. Given the millions of U.S. citizens arrested at some point in their lives, and the millions who are convicted and imprisoned (at the highest rate in the world), the need for Christian wisdom and witness seems evident. The Advocacy

Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns has lifted up the great differential in incarceration rates between Caucasian Americans and persons of color.

What difference does human rights concern make? We believe it has helped shape international relations, particularly since the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, strongly supported by the churches at that time. Individuals are freed when international attention focuses on their cases, but government policy is also a focus for human rights. Last assembly's report on torture noted the substantial difference in outlook between "mainline" and "conservative evangelical" Christians on the permissibility of torture. In some measure, that difference in outlook reflects church teaching and attitudes toward punishment and human rights. Christian witness, in groups such as "No2Torture," then contributed to the widespread recognition of moral boundaries that helped limit government practices of "enhanced interrogation" such as water-boarding, rendition to third countries for torture, and imprisonment without due process.

David Cole, professor of Law at Georgetown University, in reviewing how developments since 9/11/01 influenced the rule of law in the United States, argues strongly for the role of public opinion and witness in shaping government behavior:

One of the most important lessons of the past decade may be that the rule of law, seemingly so vulnerable in the attacks' aftermath, proved far more resilient than many would have predicted. . . . The American constitutional system ordinarily relies on courts and checks and balances to impose legal restrictions on government officials. But in this period, with one significant exception, restraint of the government was brought about neither by judicial enforcement of constitutional law nor by legislative checks on executive power, but by civil society's demands for adherence to the basic principles of human rights. Ten years and one administration later, the threats, both to our security and to our liberty, are far from over. But the experience of the last ten years shows the importance of maintaining public pressure for fidelity to our core principles as we enter the second decade of the "war on terror."<sup>2</sup>

The biblical witness is the foundation of our understanding on how we are called to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. From the early understanding of God's image on human beings, through the Fall and the great work of redemption in Christ, God calls us to walk in the ways of justice and righteousness. Past Human Rights Updates have contained study guides examining Bible passages in depth.<sup>3</sup> The prophet Ezekiel, for example, wrestles with differences in the perceived judgments of God over the course of history in chapter twenty. Yet the call to resist idolatry and human sacrifice in all its forms is clear, as is our basic direction: "I the Lord am your God; walk in my statutes, and be careful to observe my ordinances, and hallow my Sabbaths that they may be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I the Lord am your God" (Ezekiel 20: 19-20).

## I. Human Rights: Women's Reproductive Health Care

### A. *The Human Rights of Women*

Throughout human history, women's health, the well-being of their families, including existing children and aging parents, and society's need for their productive labor have required what today we call "family planning." In ancient cultures, women used a variety of herbs that had contraceptive effects, as well as herbs and procedures known to bring on menses. While these practices were never as effective or safe on the individual level as the contraceptive drugs and procedures developed in modern times, they were effective enough to impact population levels.

Determining whether to have children, when and how often, may seem to be an especially personal matter. However, women's control over their reproductive lives has also been a political issue in many cultures. In 1948, responding to the atrocities of WWII, the U.N. adopted *The Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, which states that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world" (Preamble).<sup>4</sup> Thirty years later, in 1979, the U.N. determined that on-going and extensive discrimination against women continued, "violating the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity" set forth in 1948. Therefore, it adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Among the convention's enumerated rights is the right of women "to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights" (Article 16.1.e).<sup>5</sup>

### B. *In the United States*

In the history of the U.S., women's need to responsibly control reproductive capacities has been an essential part of the struggle for social and economic equality with men. For example, the ability of middle- and upper-income white women to reduce their birth rate significantly, from more than seven children in 1800 to 3.5 children by the end of that century, was part of their struggle to gain education and employment and to safeguard their health. Yet, this reduction of white birth rates gave rise to both racist and nativist fears. As a result, in the last half of the 1800s, laws were passed forbidding the use, advertisement, or provision of contraception. Performing an abortion at any stage became a felony in many states. Thus, contraception and access to abortion became illegal. At the same time, however, state health departments forcibly sterilized poor women of color and immigrant women in an attempt to keep America "American," as President Coolidge put it.<sup>6</sup>

Laws denying women access to contraception and abortion remained in effect throughout the first half of the 20th century. However, in the midst of women's changing roles and organization for equality after WWII, and with the development of better contraceptives, public attitudes toward contraception and abortion began to change. Laws prohibiting the distribution

of contraception were overturned in the 1960s. In 1966, the federal government began to subsidize voluntary family planning services for low-income families. In response to the horrendous conditions under which illegal abortions were performed, almost fourteen hundred clergy organized to refer women to physicians for safe, albeit illegal, abortions.<sup>7</sup> In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned many federal and state restrictions on abortion, making it legal once more.

As we write this report in February 2012, a number of legislative proposals at both the federal and state levels would again restrict women's access to contraception, abortion, and a broader range of reproductive health services for low-income families.

- *Use of religious liberty arguments to exempt Roman Catholic institutions and other employers from providing, or allowing insurers to provide, contraceptive coverage or information to employees and students of all religious perspectives:* This controversy arose in early 2012 in response to the federal mandate that contraception be included in all health insurance coverage. While the law exempts those institutions performing specifically religious functions, Roman Catholic bishops maintained that the law violated their religious beliefs by requiring Catholic institutions (such as universities, social service agencies, and health providers) to cooperate in acts they consider immoral, e.g., contraception. Subsequently, Senator Rubio introduced the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2012 (S2043) which would allow any employer, based on their personal religious beliefs, to refuse to provide contraceptive coverage or coverage for related education and counseling.

If such an absolute concept of religious freedom is upheld, millions of women would be denied insurance coverage of contraception through their employment. Women would be burdened by having to purchase contraception directly or by purchasing an individual insurance plan. Depending on the type and effectiveness of the method, birth control can range from \$10 to \$100 monthly. This would place a severe economic burden on many families and especially on low-wage women. Moreover, the religious freedom of women whose religious traditions or personal beliefs support the use of contraception as a moral and necessary healthcare choice (98 percent of American women) would be compromised. The concept of religious freedom articulated by the Roman Catholic bishops stands in stark contrast to that in the Reformed Tradition which preserves the “[right] of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion” as a right that must be “equal and common to all others” (F-3.0101b).<sup>8</sup>

Loss of access to reproductive health care due to the merger of public or private hospitals with Roman Catholic hospitals: Nationwide, larger and financially stronger Catholic hospitals are merging with smaller hospitals to achieve greater efficiencies. However, when such mergers occur, reproductive health services deemed immoral by the Roman Catholic Church become unavailable in that merged hospital and may become unavailable to an entire community if it has only one hospital. Such services include contraception (including emergency contraception for rape victims), abortion, sterilization, and in vitro fertilization. Doctors express concern about their freedom to treat women with various serious conditions such as an ectopic pregnancy or miscarriage. In a recent example, a Catholic nun was excommunicated for allowing the abortion of a five-week old fetus. The woman's doctors believed the abortion to be necessary due to the woman's severely fragile health and the strong likelihood that she would not survive the pregnancy. She was too weak to be transported to a non-Catholic hospital.<sup>9, 10</sup>

- *Attempts to eliminate funding of reproductive health care services for low-income families:* Media attention has highlighted attempts to deny federal or state funding specifically to Planned Parenthood—half of whose patients are Medicaid patients and more than 90 percent of whose services are related to contraception, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy tests and prenatal care, cancer screening and prevention, adoption referrals, and primary care. Federal law already prohibits the use of federal funds to finance the 3 percent of services related to abortion.

Less attention has fallen on the bills before the U.S. House of Representatives (such as H.R. 408 and 1099) that would simply eliminate Title X, which funds family planning clinics for low-income and uninsured people, providing such services as contraception, cancer screening, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, pregnancy diagnosis and prenatal care. While most women use contraceptive pills over other forms of contraception, almost half of those using the pill use it also to regulate menstruation and to reduce pain.<sup>11</sup> The targeting of Title X and Planned Parenthood places in jeopardy a wide range of reproductive health care services for low-income women and men.

- *Personhood Initiatives.* Mississippi made the news in November 2011, when its citizens defeated a ballot initiative that would define a fertilized egg as a human person with legal rights. Voters expressed concern that the definition would not only criminalize abortion, but end the use of those contraceptives that block the fertilized egg from implanting in the lining of the uterus, such as the “morning-after” pill. It would endanger in vitro fertilization, which implants fertilized eggs in the womb (often unsuccessfully) and freezes, stores, and disposes of unused fertilized eggs. Physicians expressed concerns about its impact on their ability to treat difficult pregnancies, such as ectopic pregnancies. Sponsors of the initiative say that they intend to introduce the ballot measure in several other states in 2012: California, Florida, Montana, Ohio, Nevada, Oregon, and others.<sup>12</sup>

- *Expanding the restrictions on the use of federal funds for abortions and physician education.* The Hyde amendment already restricts federal funds from paying for abortions. Several bills before the U.S. House of Representatives, such as H.R. 3, would expand this restriction to deny any federal funding to organizations and companies that provide or pay for abortions with non-federal funds. For example, it would deny tax credits to companies that offer health plans that cover abortions. It would block anyone with insurance that covers abortions from receiving federal subsidies or medical cost tax deductions, even if the abortion portion is paid separately with personal funds. Women who use tax-free Medical Savings Accounts



would have to pay taxes on the costs of abortions. The Foxx amendment to H.R. 1216 would ban federal funds from being used to train physicians in abortion care. At the state level, thirteen states have passed legislation banning both private and public health insurance plans that would participate in state health exchanges from covering abortion services unless necessary to save a woman's life.

### C. *Beyond the United States*

The difficulties in accessing reproductive health care encountered by women in the United States are magnified on the global stage for women of many other nations, particularly those women living in poverty. Universal access to reproductive health remains an elusive goal even though codified in the 2007 modification of the 2000 United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Reproductive health was initially defined at the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994. Its definition is fundamentally an expansion of the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of health:

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this last condition are the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law, and the right of access to appropriate health care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant.<sup>13</sup>

The current World Health Organization (WHO) goal for reproductive health is

... the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of sexual and reproductive health ... [in] a world where all women's and men's rights to enjoy sexual and reproductive health are promoted and protected, and all women and men, including adolescents and those who are underserved or marginalized, have access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.<sup>14</sup>

There are five components to the WHO strategy to achieve global reproductive health. They include:<sup>15</sup>

- improving maternal care before, during, and after delivery, and newborn care;
- providing high-quality services for family planning, including infertility services;
- eliminating unsafe abortion;
- combating sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, reproductive tract infections, cervical cancer, and other sexual and reproductive health morbidities;
- promoting sexual health.

The WHO notes that addressing access to reproductive health “also contributes significantly to reducing poverty and hunger (MDG 1), promoting gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG 3) and combating HIV and other diseases (MDG 6)” all of which play a key role in access to reproductive health.<sup>16</sup>

Despite modest improvements in some narrow areas, achieving greater progress toward universal access to reproductive health remains a matter of urgency. In 2010 the report on global progress toward the MDG 5B made the following data based conclusions:<sup>17</sup>

- More women are receiving antenatal care;
- Most maternal deaths could have been avoided;
- Giving birth is especially risky in regions where most women deliver without skilled care;
- The proportion of women attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel is strongly correlated with socioeconomic status;
- Only one in three rural women in developing regions receive the recommended care during pregnancy;
- Progress has stalled in reducing the number of teenage pregnancies, and poverty and lack of education perpetuate high adolescent birth rates;
- Increasing access to contraception could reduce maternal death by 27 percent and reduce the number of unintended pregnancies from 75 million to 22 million;
- Almost no improvement has been made in increasing contraceptive prevalence among poor or uneducated women.

The Geneva Policy Dialogue Series on Reproductive Health, an international discussion forum on reproductive health, puts it succinctly:

Women with unmet need account for 82% of the 75 million unintended pregnancies that occur in the developing world. We know that every year more than half a million women die unnecessarily during childbirth or from pregnancy complications. The lives of these women and of their chil-

dren could be saved by access to comprehensive reproductive health care, empowering women and their partners to plan sustainable families that will strengthen their communities and support the economic growth and security of their countries.<sup>18</sup>

There is a direct positive correlation between the density of health workers (physicians, nurses, and midwives) and maternal, child, and infant survival. The population density of health care professionals required to ensure skilled attendance at births (at a minimum desired level of coverage) is 2.5 per 1,000 people<sup>19</sup> in order to reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality. At least fifty-seven nations fall below this benchmark (compared with 11.93 physicians, nurses, and midwives per 1,000 people in the U.S.). The U.S. is, in part, responsible for this global health workforce shortage by its failure to pursue a policy of health workforce self-sufficiency, leading to active recruitment of migrant health workers (nurses, specifically) to sustain the U.S. health-care system. The U.S. has not implemented the *WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel*.<sup>20</sup> The Milbank Memorial Fund report *Health Worker Shortages and Global Justice* recommends that

The United States should use bilateral and multilateral agreements to embody its specific commitments to solving the global health worker shortage. The agreements could cover health workforce self-sufficiency for the United States and partner countries; financial and technical support for health workforce capacity building; managing and monitoring health worker migration between countries; ... and facilitating remittance transfers and the diaspora in the United States to assist with the development of the health systems in migrant workers' home countries.<sup>21</sup>

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have played a significant and important role in providing maternal and neonatal health care globally, particularly in African countries. The 2007 USAID report *Faith-Based Models [FBM] for Improving Maternal and Newborn Health [MNH]* notes that:

In the developing world, however, faith-based health care facilities provide a significant percentage of health care services. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, faith-based facilities provide up to 70% of the region's health care services ... In other parts of the world, FBOs manage 10–30% of national health sectors. It is estimated that more than 90% of these FBO facility- and community-based programs offer MNH services.<sup>22</sup>

In a review of FBOs providing maternal and neonatal services in Africa, Widmer and colleagues concluded that the maternal-infant services provided by FBOs were similar to services offered by government agencies, but that the quality of the care was better and care recipient satisfaction higher.<sup>23</sup> The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) noted the provision of intangible services:

In addition to providing care, support and medicines, faith-based organizations often also provide less tangible assistance, such as information, encouragement, compassion and hope. Too often the strengths (efficacy, commitment, knowledge, networks and influence) and experiences of FBOs are overlooked by development planners.<sup>24</sup>

There has been, is, and will continue to be a significant and critical role for all faith-based organizations in moving our own nation and the world toward universal access to reproductive health.

#### D. *How Our Faith Responds*

The PC(USA) has repeatedly affirmed the equality of women and men both within the church itself and within society. In 1971, the UPCUSA described the meaning of this equality:

The church must challenge and change anything which interferes with a person's full development and wholeness. It must reject attempts to force persons into stereotypes which destroy personhood and deny human freedom and creativity. The church should not program lifestyles for its members. Each person living in responsible relationship with the whole community is free to decide what that style will be.<sup>25</sup>

When applied to women's reproductive capacities, this principle of freedom from socially imposed stereotypes has led the church to recognize women's rights to responsibly manage reproductive capabilities and society's responsibility to enable women to do so.

1. *Contraception*: The 1960 PCUS assembly approved "the principle of voluntary family planning and responsible parenthood." It affirmed that "the proper use of medically approved contraceptives may contribute to the spiritual, emotional, and economic welfare of the family" and urged "the repeal of laws prohibiting the availability of contraceptives and information about them. ..." <sup>26</sup> The 1971 General Assembly of the PCUS commended the U.S. Congress for enacting the first comprehensive family planning legislation and called for "more vigorous, better coordinated and more adequately funded efforts to make available both the information and the means of birth control to all persons in the country."<sup>27</sup> In the following decades, the PC(USA) has continued to affirm the need for safe, effective, and available contraceptives for all people, both in the U.S. and globally. In light of rapid population growth, the church called for "encouragement and support, respect and honor" for "those who choose not to conceive children and those who do choose to conceive."<sup>28</sup> It has continued to call upon Congress to make comprehensive family planning programs available to all who need them.

2. *Abortion*: Since 1970, the church has spoken of the termination of a pregnancy at any stage as a serious moral matter requiring careful ethical consideration by a woman, her family, and her counselors. The church's convictions have been grounded primarily in two principles

a. Women's capacity to make difficult moral decisions: "Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and intractable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide

each situation. ... We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies;<sup>29</sup> and

b. Religious freedom for the diversity of views on when human life begins within our church and the broader Christian community: “Affirms the civil and religious freedom both of those who hold the position that abortion is never permissible and of those who hold the position that abortion is permissible under certain circumstances.”<sup>30</sup> “Clearly there is both agreement and disagreement in our use and interpretation of Scripture. There is also agreement and disagreement on the basic issue of abortion. ... Therefore, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) encourages an atmosphere of open debate and mutual respect for a variety of opinions concerning the issues related to problem pregnancies and abortion.”<sup>31</sup>

3. *Legalization of and access to abortion services:* In order to protect both women’s moral agency and the religious freedom of those holding diverse views, the church has argued since 1970 against legal restrictions on abortion and urged the availability of “medically sound, easily available, and low-cost abortion services.”<sup>32</sup> “No law or administrative decision should (1) limit access to abortions; (2) limit information and counseling concerning abortions; or (3) limit or prohibit public funding for necessary abortions for the socially and economically disadvantaged.”<sup>33</sup> It has also expressed grave concern for the number of abortions in the U.S. and called for Presbyterians to work to reduce those numbers by reducing the conditions that lead women to consider abortion, such as unintended pregnancies, lack of medically accurate and comprehensive sex education, lack of access to health care, poverty of women and children, and workplace policies unfriendly to parental responsibilities.

4. *Supporting alternatives to abortion:* The church has also called upon Presbyterians to support women in finding alternatives to abortion, including the establishment of resource centers for women in each presbytery, as well as supporting public policies that provide support for such alternatives.<sup>34</sup>

#### E. *Our Call to Action*

Guided by our faith, we are called to respond to political changes that threaten the right of all women to the reproductive health care they need, including adequate access to the knowledge and services needed to choose the number and spacing of their pregnancies, in order to develop their God-given personhood, support and sustain their families, and contribute their gifts to society. What can we do?

1. Learn from the theological and moral reflections that undergird the church’s policies.

- Read the church’s policies on problem pregnancies: *Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly (Micah 6:8)* (PC(USA), 1992)<sup>35</sup> *Statement on Post-Viability and Late Term Abortions* (PC(USA))

2. Learn how legislation in your state is impacting women’s reproductive health by searching websites such as:

- National Conference of State Legislatures at [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org),
- The website of your own state legislature,
- Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice at [www.rcrc.org](http://www.rcrc.org),
- Center for Reproductive Rights at <http://reproductiverights.org/en/about-us>.

3. Support legislation that protects women’s access to reproductive health care, respects religious diversity, and supports alternatives to abortion for women who so choose.

Locally:

- Support funding of family planning clinics that provide comprehensive reproductive health care;
- Find out if your hospitals offer rape survivors emergency contraception;
- Find out if sex education curricula in public schools are comprehensive and medically accurate;
- Support legislation requiring insurance companies to include contraceptive coverage in prescription drug coverage;
- Support legislation requiring insurance companies to cover comprehensive family planning services;
- Develop a comprehensive women’s resource center in your presbytery;
- Find out how proposed legislation will impact women in your area, especially low-income women.

Internationally, urge Congress to:

- give higher priority to global health issues and impacts in all aspects of U.S. diplomacy;
- implement the *Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel*;

- Strive for health workforce self-sufficiency within the U.S. and contribute to financial and technical support for global health workforce capacity building for poor countries;
- Urge Congress to ratify the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.

## II. Workers' Rights Are Human Rights

### A. *The Human Rights of Workers*

Grounded in the biblical affirmation that all human beings are created in the image of God, the PC(USA), with its predecessors, believes that all humans have a God-given dignity, an intrinsic value, which creates an entitlement, a right, to those conditions of life necessary to sustain this dignity and enable effective participation in the decisions that impact individual and communal life. Therefore, in addition to civil and political rights, the church also champions economic rights. These include the right to adequate food, shelter, and health care. In modern countries, these rights are typically dependent on the right to employment at wages that adequately sustain families, the right to safe working conditions, the right to recuperative rest and leisure, the right to security in old age, and the right to organize and participate in collective bargaining. The movement to establish the rights of workers is global and long-standing. In 1948, the United Nations adopted The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which affirmed these rights as integral aspects of the human right to exist and live in dignity. The Declaration was approved by the 161st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA in 1949.

Two ecumenical statements, issued a century apart, attest to the persistent response of Christian churches in the U.S. to economic practices that deny these rights: *The 1908 Social Creed* of the Federal Council of Churches and *A Social Creed for the Twenty-first Century*, adopted in 2008 by the National Council of Churches of Christ and approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA). But today—and contrary to the churches' teachings—economic and political responses to the 2007–2009 recession in the U.S. threaten to thwart the rights of workers in the name of economic expediency.

### B. *What Is Happening in the United States?*

Since industrialization emerged in the U.S., balancing the human rights of workers with the property rights of owners has been a contentious undertaking. Nineteenth century courts routinely ruled against workers' rights as they upheld the property rights of private owners. The courts assumed that all individuals, whether worker or owner, were equal in freedom and opportunity. For example, in the 1830s a court found twenty-five tailors guilty of "conspiracy to injure trade" for forming a trade union—so unnecessary in a land where each one is free, according to the judge.<sup>36</sup> A Massachusetts judge found that an injured worker had no right to compensation because by taking the job the worker had willingly agreed to the risks.<sup>37</sup> The right of business to pay workers in company script instead of American currency was upheld repeatedly. Courts argued that a company is free to pay in script and a worker is equally free to accept or reject the job. Child labor was upheld as a private and free family decision. Not surprisingly, workers and business owners clashed throughout the 19th century, often violently, over the number of work hours in the day, the number of working days in a week, wages, and safety conditions.

By the latter half of the 20th century, the working conditions that many of us take for granted—eight-hour days, five-day weeks, health and safety protections, child labor restrictions, overtime pay, workman's compensation, health benefits, pensions, and the right to organize—were put into place by law or by negotiation. The unionization of about one-third of U.S. workers helped to set the standard of good jobs for all workers in a highly productive U.S. economy. Jobs are good:

- when they enable a family to care for its members; that is, to educate the young, to care for the sick and the elderly, to enjoy time together;
- when they allow time to be active at church, school, and in one's community;
- when they offer an opportunity to contribute skills, intelligence, and creativity to the company and the community;
- when they teach skills, enhance capabilities, and fairly reward committed work.

Of course, many American workers never enjoyed these good jobs. There were never enough to go around. Opportunity was never equal for the poor, women, immigrants, and those stigmatized by race and ethnicity. For these workers, especially, business practices that violated labor laws continued to devastate families and their communities. For example, a group of restaurants in New York was recently found to have systematically erased employees' time cards, paid less than minimum wage, paid no overtime, discriminated against Asian and Latino workers, and deducted the cost from waiters' pay if customers left without paying.<sup>38</sup> In America too many workers are still fired for labor organizing activities or for joining unions.<sup>39</sup> Too many workers still experience being locked into their work places with no way to exit.<sup>40</sup> Even in America, too many workers are still subject to extreme conditions of intimidation, exploitation, and control over their lives and mobility that constitute modern conditions of slavery.<sup>41</sup>

Today's recession has been especially devastating to these low-wage workers. For several decades, they have seen their working conditions, wages, and benefits legally eroded as the result of several larger social and judicial trends:

- the growth of hostility to government regulations,
- the decline in government oversight of the workplace,
- the shifting of responsibility for workers from employers to subcontractors,
- the redefining of employees as contract workers or as self-employed in order to exempt them from various labor laws, and
- systematic business and some state government attacks on unions and the rolling back of long-established worker benefits.

With the deep recession of 2007—still very real for 25 million unemployed, under-employed, and discouraged workers—an extraordinarily significant phenomenon has occurred: *the dramatic reduction in our expectations of what a worker deserves from working*. In an historic reversal, investors' economic risk and companies' labor costs have been shifted disproportionately to the backs of the great majority of American workers and their families:

- wages decline,
- jobs disappear,
- working hours become “flexible,” and undependable,
- defined benefit pensions are eliminated,
- health care coverage is reduced, ended, or the cost is shifted to employees,
- no worker is indispensable, no job is secure, and
- workers are being stripped of their right to organize and negotiate.<sup>42</sup>

The loss of that once proud standard called *good jobs*, now said to be too costly for our economy to be competitive in the world market, is contributing to an almost unprecedented level of economic inequality in our country. Today the top 400 households in the U.S. own as much as the bottom 150 million of us.<sup>43</sup> The widespread belief that in the U.S. our children can aspire to *good jobs* that support stable families is profoundly shaken. The struggle to preserve and protect the dignity of all workers has intensified.

### C. *Labor Rights from an International Perspective*

Economic globalization has created worldwide supply chains that depend heavily on the exploitation of labor for their viability. Because most production costs, including the acquisition of physical materials and the expenses of distribution, are largely inelastic, the only way that firms can create competitive advantage is to lower manufacturing costs. This is most often accomplished by reducing the cost of labor.

For workers, this translates into stagnant wages, long hours, obligatory overtime, loss of benefits, high-intensity procedures, and stress that increase the likelihood of accidents and suicides. An investigation of ten global electronics suppliers in China (e.g., Dell, IBM, Microsoft, Apple, Hewlett-Packard, Nokia, and others) documented widespread practices of forced overtime, high-intensity work processes, worker discrimination, absence of safety precautions, and other violations of China's own labor laws. To appreciate the strength of the incentives in play, consider that the production costs for the *iPhone4*, which sells for \$600, are composed of materials (\$187.51); operating expenses, e.g., plant, utilities, maintenance, security (\$45.95); assembly labor (\$6.54); and profit (\$360).<sup>44</sup> In other words, workers receive just 1 percent of what the consumer pays for the *iPhone4* while corporate owners capture 60 percent apart from recovering production costs.

As capital has become more mobile in the quest for favorable profit-making conditions, employment opportunities appear and disappear with increasing frequency. Consequently workers have often been forced to follow capital in search of jobs. For example, as NAFTA vastly undercut Mexican agriculture by enabling cheap American and Canadian food imports, unemployed Mexican farmers sought to enter the United States in the quest for work. Likewise, as many as 500,000 Chinese have immigrated to Africa, lured by jobs in its oil, copper, uranium, wood, and other natural resource industries.<sup>45</sup> The International Organization for Migration estimates total international migration rose 40 percent between 1990 and 2010.<sup>46</sup>

The intense downward pressures on wages worldwide create financial incentives for the abuse of workers' rights. These take several different forms.

- First, organizations that defend workers' rights, such as trade unions, are increasingly the targets of bias and intimidation. The International Labor Organization (ILO) notes that anti-union discrimination is their largest area of complaints received. Charges of employer interference in union activities, violations of collective bargaining agreements, and government interference in union affairs have all increased since 2000.<sup>47</sup>

- Second, a de facto war on trade unionists has been declared in various countries such as Colombia, where 4,000 trade unionists have been murdered since 1986.<sup>48</sup> In other countries, notably Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, and Russia, union organizers are frequent victims of harassment, intimidation, and arbitrary detention.<sup>49</sup>

- Third, it also creates a global market for forced labor. According to the ILO, in 2005 an estimated 12.3 million adults and children around the world were the victims of forced labor, bonded labor, and coerced prostitution (i.e., slavery). Forced labor constitutes a lucrative international business that generates an estimated \$32 billion annually.<sup>50, 51</sup> For example, workers from Asia and Africa who migrate to the Middle East in search of higher wages have been subjected to involuntary servitude, nonpayment of wages, threats, physical abuse, deprivation of food, and restrictions on movement such as confiscation of passports.<sup>52</sup> In Vietnam, the government partners with private firms to use forced labor by prisoners in national drug detention centers to produce export goods such as cashews, garments, toys, and soccer balls. During 2010, some 40,000 individuals were picked up in “street sweeps” and committed to these centers by administrative decision, which operates outside the criminal justice system with no right to hearing or trial by those accused.<sup>53</sup> This practice is not unlike the use of prisoner labor in privately run U.S. prisons to carry out low-cost information processing, electronic component assembly, garment manufacturing, telemarketing, and travel reservations.<sup>54</sup>

- Fourth, child labor constitutes another cost-saving violation to established labor rights. For example, 10 to 15 percent of the global workforce in the tourism industry is estimated to be less than eighteen years old. Child labor is extensive in the cocoa industry of West Africa. A particularly onerous illustration comes from Uzbekistan, where government authorities have annually closed schools for up to eight weeks and compelled school children—some as young as 10 years—to participate in the country’s cotton harvest. Many worked ten-hour days, lived in tents, and received daily “wages” ranging from \$1.50 to \$3.60.<sup>55</sup>

In sum, worldwide economic competition, engendered by globalization, creates relentless downward pressure on workers’ wages, whether in the United States or abroad. In their efforts to lower wages, countries and firms often engage in illegal or unethical labor practices and seek to dismember organizations that defend workers’ rights. The net result provides consumers with cheaper products, even though workers may be less able to afford them.

#### D. *How Our Faith Responds ...*

The PC(USA) responds to these circumstances with this affirmation: Our faith, rooted in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, has something to say to the 25 million underemployed, unemployed, and discouraged workers in the U.S.; to the 46 million Americans relying on food stamps; to the one-in-five U.S. children who are food insecure; to the foreclosed; to the 25 percent of U.S. workers earning poverty-level wages; to the 50 million without health insurance; and to those whose decisions shape our economy. Our faith in one sovereign God generates a message of hope for all the workers of the world:

1. “Work ... is an integral part of the believer’s response to God’s call.” It provides “... not only the means for subsistence, but also a way to honor human dignity and participate in community life.”<sup>56</sup> We are created to work, paid or unpaid, as a means of pleasing God, of developing God-given capabilities, and of contributing to the common good. Therefore, unemployment, underemployment, and work that do not protect human dignity and sustain families seriously disrupt God’s plan for human community. Calvin wrote:

We know that people were created for the express purpose of being employed in labor of various kinds, and that no sacrifice is more pleasing to God, than when everyone applies diligently to one’s own calling, and endeavors to live in such a manner as to contribute to the general advantage.<sup>57</sup>

2. Our church states, “... servanthood means that economic activity needs to be viewed as serving the needs of the world.”<sup>58</sup> “Sin tempts us to value things over people, measuring our worth by the quantity of goods we acquire and consume, rather than by the quality of our relationships with God and with others.”<sup>59</sup> We are created to share the products and profits of our work so that all may benefit. Employment must sustain people with dignity and security. The market economy and public policies must ensure that there is sufficient employment for all who need it.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, gross economic inequality is a serious violation of God’s intent for God’s children and the earth’s bounty. Calvin, commenting on Corinthians, writes:

he [Paul] orders every one to bring what he has to the common heap, and not to keep back gifts of God in the way of enjoying every one his own, apart from others, but aim unitedly at the edification of all in common.<sup>61</sup>

3. In addition, the PC(USA) teaches, “All conditions of paid employment, including compensation and working conditions should sustain and nurture the dignity of individuals, the well-being of households and families, the social cohesiveness of communities, and the integrity of the global environment.”<sup>62</sup> The ultimate goal of an economy is to serve people as we live out our calling to love God and neighbor. Every human economy, throughout the world, is subject to the sovereignty of God.

#### E. *Our Call to Action ...*

Guided by faith, we are called by God and our church to respond to cultural and economic changes that threaten human dignity, the wellbeing of families, the just character of our communities, and the health of the earth. What can we do?

1. Learn how our faith teaches us to evaluate our economic lives by reading and networking.

- Read PC(USA) policies, such as, “*God’s Work in Our Hands*,” “*Hope for a Global Future*,” “*The Social Creed for the 21st Century*,” and more;
  - Join ACSWP’s *Salt and Light* listserv at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/acswp/getting-involved>;
  - Subscribe to *Washington Report to Presbyterians* at <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/washington/washington-report-presbyterians>;
    - Log on to *Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice* at <http://justiceunbound.org>.
2. Be an informed consumer.
- When traveling, stay only at hotels that have signed the industry’s Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. This is an industry-driven initiative for responsible tourism. For example, Hilton Hotels have so far not signed this code.
  - Consult periodically the Department of Labor’s List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor to guide your consumer purchases.
    - Consider faith-based investing or socially responsible investing; for example, *Oikocredit*, a church-based organization making loans globally to economic development projects benefiting the poorest people in their societies.
    - Buy chocolate, coffee, and tea from Equal Exchange, a fair-trade partner of the PC(USA) Hunger Program, and participate in the Campaign for Fair Food.
3. Act in your congregation and community.
- Join those supporting and advocating for the poor;
  - Join those aiding the unemployed;
  - Review your congregation’s beliefs and practices about work and compensation;
  - Learn about worker justice issues in your community;
  - Look into Interfaith Worker Justice at <http://www.iwj.org/>;
  - Use your consumer power to urge changes in businesses you and your congregation use;
  - Tell your government representatives what your faith demands of our economy; and
  - Become passionate about one issue and work for values-driven change.

[NOTE: The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (another “standing” committee of the assembly) is requesting the 220th General Assembly (2012) to call the church to renew its commitment to a living wage for all people and to reaffirm its support for collective bargaining rights regarding wages, benefits and employment. Such advocacy demonstrates continued efforts within the church to respond faithfully to economic changes that threaten human dignity and the wellbeing of families.]

### III. Civil Liberties and National Security in the United States Since 9/11/01: Concerns for Consideration

#### A. *Civil Liberties as Human Rights*

Domestic and foreign surveillance by the U.S. government have grown enormously since the destruction of the World Trade Center and damage to the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Since the threat of terror moved across borders, law enforcement was seen to need more and better coordination between domestic and foreign information gathering, blurring traditional lines between the CIA and external intelligence operations and the domestic sphere of the FBI. Concern for national security increased relative to concern for civil liberties,<sup>63</sup> which are based in the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, ratified on December 15, 1791. Additional threats to civil liberty, privacy, and democratic practice relate to advances in surveillance, electronic data gathering, and automated war technologies. Both the overall security-liberty balance and a range of recent threats to civil and religious liberty prompt this brief review and statement of concerns.

Any government must protect its citizens as part of its service to the common good. Yet the total elimination of risk is impossible, especially if political, cultural, and religious factors are included in threat assessment. In a summary of the ethical issues facing governments in the use of counterterrorism measures, a European expert affirms the basic truth that “transnational terrorism is substantively a battle of values, which cannot ultimately be won by force”.<sup>64</sup> Put positively, we believe it is

an aspect of the church's witness to hold civil society to the highest values, in keeping with the prophetic dimensions of Christian obedience.

In describing the U.S. political and civil liberties milieu, this report offers data on the growth of the "security-surveillance complex" and summarizes reasons for concern based on the views of several professors of law active in human rights and government accountability work. The report then briefly describes the church's approach to civil liberties and closes with thoughts for further consideration. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has very strong policies on religious freedom, civil liberty, and against torture, though its strongest statement on privacy and the restraint of government and private information-gathering dates back to 1973.

#### B. *What Is Happening in the United States?*

Perhaps the clearest recent challenge to civil liberties came in the National Defense Authorization Act signed by President Obama on December 31, 2011, which gives the president the power to order U.S. citizens, as well as alleged international opponents, held in indefinite detention.<sup>65</sup> This effectively suspends "due process" for individuals defined as threats to national security, without reference to a traditional battlefield or a specific war. As seen in the targeted killing of U.S. citizen, Anwar Al-Awlaki in September 2011, after the president had placed him on a "kill or capture" list, Executive Branch power has continued to grow following its expansion under President George W. Bush.<sup>66</sup> The president currently has the discretion to direct whether an alleged terrorist may be subject to civil courts or to military tribunals. Such tribunals have less strict and public standards of due process that have allowed the use of evidence gained from torture, although President Obama reaffirmed a historic ban on torture in the United States.<sup>67</sup>

##### 1. *The Growth of Surveillance and Counter-terrorism Activities*

In July 2010, *The Washington Post* published the results of a two-year investigative journalism project on secret government agencies, including those that have been created since 9/11. Here are some of the findings excerpted from their report:

- Some 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies work on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence in about 10,000 locations across the United States.
- An estimated 854,000 people, nearly 1.5 times as many people as live in Washington, D.C., hold top-secret security clearances.
- In Washington and the surrounding area, thirty-three building complexes for top-secret intelligence work are under construction or have been built since September 2001. Together they occupy the equivalent of almost three Pentagons or twenty-two U.S. Capitol buildings—about 17 million square feet of space.
- Many security and intelligence agencies do the same work, creating redundancy and waste. For example, fifty-one federal organizations and military commands, operating in fifteen U.S. cities, track the flow of money to and from terrorist networks.
- The U.S. intelligence budget is vast, publicly announced last year as \$75 billion, 2-1/2 times the size it was on September 10, 2001. But the figure doesn't include many military activities or domestic counterterrorism programs.
- Within the Defense Department alone, eighteen commands and agencies conduct information operations, which aspire to manage foreign audiences' perceptions of U.S. policy and military activities overseas.
- And all the major intelligence agencies and at least two major military commands claim a major role in cyberwarfare, the newest and least-defined frontier.
- DHS (Department of Homeland Security), in existence for only seven years, already has its own Special Access Programs, its own research arm, its own command center, its own fleet of armored cars, and its own 230,000- person workforce, the third-largest after the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. [Special Access Programs are top secret task groups, highly insulated and administratively camouflaged to blend in with other programs—ed].<sup>68</sup>

The legal trigger for this wave of development was the USA Patriot Act, formally the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001. Though more than 300 pages long—incorporating some previously written material—Congress passed the bill seven weeks after 9/11. In the words of legal affairs analyst, Adam Liptak, "it quickly became a sort of shorthand for government abuse and overreaching."<sup>69</sup> According to Human Rights Law professor, William Quigley,

On May 27, 2011, President Obama, over widespread bipartisan objections, approved a Congressional four-year extension of controversial parts of the Patriot Act that were set to expire. In March of 2010, (The President) signed a similar extension of the Patriot Act for one year. These provisions allow the government, with permission from a special secret court, to seize records without the owner's



knowledge, conduct secret surveillance of suspicious people who have no known ties to terrorist groups and to obtain secret roving wiretaps on people.<sup>70</sup>

The “material support” provision refers to assistance given to terrorist organizations that may be taken to include communications, “expert advice and assistance,” with such organizations, broadly defined. Under expansive definitions, some reporting on organizations may be restricted and “Friend of Court” briefs by third parties prevented. The Obama Administration Justice Department was challenged on this, but upheld 5-4 by the Supreme Court in *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project*.<sup>71</sup>

## 2. *The Demands of Secrecy and the Role of Whistleblowers, the Press, and Concerned Citizens*

While all nations have some kind of intelligence service, the United States preserves its democratic character by constitutional checks and balances, including the Bill of Rights, and public accountability, including the free press. The reach of national security can thus be seen in the obstacles, good and bad, placed in front of the disclosure of government “secrets.” For Presbyterians concerned with the morality and legality of government actions, what follows are examples and important developments for consideration.

The role of Wikileaks, a self-styled cyber-accountability group, is well-known for its release of thousands of classified documents from U.S. embassies—including confirmation of official corruption in Tunisia, Libya, and other countries that aided the “Arab Spring.” Thousands of field reports from Afghanistan described lack of progress in that war and many civilian deaths not reported elsewhere, arguably making for a more truthful public debate.<sup>72</sup> Defenders of government secrecy point to the diplomatic damage done by disclosing confidential reports and the danger to the trust and security among those who cooperate with U.S. officials, while critics point out that few specific negative effects have been presented, even for later documents not “scrubbed” with the assistance of *The New York Times* and *Guardian* (Britain) newspapers.<sup>73</sup> The treatment of Corporal Bradley Manning, accused of being the source of the documents, has included prolonged forced nudity and solitary confinement in a remote prison, raising questions about his own due process.<sup>74</sup>

The *Washington Post* study cited earlier claimed that the culture of secrecy was self-perpetuating and hard to monitor. Another test case for the treatment of whistleblowers occurred in a case carried over from the Bush to the Obama Administration, that of senior National Security Agency (and former military officer) Thomas Drake. Prosecuted under the Espionage Act, Drake was accused of being a primary source for reporter Sioban Gorman of the *Baltimore Sun*. Gorman “wrote a prize-winning series of articles for the *Sun* about financial waste, bureaucratic dysfunction, and dubious legal practices in N.S.A. counterterrorism programs.”<sup>75</sup> Jane Mayer provides a lengthy analysis of the case,<sup>76</sup> which William Quigley summarizes:

They charged a National Security Agency adviser with ten felonies under the Espionage Act for telling the press that government eavesdroppers were wasting hundreds of millions of dollars on misguided and failed projects. After their case collapsed, the government, which was chastised by the federal judge as engaging in unconscionable conduct, allowed him to plead to a misdemeanor and walk.<sup>77</sup>

Other reasonably well-known censorship cases include the memoir by former CIA agents; Ali Soufan’s *The Black Ban-ners*,<sup>78</sup> and Glenn Carle’s *The Interrogator*.<sup>79</sup>

Any particular case can be debated, of course; concerned citizens have to assess broader patterns. In the Drake case and those two books, long-time U.S. agents involved in the “war on terror” claim that they crossed moral lines that became hard for them to justify in terms of the values and purposes of their country. To make sense of testimonies like theirs, Mark Danner speaks of the United States after 9/11 entering a “state of exception,” when traditional moral restraints were and remain suspended.<sup>80</sup>

In assessing the policies and practices of the United States, the once covert use of drone aircraft in Pakistan provides an example of the limits of secrecy. Admiral Denis Blair, former director of National Intelligence for the Obama Administration, publicly argued that this program should be run by the military rather than the CIA, as “Covert action that goes on for years doesn’t generally stay covert.”<sup>81</sup> The use of drones in Pakistan as well as Afghanistan raised two sets of questions for U.S. citizens, one related to the morality of targeting individuals outside an established battlefield setting (including rules on evidence and collateral damage),<sup>82</sup> and one related to foreign relations, specifically the deterioration of relations with Pakistan.<sup>83</sup> Since drones are used for surveillance now along U.S. borders and were used extensively in supporting the Libyan insurgency, more public debate may be needed on operations that may be secret from the American people, but not necessarily secret from people in other nations.

The range of government data collection that concerned the 217th General Assembly (2006) related to the disclosure of large scale warrantless wiretapping that appeared to violate provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978.<sup>84</sup> That act established a secret intelligence court and the use of “national security letters.” Other information disclosed the use of electronic “data mining” among all the international e-mail and phone transmissions harvested by the government’s listening posts. Subsequent legislation has updated FISA with some restrictions on the roles of internet service providers subject to government access and other forms of warrantless information gathering now deemed not to violate the Fourth Amendment against unreasonable search and seizure.<sup>85</sup>

Technological advances in data-gathering can appear benign or worrisome, depending partly on how aware citizens are of the limits to their privacy.<sup>86</sup> Recent concern has focused on the amount of personal information disclosed for commercial purposes by such companies as Facebook and Google, whose value is partly constituted by once-private data provided by users that is linked to advertising. Most users of those services willingly trade privacy for connection and convenience. Another source of data are GPS applications in mobile phones; such devices can also be put on vehicles without a warrant for ease in tracking suspects. Potentially more worrisome are developments lifted up by William Quigley, drawing on studies by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Center for Constitutional Rights:

- Wiretaps for oral, electronic or wire communications, approved by federal and state courts, are at an all-time high. Wiretaps in year 2010 were up 34 percent from 2009, according to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.
- The Electronic Frontier Foundation documented thousands of violations of the law by FBI intelligence operations from 2001 to 2008 and estimate that there are over 4000 such violations each year. President Obama issued an executive order to strengthen the Intelligence Oversight Board, an agency that is supposed to make sure the FBI, the CIA, and other spy agencies are following the law.
- Western companies sell email surveillance software to repressive regimes in China, Libya and Syria to use against protestors and human rights activists. Surveillance cameras monitor residents in high-crime areas, street corners, and other governmental buildings. Police department computers ask for and receive daily lists from utility companies with addresses and names of every home address in their area. Computers in police cars scan every license plate of every car they drive by.
- There are at least 72 fusion centers across the U.S., which collect local domestic police information and merge it into multijurisdictional intelligence centers, according to recent report by the ACLU. These centers share information from federal, state and local law enforcement and some private companies to secretly spy on Americans.<sup>87</sup>

### C. *How Our Faith Responds*

In the 2006 “Resolution on Human Rights in Time of Terrorism and Torture,” the General Assembly called for

the humane treatment with due process for all combatants held by U.S. forces anywhere in the world, and support[ed] the provisions of the Bill of Rights and the principles of judicial review and congressional oversight over Executive Branch operations, now including counterterrorism, Homeland Security, and domestic surveillance programs, both classified and publicly acknowledged.

That resolution also called for “the protection of the right of privacy for U.S. citizens against intrusion by government or private entities.” This update follows most clearly upon that 2006 statement.

Traditionally, the focus of Presbyterian and other religious engagement with civil liberties is the First Amendment’s first phrase, the “Establishment clause,” which guides the separation of church and state. Yet the founders wisely saw the freedoms of worship, speech and press, assembly, and “to petition for redress of grievances,” connected with each other, and combined them all in the First Amendment. Particular Christian concerns for freedom, justice, and peace are addressed in various later amendments (now totaling twenty-seven), but the First Amendment itself ensures the capacity of individuals and groups to address any of those and other topics. A notable example of the Presbyterian church’s use of its voice on behalf of civil liberties in general was the 1953 *Letter to Presbyterians* of the General Assembly Council that challenged McCarthyism and its distortion of national security fears.<sup>88</sup>

The General Assembly’s most extensive treatment of religious and civil liberties, *God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience* (1988), is named for the key Presbyterian belief in God’s direct address to the individual conscience. That thorough statement considered civil disobedience, aid to religious schools, prayer in public schools, Sabbath observance, tax exemption, and other questions, including government intervention in religious affairs.<sup>89</sup> This last matter has direct bearing in the current climate.

In 1984 and possibly before, the U.S. government sent covert agents into several congregations of the Presbyterian and American Lutheran churches in order to investigate the “Sanctuary Movement,” which protected persons fleeing from government-sponsored violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and other countries. In January 1986, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the American Lutheran Church, and four of their congregations, filed suit alleging that the undercover operation (later acknowledged) violated the free exercise of religion. Freedom of the pulpit and of parishioners to speak truth was clearly connected to freedom of speech.

That lawsuit, described in the booklet, “Why Churches Fight Government Infiltration,” bears some analogy to efforts by Muslim congregations in the U.S. to address more recent government surveillance and use of informers, intended to track down terrorism.<sup>90</sup> Though the issues are different, the First Amendment principle of noninterference and the need for warrants for entry, search, and seizure stipulated by the Fourth Amendment, have clear bearing. Government surveillance and pressure under an expanded understanding of the “material aid” statute has severely limited Muslim charities that give funds overseas for any purpose, and thus jeopardizes any religious giving across borders that the government may wish to discourage. The Associated Press uncovered a specific program of the New York City Police Department, done in cooperation with the CIA, that involved “mosque crawlers” who investigated worship services based on the ethnic profile and reputation of the mosques.<sup>91</sup>

In the current context, all PC(USA) funds sent overseas must comply with the Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Asset Control, which means assuring that each grant or disbursement to recipient or intermediary does not go to someone on a published list of proscribed persons and entities (that listing is available on line:

[www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/t11sdn.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/t11sdn.pdf)). Other watch-lists and security reviews have made it more difficult for nationals from many countries to receive visas, reducing numbers of international students, tourists, mission partners, and participants in church gatherings such as the Uniting General Assembly of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (June 2010, Grand Rapids, Michigan).

To recognize the context of fear of Muslim and other terrorism is not to enter into a full analysis of its scope and of the status of allegations and arrests made over the years since 9/11. Nor is this report to address specifically the use of torture, which the assembly strongly condemned in 2006 when it also called for the closing of extraterritorial prisons (such as Guantanamo).<sup>92</sup> And neither is this to deny the need for accountable government investigation and targeted surveillance capacities. Yet the “mission creep” of police power, in a country already characterized by the highest level of incarceration in the world, raises concern for overreaction and the weakening of legal safeguards already in debate. Before 9/11, church concern about torture (the Eighth Amendment’s “cruel and unusual punishment”) had to do with the U.S. criminal justice system, including the effects of prolonged solitary confinement on the mental health of inmates.<sup>93</sup>

#### D. *For Further Consideration and Reflection*

This update is not comprehensive, but has tried to point to some of the major trends in post 9/11 domestic civil liberties. Most church members’ conscious experience of increased surveillance may be at the airports, especially if travelling overseas, but the scope of state security operation is far more pervasive and linked to everyday police operations. Beyond personal concern for privacy, however, is the church’s historic concern for the rights to dissent, to protest, to exercise one’s conscience in freedom, and to have a say and a vote in governance structures. Not all dissenters are prophets, but some are. The church itself, as a corporate body, has also valued its corporate social witness as part of its responsibility in society. How much may the church’s concern for reconciliation and peace, for example, attract government surveillance and endanger international partners? How much do church members in prison ministry, for example, encounter a more militarized environment?

In these areas, there are observers who are quite worried that the “war on terror” has a momentum of its own, based in enormous investment without oversight. Fear can also feed upon itself, magnify distrust, and narrow our willingness to act on Gospel imperatives of love and justice, even with strangers. And while Presbyterians value the role of government for both protection and provision for the common welfare, limits are also needed.

What this review has revealed, however, is that technical advances in surveillance, commercial data collection, and new forms of warfare raise major new questions about civil liberties. The latest substantial treatment of privacy itself goes back to 1973, when the 185th General Assembly adopted a strong statement that called for “public and private agencies to provide for maximum protection of privacy” and recommended guidelines for self-regulation for such agencies and the church itself in dealing with bank credit, insurance, welfare, law enforcement, education, personnel, counseling, and medical data. That assembly addressed domestic surveillance, whistleblowing, and protective regulation dealing with secrecy and technology in that pre-Watergate, pre-cyberspace time:

Regarding domestic security, we favor action to: (a) prohibit any branch of the Department of Defense from engaging in surveillance of, or data collection on, domestic political activity, and (b) require the destruction of all such political surveillance files accumulated by the military.

Regarding confidential relationships, we urge: (a) enactment of uniform state legislation and consistent federal legislation to establish guidelines that protect legitimate news professionals from being compelled to testify about their sources, (b) development of legal guidelines for limiting the use on privacy grounds of subpoenas and immunity provisions in the conduct of grand juries, and (c) review of current statutes.

We recommend the creation of an independent regulatory body with carefully defined authority to review, oversee, and approve the collection and dissemination of personal data by governmental bodies...and by entities that collect and disseminate personal data for public and commercial purposes. Despite the fears and deficiencies which seem inherent in regulatory administrative bodies, we feel that such a regulatory agency offers the hope of flexibility and expertise to meet the threat of dehumanization in an area of rapidly developing technology.

Then, after emphasizing the inability of all agencies to regulate themselves, the Assembly called “for the formation of a National Privacy Service Office...in the manner of an ombudsman...” (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1973, Part I, pp. 535–42).

#### *For Reflection*

The area of civil liberties is quite wide, but its core remains the freedom of conscience that for us is linked to the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The threats that all developed societies face are continuously reshaped by new technologies, and then protective technologies themselves need oversight. Freedom and privacy are closely related, and the data collection of government and digital age corporations are also closely related. In this environment shaped by flows of information, advertising, and virtually inescapable monitoring, not only our personal liberties but the independence of the Church is potentially at risk. In such a setting, new legal protections may be necessary and new questions opened about intelligence technology in our society.

To provide historical perspective, we include the Bill of Rights in its original language as an appendix, and close with two quotes from wise judges; from *Learned Hand*, cited by David Cole:

Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it.<sup>94</sup>

And along with liberty is moral connection, addressed as “Ethics” by Earl Warren:

In civilized life, law floats in a sea of ethics. Each is indispensable to civilization. Without law, we should be at the mercy of the least scrupulous; without ethics, law could not exist . . . Society would come to grief without Ethics, which is unenforceable to the courts, and cannot be made part of the Law . . . Not only does Law in civilized society presuppose ethical commitment; it presupposes the existence of the broad area of human condition controlled only by ethical norms and not subject to Law at all. There is thus a Law beyond the Law, as binding on those of us who cherish our institutions as the Law itself, although there is no human power to enforce it.<sup>95</sup>

If ethics are a sea, it is one of the church’s tasks to help that sea level rise. Paul’s efforts to receive due process under Roman law in the Book of Acts (such as 23: 26–35) do some of that extending ethical awareness. Similarly, when people fear speaking out and claiming their rights, may the Holy Spirit give us courage to witness to Christ and unmask idolatries, as A Brief Statement of Faith affirms. Then we may hear the echo of Peter’s words from earlier in Acts, “we must obey God rather than human beings!”

#### E. *Our Call to Action*

Guided by our faith, we are called to respond to political changes that threaten the freedom of religious practice and the civil liberties of God’s children, both abroad and in the United States. What can we do?

1. The General Assembly may want to request several experts in civil liberties and cyber-intelligence to update the 1973 study, in light of new technological advances, focusing particularly on matters related to the First Amendment.

2. Education for individuals and congregations:

a. Read “God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience” (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/god-alone-lord-conscience/>), adopted by the 200th General Assembly (1988), referring to the *Book of Order*, F-3.0101. and *The Book of Confessions*, 6.109. In addition to containing excellent guidelines for all areas of church/state interaction (such as public school and public religious display questions), this policy statement explains why the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has had such a significant history in the progress of religious liberty. Additional information on church/state issues and “government intervention in religious affairs” can be obtained from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

b. Read the “Friend of Court” (*amicus curiae*) briefs filed in notable legal cases when recommended by the Advisory Committee on Litigation and authorized by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. Information can be obtained from the Office of the General Assembly: <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/constitutional-services/amicus-curiae-briefs/>.

c. Conduct an adult education class using a past Human Rights Update study guide, several of which can be found on the ACSWP website: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/acswp/>.

(1) 2000–01: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/human-rights-update-2000-2001/>;

(2) 2001–02: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/human-rights-update-and-study-guide/>;

(3) 2003–04: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/human-rights-update-2003-2004/>.

d. Before participating in public protest and acts of civil disobedience, inform participants of their legal rights in case of arrest, possible injury, and probable surveillance. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) can provide this information: <http://www.aclu.org/free-speech/know-your-rights-demonstrations-and-protests>. Many ACLU state-affiliates provide further details: <http://www.aclu.org/maps/aclu-affiliate-involvement-occupy-movement-around-country>. Click on a state and see “know your rights / materials”.

e. Study ACLU’s “Keep America Safe & Free” campaign: <http://www.aclu.org/keep-america-safe-free>.

3. Study the National Security Archive unclassified resources on government secrecy and the CIA files released under the Freedom of Information Act. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>

4. Take action:

a. Review and consider getting involved in public interest groups active in the area of civil liberties: ACLU, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights, Center for Constitutional Rights, Brennan Center for Justice, and Human Rights First are examples.

b. Review and consider getting involved with international civil liberties and human rights, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Check out Amnesty’s work on national security and human rights: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/issues/security-and-human-rights>.

c. If you are facing a serious ethical quandary about the misuse or suppression of information in your work, you may wish to contact the Government Accountability Project at: <http://www.whistleblower.org/>.

d. Engage the debate regarding the ethics, safety, and effectiveness of new security and screening measures employed by the Transportation Security Agency (TSA). For instance, in Congress, Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) has raised concerns about full body scanners and other security measures: [http://holt.house.gov/index.php?Itemid=18&id=651&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://holt.house.gov/index.php?Itemid=18&id=651&option=com_content&task=view).

e. On the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, a source for information is: [http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/asylum/refugee\\_index.html](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/asylum/refugee_index.html) Advocates connected to the new sanctuary movement may be found at: [http://www.religionlink.com/tip\\_081208.php](http://www.religionlink.com/tip_081208.php).

f. Write or call your elected officials to voice your concerns for civil liberties.

g. Contact the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Committee on Litigation with concerns for specific legal proceedings that might warrant an *amicus* brief.

h. Express your concerns and engage the civil liberties conversation through *Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice*, published by ACSWP: <http://justiceunbound.org>. Submit your articles and reflections: <http://justiceunbound.org/about/submission-guidelines/>.

## Appendix A

### The Text of the Bill of Rights

#### Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

#### Amendment II

A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

#### Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

#### Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

#### Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

#### Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

#### Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

#### Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

#### Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

## Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

## Endnotes

## Endnotes for I. Human Rights of Women

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Endnotes for III. Civil Liberties and National Security in the United States Since 9/11/01: Concerns for Consideration

63. The Department of Justice's "Top Management and Performance Challenges in the Department of Justice—2011" states at the outset, "we continue to believe that *Counterterrorism* presents the greatest challenge to the Department." Though this helpful overview of DOJ work states that its 10 areas of concern are not ranked, "Protecting Civil Rights and Civil Liberties," a section less than half the length of "Counterterrorism," is the fourth subject listed. <http://www.justice.gov/oig/challenges/2011.htm>.
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89. See *Minutes*, 1988, Part I, pp. 549–99. This study was printed and is available from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. It updates several prior assembly policy statements including, Relations of Church and State (1963), and draws on three long articles in the May/June 1986 *Church & Society*, “Reformed Faith and Religious Liberty.”
90. Numerous articles have been written on this; an early one describing a legal challenge to the treatment of Muslims and a particular mosque: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/31/us/threats-responses-civil-liberties-suit-challenges-constitutionality-powers.html>.
91. <http://newsone.com/nation/associatedpress3/nypd-and-cia-had-secret-mosque-crawlers-operation/>.
92. See Minutes of the 217th General Assembly (2006), Resolution Against Torture (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-against-torture-human-rights-time-terro/>).
93. <http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/viewer.aspx> “Virginia Prisons become focus of anti-isolation campaign,” *Washington Post*, 1.8.12.
94. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2011/sep/29/after-september-11-what-we-still-dont-know/?pagination=false>.
95. <http://www.conservativeforum.org/quotelist.asp?SearchType=5&Interest=57> Warren was speaking before at the Jewish Theological Seminary, 11.11.62.

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 14-04

*Comment on Item 14-04—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Each year, General Assembly program staff are invited to submit programmatic emphases for inclusion in the *Presbyterian Planning Calendar*. The GAMC has established guidelines by which proposals are reviewed. Nominations occur in the summer, for approval by the GAMC at its September meeting. In September 2011, the programmatic emphases for the 2013 *Presbyterian Planning Calendar* were approved.

“Human Rights Day” (December 10) is already included in the list of programmatic emphases for 2013. This date has also been listed in every *Presbyterian Planning Calendar* from 1993–2012.

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## Item 14-05

[The assembly approved Item 14-05. See pp. 61, 63.]

*Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness, an Interim Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Peace Discernment Steering Team.*

**Both the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommend that the 220th General Assembly (2012)**

**1. Receive the following interim report on the Peace Discernment process entitled, “Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness.”**

**2. Direct that any policy changes from the Peace Discernment Steering Team be brought to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in coordination with the General Assembly Mission Council.**

**3. Encourage Presbyterians to participate in churchwide discernment on current matters of peace and violence in light of the witness of Jesus Christ and Christian teaching and to encourage congregational, presbytery, college, and seminary groups to engage in the process described in the interim report.**

*Rationale*

Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness  
Interim Report of the Peace Discernment Steering Team

These recommendations and interim report are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 13-11, On Strengthening the Peacemaking Program (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 65, 67–69, 356 of the printed version; pp. 966–72 of the electronic version).*

INTRODUCTION

“In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage ... to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace” (*The Book of Confessions, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 65–66, 71*).

“The church bears witness to Christ when it nourishes the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in our world” *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/peacemaking/>, p. 6).

The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed

the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the [Presbyterian] Peacemaking Program, to appoint a five-person steering team, at least one of whom shall be a college student or other young adult, to work with ACSWP and Peacemaking Program representatives to design and implement a broadly participatory four-year process to do the following:

1. Seek clarity as to God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war; and
2. Identify, explore, and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence, reporting to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with recommendations for policy and action. ... (*Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 68*)

Item 13-11 also asked that an interim report be made to the 220th General Assembly (2012), that would “include specific recommendations of strategy and policy to invite the broader church into the time of discernment, framing the conversation, naming the best partners, and laying out a process to help our congregations to wrestle with these important ethical questions” (*Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 69*).

This interim report is an invitation from the Peace Discernment Steering Team to the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to participate in a time of discernment, looking at peacemaking and nonviolence in the 21st century. We “invite Presbyterians, individually and corporately, across the church into a time of study and reflection on the root causes of violence and responses to it, and on peace, justice, and ministries of peacemaking and justice—seeking that honor the gospel, the history of the church, and the movement of the Holy Spirit as the church attempts to live out Christ’s command to love one another, even those we call our enemies” (*Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 69*).

Words alone cannot contain the horror of violence, the cruelty of sadistic torture, the pain of bullets entering flesh, the burning of white phosphorous on a child’s skin, the sight of a beloved spouse splattered against a wall, the loneliness of a young teenager in prison, the fear of a trafficked woman in a cage, the tearing muscles of a naked man on a cross. God knows.

Violence comes in many forms related to power and property, personhood, and peoplehood. Evil is larger than violence, but violence is perhaps its clearest marker. Mercifully, God’s goodness and grace are larger yet, enduring in unimaginable suffering, strong enough to overcome vengeance and hatred, and their names are sometimes peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Each one of us has encountered violence at some point in our lives, if only on the periphery of it. Any discernment process in this terrain will open difficult doors, and may re-introduce us to an inner victim or tyrant, although more likely both. This is one reason we seek also to re-introduce Jesus of Nazareth as the “Prince of Peace.” Christ knows who we are and his greatest name is Love.

One of the overtures shaping the 219th General Assembly (2010)’s action clearly sought to encourage our church to become a “peace church,” not simply opposing particular wars but affirming nonviolence as a basic orientation toward conflict—abroad, at home, and in our everyday lives. The assembly was not asked to take that position in 2010, but rather to put that basic question of war and violence before the whole church in relation to a wide range of Christian responses to our changing context in our nation and our world. Taking into consideration the other overtures, the assembly recognized that the church needed to update its thirty-year-old overall policy stance in light of significant international changes that have transformed widely-held notions of what constitutes peace and violence. With that updating, the church’s peace programs guided by assembly policy would, in turn, also be updated.

Why engage in this new exploration of peace now? Because the world has changed dramatically since 1980, when the 192nd General Assembly (1980) adopted *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* and established the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. The world is much larger (population has grown from 4.5 billion in 1980 to 7 billion today), and it is more connected (through economic globalization and improved communications systems such as the World Wide Web). With the Cold War over, the Berlin Wall fallen, and the Soviet Union no more, what was an East-West ideological divide has given way to a North-South economic divide between rich and poor countries. With this divide has come greater recognition of the presence of structural violence (social and economic injustice) and its role in undermining human dignity.

Terrorism has replaced communism as the number one threat to U.S. national security, particularly since the tragedy of September 11, 2001. The military budget, never declining much from Cold War levels, is larger than all other programs except Social Security. United States military superiority coupled with America's view of itself as exceptional has raised questions about the United States' involvement in the world. Many consider the United States to have become an empire, with military power the key to its domination in many parts of the world. And yet, recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been extremely costly in human and economic terms both for the U.S. and these countries, and it is not at all clear what they have achieved. This adds to an "increasing sense of the impotence of military might" (p. 11) and the belief that "the main problems of the world will not yield to military solutions," (p. 15) as *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/peacemaking/>) put it.

At the same time, there is growing recognition that nonviolent direct action can be a powerful, alternative means of responding to conflict, as it has proven successful in struggles for justice, human rights, and self-determination around the world—even overthrowing some of the most brutal dictatorships the world has seen. From the Independence Movement in India to the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, from the anti-communist revolutions in Eastern Europe to the role that peaceful protests played in overturning white minority rule in South Africa, from the role of the churches in delegitimation of violence in Northern Ireland to the "Arab Spring" protests in North Africa and the Middle East, and the Greenbelt Movement in Kenya, highlighting the connection between sustainable practices, ecological conservation, and development—there are many examples of nonviolent action producing massive social change.

Indeed, nonviolent direct action is one of ten practices for reducing violence and promoting peace that were identified by an ecumenical group of Christian ethicists brought together by Professor Glen Stassen of Fuller Theological Seminary and later taken up by the 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in its *Resolution on Just Peacemaking and the Call for International Intervention for Humanitarian Rescue*:

1. Support nonviolent direct action.
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat.
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution.
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty.
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development.
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system.
8. Strengthen the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights.
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade.
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.

We seek to build upon the broad understanding of peacemaking put before the church in *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*. We affirm that peace is much more than the absence of war. It also involves the presence of justice for all people and the health of our planet for all creatures who dwell on it. We also acknowledge the problem of interpersonal violence and affirm the need for peacemaking at all levels of our life together—in our individual lives, families, congregations, communities, nation, and world.

Thus we believe there is an urgent need today for U.S. Presbyterians to question the extent to which violence and injustice pervade our society and dominate our relations with one another and with other nations. Living in the world's only superpower, spending more on the military than all other developed countries combined, and facing growing poverty at home, we suggest it is time for us to spend more time thinking through:

- our involvement in war, injustice, and environmental degradation;
- our participation in more complicated structures of violence and oppression; and

- the purposes and costs of international policing and war in a highly interconnected world.

This brief document invites members, congregations, and all councils and organizations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to prepare to participate in a process of discernment, to “encounter the Gospel of Peace anew.” This is the outline of the process requested by the last General Assembly. And while we are now preparing a guide and resource packet for discernment, our hope is not simply to help the church “count the costs” of grievous wars and violence in our culture, but to “meet the Prince of Peace again, as if for the first time.”

We recognize that this is not the way some Presbyterians see the world and we acknowledge that this open process will be open to much criticism as well as confirmation. In the spirit of inviting diverse conversations that engage the whole church, we have sought an accessible rather than academic approach, yet know that creative thinking requires reliable information—a standard for all conversation partners.

#### A PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT

Discernment is a serious, spiritual task, and one entirely consistent with our historic Presbyterian ethos of public responsibility for the common good. It is both personal, involving our God who “alone, is Lord of the conscience,” and communal, involving the church as a community of moral discourse, shaped in the Reformed tradition by an understanding of covenant. Discernment involves clear perception of facts and our relation to them, for the sake of faithful action.

As Presbyterians, we believe that God is the source of truth found throughout creation, even though our perception is distorted by sin or our finitude, which sometimes prompts us to respond to evil through fear, ignorance, and a grasping for power. Discernment is needed to untangle self-interest and to remove blinders so that the church and our individual witness will be open to God and neighbor. It can be a challenging process, both personally and when attempted on a church-wide scale.

Discernment involves slowing down and listening together for God’s voice speaking in our midst. Through discernment, we seek wisdom, clarity, and insight as to what God is calling us to be and do, here and now. In discernment, we try to see the world through God’s eyes and align our words and actions with God’s will. Discernment was invoked and put to good use by the Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church (2008). The Peace Discernment Steering Team also has experienced its benefits in our own reflections on nonviolence.

There is a fruitful paradox at the heart of discernment: on the one hand, if discernment is to be genuine, it cannot have pre-determined outcomes; on the other hand, we never come to discernment with a blank slate, but must always bring ourselves, our values, and our experiences. Authentic discernment involves a fresh encounter with the Spirit of the Living Christ.

So, while nonviolence is a clear option to be presented, our discernment process is open-ended. The outcome of this process is not predetermined. Nor do we expect all Presbyterians to agree with even a consensus view of the best approaches to different kinds of violence and conflict. Yet, just as individual members bring their own experience and conviction, so the faith that we share brings with it a tradition and wisdom about how to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Peace Discernment Steering Team (PDST) proposes the following timeline for engaging the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in a participatory policymaking process on these concerns over the next four years:

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|---------------|--|
| OCTOBER 2011  | The PDST consults with Christian ethicists at the Social Ethics Network gathering at San Francisco Theological Seminary.   |
| APRIL 2012    | The PDST conducts “listening project” in Washington, D.C., to hear from Presbyterians involved in military/industrial complex, war veterans, military families, chaplains, policymakers, and other D.C. constituencies. The PDST also consults with Presbyterian Peace Fellowship at its Convocation of Peacemakers held at Stony Point Center.  |
| MAY/JUNE 2012 | The proposed Peace Discernment Process and selected background pieces are posted on PC(USA) website. A short five-minute video is produced, inviting individuals, churches, and presbyteries to be part of the Peace Discernment Process. The process proposed will include ways to explore and experiment with peacemaking approaches but also emphasize the need to hear all voices and to uncover resources in one’s own community. |
| JULY 2012     | The 220th General Assembly (2012) receives the interim report/invitation document from the Peace Discernment Steering Team and its parent bodies. If the assembly approves this document, it is sent to all councils and agencies of the church for appropriate consideration and response over the next ten months, allowing for analysis of responses and recommendations to be made to the 221st General Assembly (2014).           |
|               | The Peace Discernment Process is presented at the Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference at Ghost Ranch. Participants are encouraged to involve their congregations and presbyteries in the Peace Discernment Process.  |

- SEPT./OCT. 2012 The PDST attempts to engage a broad cross-section of the church by intentionally inviting diverse congregations into conversation, both those that have a history of participating in peacemaking and those that may be new to peacemaking. Sessions are invited to form peace discernment teams in their own congregations to elicit people's personal stories of their encounters with the Prince of Peace in a violent and unjust world. They send a commitment form to their presbytery and to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program declaring their intention. (Goal: at least 15 percent of churches in every presbytery.)
- At the same time, all presbyteries are invited to schedule one-day peace discernment conversations, facilitated by a member of the Peace Discernment Steering Team or other resource person. These could be held at a church, a college, a camp/conference center, or a military base. Presbyteries contact the Peace Discernment Steering Team to schedule a date and enlist the help of a facilitator. (Goal: A facilitated peace discernment conversation in at least 25 percent of presbyteries.)
- NOV. 2012–MAY 2013 Using a small group discernment process developed by the PDST, the congregational peace discernment teams gather for a series of meetings or for a weekend retreat. They submit a summary of their findings (highlighting particularly gripping stories and creative/new peacemaking initiatives) to their presbytery and to the Peace Discernment Steering Team, using a response form provided to them.
- Presbyteries hold their facilitated peace discernment conversations and submit a summary of their findings (also highlighting particularly gripping stories and creative/new peacemaking initiatives) to the Peace Discernment Steering Team, using a similar response form provided.
- Individuals may also submit personal stories on-line, via the website, in prose or poetry, art or video.
- FEBRUARY 2013 The PDST holds Peace Convocation for up to 150 “individuals who are engaged in action and reflection on peacemaking and justice seeking, including faculty and students from Presbyterian-related colleges, universities, and seminaries, activists, individuals engaged in nonviolent witness, grassroots persons working for justice and peace, others engaged in peacemaking in congregations, [mid councils], Presbyterian Women, and other Presbyterian-related entities.”
- College, university, and seminary representatives are encouraged to involve students and young adults in the peace discernment process and to incorporate peace and justice studies in longer-term curriculum development. Other participants are encouraged to involve their congregations and presbyteries in the Peace Discernment Process if they have not already done so. Keynote speeches and a summary report are posted on-line.
- APRIL–NOV. 2013 The PDST analyzes and distills input from church-wide Peace Discernment Process, incorporating it into a report and recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014). The PDST submits report and recommendations to ACSWP for approval in January 2014.
- JUNE 2014 The PDST presents its report and recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014), asking for that assembly to receive the report for a two-year period of study before final action in 2016. The 221st General Assembly (2014) may affirm the recommendations (and/or amend them) and send them out more formally for responses from the presbyteries. While this is not seen to involve constitutional changes, if the 221st General Assembly (2014) approves significant changes to the church's stances towards war and violence, it is felt that the presbyteries should again be engaged in a way that may test the recommendations and guide a final decision at the 222nd General Assembly (2016).
- JULY–DEC. 2014 A video and study guide is produced to accompany the peace discernment report and recommendations.
- JUNE 2016 The 222nd General Assembly (2016) takes final action.

[NOTE: A small group discernment process and response forms for use by congregational peace discernment teams and presbyteries are being developed by the Peace Discernment Steering Team and will be available at the 220th General Assembly (2012).]

#### THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH

The most comprehensive current policy on matters of international violence and war is *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* (1980), a response to overtures from thirty-one presbyteries. This twenty-seven-page policy was developed by a team of experts over a five-year period and includes two appendices and a study guide. It led to the creation of the very influential Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. Through a special offering, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has raised between \$1–\$2 million each year since its creation and has developed a host of resources, annual peacemaking conferences, international study

tours, and other initiatives. It arranges annually for PC(USA) congregations to host international peacemakers. Approximately 50 percent of Presbyterian congregations have affirmed the Commitment to Peacemaking over this period, with large differences among presbyteries and regions. Some peacemaking funds have supported the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations; other funds, in stipulated proportions, have supported peacemaking activities in congregations and presbyteries.

When the church spoke in 1980, it broadened the Vietnam era concern for individual conscience to affirm that peacemaking was the calling of all believers, particularly to face nuclear and other cold war dangers, and in ways that would recognize global interdependence and encourage a wide range of church engagement. *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* provides a broad biblical, theological, and ethical basis for Christian peace mission but also identifies some general directions; to reverse the worldwide arms race, examine “conversion of the economy from military to civilian production,” and relate peace to justice concerns.

Since that time, careful studies and prophetic statements have addressed the nuclear danger, particular military interventions and their rationale, and the relation of religion, violence, and terrorism. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), since 1986, has held a virtual “nuclear pacifist” position, opposing first use and retaliation and calling repeatedly for disarmament. “Just Peacemaking” categories were introduced in 1996, designed to advance the ecumenical church’s thinking beyond the traditional categories of “Just War,” “Crusade,” and “Pacifism.” General Assemblies have also called for responsible withdrawals by the U.S. from Iraq (2004) and Afghanistan (2010); the 2004 assembly prophetically and controversially termed the Iraq war, “unwise, illegal, and immoral.” (The 2008 assembly “commended for study” a careful ethical assessment of that war entitled, “To Repent, To Restore, To Rebuild, and To Reconcile.”)

This effort differs from previous studies in seeking broader participation and in focusing more on the example as well as teaching of Jesus and the early church.

This effort, however, returns to an earlier model of church decision-making on war and peace used by our church long before 1980. In proposing a two-stage process for inviting responses, reflecting on them, and then sending out preliminary recommendations to the presbyteries, this process echoes a model used by our church in the 1930s, before World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

In 1936 and 1938, the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in the United States of America affirmed and sent to the presbyteries a proposal to remove “just war” language from the Westminster Confession, then the only confessional standard for the church. On both occasions, a majority of presbyteries voted for the proposals, but the number did not reach the supermajority required for confessional change.

The church changed the nature of its peace witness in “The Confession of 1967,” in an affirmation that is central to the thinking of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* and which remains vital today:

God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ is the ground of the peace, justice, and freedom among nations which all powers of government are called to serve and defend. The church, in its own life, is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace. This search requires that nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at risk to national security, to reduce areas of strife and to broaden international understanding. Reconciliation among nations becomes particularly urgent as countries develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, diverting their [hu]manpower and resources from constructive uses and risking the annihilation of [hu]mankind. Although nations may serve God’s purposes in history, the church which identifies the sovereignty of any one nation or any one way of life with the cause of God denies the Lordship of Christ and betrays its calling. (*The Book of Confessions*, Section 9.45).

The current position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), then, tilts strongly toward peace and develops means for peacemaking, but considers wars on a case-by-case basis, often adapting “just war” criteria to assess justifications for and conduct of hostilities. In ecumenical terms, several of the alternatives to war commended by the assembly would be considered, “Just Peacemaking,” though the Presbyterian policy by that name is focused on humanitarian intervention, as in Bosnia or Libya most recently.

The Peace Discernment Process into which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is now being invited is concerned principally with the following questions:

- How can the PC(USA) hasten the day when humankind no longer considers violence and war acceptable or inevitable means of resolving conflicts?
- Should the PC(USA) continue its “just war” theology, or have the conditions of modern warfare and the politics and economics of war rendered our historic stance obsolete? Are there new and different biblical alternatives to consider, such as “Just Peacemaking”?
- Is the PC(USA) now being called to become a “peace church,” opposed to all wars and affirming nonviolence as a basic orientation toward conflict—abroad, at home, and in our everyday lives? And if so, what would the implications of such a stance be for those in the military, those in military industries, and for our witness in society?

- How can the PC(USA) confront complicated structures of injustice and oppression; and the threat of environmental degradation more effectively?

## APPENDIX A

TEST SAMPLE CONTEXTS AND QUESTION SETS—  
BEING TESTED FOR POTENTIAL INCLUSION IN THE DISCERNMENT INVITATION  
TO BE PRESENTED AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## JESUS, THE EARLY CHURCH, AND NONVIOLENCE

*Jesus and Nonviolence*

Nonviolence can be thought of as both a means and an end. It is an end in that it refers to the future world we long for—a world free from violence and war, free from hunger and poverty, free from injustice and oppression. Jesus called it “the kingdom of God;” Martin Luther King Jr., called it “the beloved community;” and Walter Wink has called it “the domination-free order.” Nonviolence also can be thought of as a means in two ways: as a technique for engaging in conflict, and as an ethic or philosophy for living one’s life.

There is a clear predilection for nonviolence in both the example and teaching of Jesus and in the practice of the early church.

When members of Jesus’ hometown synagogue were so infuriated by his preaching that they drove him out of town, intending to throw him off a cliff, “. . . he passed through the midst of them and went on his way” (Lk. 4:30). Jesus didn’t try to run away. Nor did he try to defend himself with violence. Instead, he seemed to choose a third response. He stood his ground with courage, faced down the angry mob, and made his way through the crowd without striking one blow.

The Peace Discernment Steering Team follows Walter Wink and other scholars who see in Jesus a “third way” that resists evil through nonviolent means, an approach that outflanks and reverses aggression, sometimes by choosing to suffer. From this perspective, turning the other cheek, offering more clothing than a coat, and going a second mile, are examples of (the “weaker” party) taking the moral initiative and humanizing one’s opponent, “forcing” him or her to recognize one’s own humanity without resorting to violence. This is a strategy with social and cultural implications, potentially breaking cycles of subjugation and humiliation, exposing injustice in power dynamics, and neutralizing and undermining the threat of violence [Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 186–87.]

Without imposing one text or one view on the whole picture of Jesus, the “third way” interpretation is a way of accounting for a prophetic and nonviolent life that threatened both the Roman and Temple authorities. It presents a Jesus of inner power who, when a Samaritan village refused to host him, refuses his disciples’ idea that he ask God “to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them.” (In contemporary terms, they could have been calling for a missile or divine airstrike to take out that village.) Jesus rebukes them, saying: “You do not know what spirit you are of, for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of human beings but to save them” (Lk 9:51–62, esp. 55–56, NASB). Even when Jesus demonstrated his strong passion for justice and the integrity of God’s sacred house, cleansing the Temple, overturning the tables of the moneychangers and driving them out, he stopped short of violence against persons.

When Jesus was about to be arrested, one of his disciples struck a slave of the high priest with a sword and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said “No more of this!” And he touched the slave’s ear and healed him. Matthew quotes Jesus saying: “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword” (Mt. 26:52, NRSV). Jesus didn’t resort to violence to protect his life or legacy. Instead of taking up the sword, he chose to endure the suffering of the cross with words of forgiveness on his lips: “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Lk 23:34, NRSV).

Of Jesus’ death on the cross, Martin Luther King Jr., said: “Jesus eloquently affirmed from the cross a higher law. He knew that the old eye-for-an-eye philosophy would leave everyone blind. He did not seek to overcome evil with evil. He overcame evil with good.”

While we emphasize the witness of Jesus in this resource for discernment, a fuller discussion would compare his teaching with the broad range of approaches to violence in the Old Testament. During the reigns of kings, for example, we see leaders who exercise power and sovereignty over their own people, and wage offensive and defensive war. The prophets (closest models for Jesus) hold the royal figures to moral accounting based on law and teaching received from God in the earliest period of liberation and community formation. There are stories of victory and defeat in warfare, descriptions of captivity and exile, and accounts of battle and its aftermath. In the earlier periods, the people do not have power and face disordered violence, as in the book of Judges; later books describe internal divisions within a Hebrew kingdom and rebellions by vassal states against oppressive empires.

Some scholars have seen the biblical books unfolding a progressive revelation leading from the initial wars in Canaan toward more profound models of faithfulness such as that of the “suffering servant.” Others spiritualize the narratives of all-out wars of conquest, or de-emphasize the commands to kill women and children as well as male fighters, a style of war sometimes called “holy war” or later in history, “crusade,” although some crusading campaigns followed rules of chivalry. Whichever approach to the “holy war” and sacrificial passages one uses, the Reformed tradition takes the Hebrew Bible very seriously and we are reluctant to impose one schema upon it.

*The Early Church and Nonviolence (Adapted from 2010 Item 13-06)*

The history of Christian responses to violence tells a compelling story of the initial embrace of the nonviolent witness of Jesus. Early Christians in Rome refused to engage in any violence because they trusted that their love for fellow citizens would point people to the new day dawning in Jesus Christ (Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 14.3; Origen, *Against Celsus*, 8.68, 75; Arnobius, *Against the Nations*, 1.6). The first Christians lived according to a nonviolent code, with frequent martyrdom.

Moreover, taking with utmost seriousness the Hebrew prophets, Micah and Isaiah, early Christian theologians asserted that the coming of the Messiah removed the need for members of the beloved community to do anything other than beat their swords into plowshares when it came to matters of violence (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 110; Origen, *Against Celsus*, 5.33; Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*, 5; cf. also Cyprian, *On the Advantage of Patience*, 14). They did not interpret the violence in their Scriptures (our Old Testament) as giving them license to kill.

Indeed, there is no affirmation of killing or war anywhere in the writings of the early church, nor is there anywhere the idea that Christians making war would make the world a better or safer place. The early writings are replete with prohibitions against killing of any sort, some of which even carried the explicit sanction of forbidding admission to the Eucharist directed at persons engaged in such acts (*Canons of the Synod of Illiberis*, 56; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, Canon 16; Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 6.20.16–17). The early Christians would not even watch killings, either by observing the carrying out of legal death sentences or by attending the gladiatorial games (Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 30.6, 31.6; Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians*, 35).

Christians today who interpret the apostle Paul as giving divine sanction to violence and war (Rom. 13:4) cannot ignore the history of the early church and even Paul's own words immediately before and after that passage about caring for enemies, overcoming evil with good, and fulfilling the law through loving others (Rom. 12:20–21 and Rom. 13:8–10). Indeed, recent scholarship indicates that the letters of Peter, Paul, and other authors call for Christians to adopt a new behavior toward those who do harm to them (Rom. 12:14–21; 1 Pet. 3:9–19; James 3:13–4:3). Though generally poor and powerless, these early Christian communities were also vibrant and threatening to the Roman empire and its institutions of slavery and expansionary war.

The history of the Christian response to violence changed in the fourth century. Following the conversion of Constantine, Christians began to take up arms on behalf of the Roman Empire, sometimes with inducements of money, property, and power. The change was such that while in 303 CE it was forbidden for Christians to serve in the military, by 416 CE only Christians were allowed to serve.

Christian participation in the wars of the Roman Empire contributed to the creation of the “Just War” Doctrine or Theory, developed primarily by Bishop Augustine of Hippo. The Just War Theory established the ground rules under which a Christian might be understood to be acting morally when killing another human being.

Even Augustine, though he believed that protecting the innocent made killing justifiable, nevertheless taught that a Christian killing in self-defense was immoral. After Augustine, the justification for killing on the part of Christians expanded to include self-defense and even further, to the killing of other Christians, if considered aggressors. This practice has continued until our own times.

The practice of granting exceptions or expansions (and exclusions) to the basic principles of the Just War Theory has resulted in an ever-expanding definition of “just war” as weapons technology and cultural patterns have changed over the centuries. It is sometimes argued that each new exception becomes the new standard, which then gets broadened to embrace the next exception, but space prevents a full discussion of the influence of the church on international law and state relations that also shaped Just War theory. In principle, however, the church moved from a counter-cultural nonviolence to accepting the killing of human beings for the sake of public order when certain legal limits were applied.

#### *Questions for Reflection/Discernment*

- Do the example and teaching of Jesus and the practice of the early church require us to be nonviolent?
- In what ways does the church today practice (or fail to practice) Jesus' message of nonviolence?

#### THE CHALLENGES OF VIOLENCE, TERRORISM, AND WAR

Since the terror event of 9/11/01, involving four hijacked civilian airplanes and approximately 3,000 civilian casualties, the U.S. has been engaged in two significant wars and a more recent intervention in Libya. The war in Afghanistan has been a joint operation with NATO member armies as was the recent military intervention in Libya. The war in Iraq was inaugurated without United Nations authorization and involved a “coalition of the willing,” with Great Britain most notable among the U.S. allies.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars have been extremely costly in both human and economic terms. More than 6,100 U.S. soldiers have been killed and more than 46,000 have been injured. The number of Afghans, Iraqis, and Pakistanis who have died in the fighting are estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands. War refugees and internally displaced persons number 7.8 million. The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars will cost the U.S. alone an estimated \$3–4 trillion when current and future veterans' costs are added up; the costs of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and military activity by other countries involved is estimated to be another \$3 trillion. Most Americans now question whether these military interventions have been worth the enormous cost in lives and national treasure.

For most of our history, the size of the military mirrored the immediate threat or task to which it was directed. In times of war, the U.S. drafted an army, and when the war was over, most of the army disbanded. This was the case after the American Civil War and after both the first and second world wars. But since the end of the cold war, the size and capability of our military has increasingly taken on a life of its own, independent of any specific threats. Americans have grown to see it as their right and responsibility to police the world. Without credible threats to the U.S. itself (as distinct from threats to individual citizens), have we come to value military power for its own sake?

The U.S. spends more money on its military than the next seventeen countries combined. It retains some seven hundred military bases around the world from which to project force, carry on surveillance, and protect oil and other resources. United States military intervention has become commonplace since the end of the Cold War—Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Libya, the list goes on. Hardly a year or two has passed without a significant military action. Living in a state of war has become the rule rather than the exception.



Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, the entire spectrum of our nation's engagement with the world is becoming more militarized. United States military forces are increasingly being used to do things that have not usually been considered part of their job—things like nation-building, which had been handled by the State Department and through international diplomacy.

The growth of military spending has been driven, in part, by military manufacturers and a host of contractors and private security companies. President Eisenhower's prophetic warning about the "unwarranted influence" of the "military-industrial complex" has become more relevant than ever. However, today the concept has expanded to include the role of congressional leaders, many of whom receive campaign contributions from military contractors or are hired as arms industry lobbyists once they leave public office. Now called the "congressional-military-industrial complex," or "iron triangle," it is an interlocking system of mutually reinforcing interests with very little outside oversight. Supported by "political engineering," that distributes contracting across many congressional districts, the complex creates and sustains its own bureaucratic momentum and is largely impervious to criticism or serious reform.

"National Security" has become the overarching interest with which the U.S. approaches the world. Since the "war on terror" began, covert operations, surveillance, and drone missiles have taken on a central role. The growth in the U.S. intelligence community has been staggering.

The Central Intelligence Agency (1949, from the Office of Strategic Services), the National Security Agency (1952), the National Reconnaissance Office (1960), and the Defense Intelligence Agency (1961) are the most acknowledged of U.S. secret services and the basis for pre-1980 descriptions of the U.S. as a "national security state." This description covered not only the growth in cold war secrecy, but the expansion of executive branch power over the standing army and the particular stewardship of nuclear weaponry.

Since then, the growth of new layers of security, secrecy, and cyber capability suggest a new kind of arms race, and one that is acknowledged to be disproportionate to the threats of terrorism. According to a July 2011 series in *The Washington Post*, some 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies work on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence, with an estimated 854,000 people holding top-secret security clearances.

The United States' vast military and intelligence establishments go far beyond the intent or imagination of our nation's Founders, whose views could loosely be called "isolationist," opposed to foreign "entanglements" in John Adams' words. George Washington himself counseled against a significant standing army: "Overgrown military establishments are under any form of government inauspicious to liberty, and are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican liberty." (*Farewell Address*, September 17, 1796). And James Madison wrote: "Of all enemies to public liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few" ([http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/James\\_Madison\\_or http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/63859.James\\_Madison,\\_quote\\_33](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/James_Madison_or_http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/63859.James_Madison,_quote_33))

What may be most disturbing is how these developments have taken root largely without public debate. As our military spending remains at unprecedented levels, and as the tasks of the military continue to expand, an almost permanent state of war becomes the new "normal." Rather than a "peace dividend," our military planning recently sought "full spectrum dominance," and is still predicated on maintaining overwhelming superiority.

Within the military itself, however, there are voices for change. One of the more comprehensive comes from Captain Wayne Porter, USN, and Colonel Mark Mykleby, USMC, whose proposal for a new "National Strategic Narrative" was endorsed and summarized by Anne-Marie Slaughter, a professor of international affairs and briefly Director of Policy Planning in the State Department. Their proposal is for five shifts in approach:

1. from a dominant position of control to credible influence in a more open geopolitical system;
2. "from containment to sustainment," based on domestic re-development and better modeling of the behavior we seek in other nations;
3. "from deterrence and defense to civilian engagement and competition," which would re-emphasize trade and diplomacy, while still modernizing "a security complex that includes all domestic and foreign policy assets;"
4. "from zero sum to positive sum global politics/economics," preferring interdependence and universal values to isolation and exclusion of other nations;
5. "from national security to national prosperity and security," a shift that would involve a new "National Prosperity and Security Act to replace the 1947 National Security Act.

In Slaughter's summary, she sees the officers adjusting the balance between exceptionalism and universalism toward the latter value, still seeking to be "leader of the free world," but in a healthier and actually less military way. <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/A%20National%20Strategic%20Narrative.pdf>

#### *Questions for Reflection/Discernment*

- Have the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan changed the way you think about war? If so, how? What lessons have you learned from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?
- Do you, in your own life, see signs of a "military-industrial-congressional" complex supporting our tendency to use force or threat of force?
- What effects do you see in the shift from the citizen-soldier model to the volunteer or professional soldier model, with contractor support?

- As Christians, should we expect or encourage our political leaders to show mercy to our nation's enemies?

#### LIVING IN A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE AND FEAR

The fear that drives our military policy also erodes our relationships with one another. This erosion becomes normalized as structural violence. It is evident in practices of suspicion towards the "other" (people from other countries, other racial/ethnic groups, other religions), in practices of wealth accumulation that create and perpetuate economic inequality, and in practices of preemption that cause people and nations to react with force as a first resort.

Violence pervades American culture. Examples abound:

- A young teenager lives in a drug-infested neighborhood where warring gangs fight over turf. He is caught in the crossfire on his way to school and killed outside his home.
- A wife leaves her husband and seeks the safety of a battered women's shelter after the last beating left her hospitalized with stitches and a concussion.
- About 30,000 people are killed by firearms each year in the U.S., including suicides, with thousands more wounded.
- In the U.S., one in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.
- On average, children's cartoons contain large amounts of violence, as do adult television crime shows and movies, including horror movies.
- Popular video games for boys especially include "single shooter" games with constant killing and destruction.
- Many sports involve partly ritualized and partly controlled violence, sometime simulated in the case of professional wrestling, but often bloody in cage-fighting and other extreme combat.
- A man is convicted of armed robbery, sent to prison, where he is then raped repeatedly with the tacit acceptance of the guards.
- A young woman assembling U.S. cell phone components for sixty hours a week for four years in a free trade zone becomes profoundly depressed and jumps to her death from a dormitory window.

While direct physical violence may be more visible and attract more attention, there is another form of violence that is far more widespread in the world and arguably does far more harm over time. It is known as "structural violence" and refers to social and economic structures that oppress and impoverish people, preventing them from meeting their basic human needs and realizing their full human potential.

Corporate-led globalization has resulted in a growing gap between the rich and the poor. The world's income distribution resembles the shape of a champagne glass, with the top 20 percent of the world's people who live in the world's wealthiest countries receiving 83 percent of the world's income. The next 20 percent receive 10 percent of the world's income. The remaining 60 percent of the world's people share the 7 percent of world income that is left.

From this global perspective, Americans are among the richest 20 percent of the world's population. (Consider that 40 percent of the world's people attempt to live on less than \$2 a day.) Most Americans live on much more than that. But within the United States there is also a growing gap between the rich and the poor. The U.S. economic and political system has enabled 1 percent of Americans to take in almost a quarter of our nation's income every year and to control more than 40 percent of our nation's wealth. This growing economic inequality is becoming untenable. Millions in the U.S. are not working. Millions more have lost their homes to foreclosure. Retirees and those nearing retirement see their retirement savings plummet every time the stock market takes a dive. Poverty in the United States is the highest it has been in fifty years!

Some Americans have taken to the streets, calling for change. They are no longer willing to give their consent and cooperation to a system that allows so much wealth and power to be concentrated in the hands of one percent of the population. The protesters say they represent "the other 99 percent."

Global economic inequality is nothing new, sad to say. In 1948, George Kennan, head of the U.S. State Department planning staff, wrote the following in a secret policy planning study:

We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population. ... In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. ... To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives. ... We should cease to talk about vague and ... unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.

How do we "maintain this position of disparity?" What does it mean to "deal in straight power concepts?" Enter the military-industrial complex. Thomas L. Friedman, the foreign affairs columnist for the *New York Times*, explains it this way: "The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the first designer of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies to flourish is called the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines Corps."

We maintain our privileged economic position in the world through U.S. military might, as well as through military aid and weapons sales to governments around the world. The United States is the largest supplier of arms in the world. In many cases, these weapons are

used by militaries against their own people in order to maintain a stable environment for corporate investments. Militarization makes corporate-led globalization possible.

Examples of structural violence also include the patterns of inequality and exclusion called the “isms” of racism, sexism, classism, ethnocentrism, and nationalism, as well as homophobia. These patterns operate at interlocking levels—institutionalized (policies and practices), interpersonal (group and individual), and cultural (social norms and valuing).

Most Americans know that the “isms” exist, but the common discourse in our country narrowly addresses discrimination that happens at the interpersonal level—when someone makes a blatantly derogatory comment or is accused of doing so. This myopic focus stymies people’s understanding of the more insidious institutional and cultural forms of the “isms” that crush the human spirit and deny people access to adequate food, water, shelter, education, health care, and self-determination. So while the theories of oppression have become much more nuanced (e.g. critical race theory and Chester M. Pierce’s work on “microaggressions”) and reveal how the “isms” perpetuate deeply entrenched power disparities; most Americans are both unfamiliar with how the “isms” operate and unaware of their exacting toll.

Yet, these forms of oppression do cause harm. We dehumanize ourselves and degrade others by unconsciously supporting patterns that pin our opportunities for well-being on our neighbors’ marginalization. In each case, structural violence prevents us from fulfilling our Christian calling to be in authentic loving relationships with our neighbors, near and far.

The structural violence of injustice and oppression often leads to the violence of revolt and rebellion that then leads to the retaliatory violence of government repression, which then only compounds the structural violence of injustice and oppression and leads to further revolt followed by yet more repression. This dynamic is the Spiral of Violence to which Martin Luther King Jr. referred when he said: “The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. . . . Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

Matters of social and economic justice hold a central place in the Bible. These issues are found all through the Hebrew prophets. Jesus talks more about wealth and poverty than almost any other issue. Indeed, if we tried to cut out all the references to the rich and the poor in the Bible, our Scriptures would be left in shreds.

A central theme of Jesus’ public ministry, empowered by God’s Spirit, was about nonviolent liberation—freeing people from spiritual, physical, social, and economic forms of bondage. His healings, for example, often also involved restoration to community and recognition of a measure of personal identity. It was good news for the poor, the captives, the blind, the oppressed, the landless and enslaved—all people marginalized or excluded by the culture. This good news extended beyond the nation of Israel to include Gentiles as well. But Jesus’ radically inclusive message of liberation for all, while welcomed by the poor and the outcast as a sign of hope, was rejected by those in power. The leaders of his own people collaborated with the Roman government to have him executed.

Jesus’ teachings run counter to the popular theologies of Jesus’ day and our day, theologies which suggest that poverty and suffering are consequences of unrighteousness, indications of God’s judgment, while material wealth and physical well-being are consequences of righteousness, indications of God’s blessing. Jesus turns this thinking upside down. His words challenge us to look critically at our lives, to take a second look at our priorities. The whole law and the prophets are summed up in love of God and love of neighbor, Jesus tells us. (Mt. 22:34–40) That law of love, applied to situations of everyday life, serves as the central criterion for the Last Judgment.

We are also doing violence to the earth and its creatures. We are destroying ecosystems, depleting precious natural resources, and causing a massive extinction of species. We are now using natural resources like fresh water faster than the earth can replenish them. And we are generating waste products like greenhouse gases that are altering the ecology of the entire planet. Global climate change is causing more extreme (and destructive) weather events to occur. Floods and droughts are becoming more severe. Glaciers and ice caps are melting, sea levels and ocean temperatures are rising, and coral reefs are dying. In the book, *Tropic of Chaos* (2011), Christian Parenti warns that climate change is creating desperate refugees and the potential for serious violence in many regions.

The challenge of our culture is that it increasingly seems to be low in empathy, high in fear, and willing to sacrifice the future for the present. Some of the factors listed at the beginning of this reflection section may contribute to that lack of empathy and the related lack of community and feelings of powerlessness. As followers of Jesus, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is incumbent upon us to treat others with respect and dignity and to ensure that their basic human needs are met.

#### *Questions for Reflection/Discernment*

- How have your experiences with violence and/or war affected you, your faith, and/or your views about peacemaking?
- Would you agree that discrimination against particular sections of society, such as sexism, racism, classism and ethnic or religious prejudice, is a form of violence (structural violence)?
- Do cultural practices such as violence in entertainment media actually lead to greater violence, or to greater passivity? Are we in some sense bullied and disempowered by the world of fantasy?
- Are economic practices of unemployment, poverty-level wages, and work without health or retirement benefits forms of structural violence?

#### NEW DIRECTIONS FOR PEACEMAKING: NONVIOLENT ACTION, CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION, AND RECONCILIATION

During the past twenty years, the field of peacemaking and conflict transformation has taken off. Peace and conflict studies programs in colleges and universities have been established in increasing numbers across the U.S. and the world. There are now four hundred such programs globally, several in the sixty-six colleges and universities affiliated with the PC(USA). Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)

have proliferated, helping to strengthen civil society. Think tanks, research centers, and foundations, such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the U.S. Institute of Peace, the International Crisis Group, Search for Common Ground, and the Oxford Research Group, have developed innovative methods of conflict analysis and intervention. More than one thousand organizations work explicitly on peace and conflict issues globally.

Methods of conflict prevention, conflict management, diplomatic peacemaking, and post-conflict peacebuilding have been developed significantly. We have seen a greater acceptance of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in the international community as well as the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC). More conflicts are being ended through negotiation rather than victory by one adversary over another. More “post-conflict” countries are forming Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Civil society and women, in particular, are increasingly seen as important actors in peacebuilding.

Additionally, there is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which represents a push to strengthen the international community’s commitment to intervening to prevent and stop genocides, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.

Since the end of the cold war, conflicts between nation-states have actually been declining in number. But at the same time, the number of conflicts within nation-states has surged. Some of these intrastate conflicts have been predominantly violent in nature, coinciding with a dramatic uptick in the proliferation of small arms and other light weapons being used by a variety of armed actors (the state, paramilitaries, insurgent groups, and the like). Other intrastate conflicts have been predominantly nonviolent in character, with populations undermining the power of their governments using methods of nonviolent resistance such as street marches, mass rallies, strikes, boycotts, and civil disobedience. Repressive governments, in turn, may use techniques of both counterterrorism and counterinsurgency against non-violent leaders and their communities, prompting forms of anonymous and collective leadership.

A recent study published in *International Security* (“Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,” by Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth) compared the effectiveness of violent and nonviolent resistance campaigns in conflicts between non-state and state actors between 1900 and 2006. The study found that “major nonviolent campaigns have achieved success 53 percent of the time, compared with 26 percent for violent resistance campaigns.”

Nonviolent struggle has proven to be a powerful means of wielding power in a variety of conflicts. The nonviolent “people power” revolution in the Philippines brought down the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. Pro-democracy movements in Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia ousted communist regimes in 1989. Presbyterians, other Protestants, and Catholics gradually reclaimed peace in Northern Ireland. The anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, supported by international economic pressure, brought an end to white minority rule. A nonviolent student movement in Serbia led in ousting Slobodan Milosevic in the year 2000. Christians participated in these movements for social change, using methods of nonviolent action reminiscent of the civil rights movement that changed America. Then, in early 2011, Arabs all across North Africa and the Middle East took to the streets calling for freedom and democracy in what has become known as “the Arab Spring.” Their struggles continue, despite violent repression and civil war in some states.

Nonviolent “people power” movements have shown themselves capable of overthrowing dictators, thwarting coups d’état, defending against invasions and occupations, challenging unjust systems, promoting human rights, and resisting genocide. Jesus’ “third way” of non-violent action may not work in all circumstances, but the historical record shows that it is a powerful means of engaging in conflict, and can be used successfully in struggles for justice, human rights, and self-determination.

In addition, at the individual and community levels there are new models for engaging in active peacemaking and working for justice, including the use of social media technologies for advocacy and organizing, nonviolent communication, consensus decision-making processes, restorative justice, nonviolent accompaniment, conflict resolution techniques, artistic expressions, and methods of church-based community organizing.

As followers of Jesus, it is incumbent upon us to examine the common acceptance and even reliance on violence as a response to conflict and to consider exploring and risking nonviolent alternatives. The founding document of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program also said that “the church must struggle against the cynicism that regards [the pursuit of peace] as idealistic rather than realistic. It must find a central purpose in the intention to make peace. Peacemaking is an indispensable ingredient of the church’s mission. It is not peripheral or secondary but essential to the church’s faithfulness to Christ in our time.” The fact is, church-based initiatives have had demonstrably successful results, appealing to the best in individuals and groups, and finding God present and full of new life.

#### *Questions for Reflection/Discernment*

- Have you ever been offered an opportunity to take a bold stand for peace? If so, how did you respond? If not, do you wish you could have such an opportunity?
- How can the PC(USA) hasten the day when humankind no longer considers war an acceptable or inevitable means of resolving conflicts?
- How could the PC(USA) do a more effective job of teaching nonviolence to its members?

#### DISCERNING GOD’S CALL TO PRESBYTERIAN PEACEMAKERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Presbyterians today face a difficult dilemma. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who we know as the Prince of Peace, calls us to embrace nonviolence and reconciliation. And yet, the world around us persists in doing violence—in response to conflict, in social and economic relationships, and in relation to the earth. Overall, rather than seeing nonviolent responses to conflict, we see many who have embraced the “myth of redemptive violence.” How much do we, too, put our faith and trust in military power, disregarding Scripture like Psalm 33? Instead of pursuing social and economic justice in our relationships with others, have we not also been seduced by materialism, consumerism, and an “American way of life” that is unsustainable, except by structural violence? Instead of making the lifestyle and policy

changes necessary to protect planet earth from severe climate change, we still seem culturally addicted to nonrenewable resources and the power relations necessary to obtain them.

The Peace Discernment Steering Team asks if it is time for Presbyterians in the United States to reclaim greater responsibility for our own actions and those taken in our name. Napoleon aptly pointed out that: “The world suffers a lot. Not because of the violence of bad people, but because of the silence of good people!” As a church and as a society, should we learn to move from violence to nonviolence, from war-making to peacemaking, from a permanent war economy to a sustainable peace economy, from being citizens of an empire to members of God’s peaceable kingdom? What are the true dangers we face, the security we long for, and the liberty that comes with “justice for all?” How do we better align ourselves with God’s vision of justice and peace? How can we hasten the day when humankind no longer considers violence and war acceptable or inevitable means of resolving conflicts?

While we do not presume to know what the Spirit is calling the PC(USA) to be and to do in this particular historical moment, we strongly affirm that “the Church is sent to be Christ’s faithful evangelist ... participating in God’s mission to care for the needs of the sick, poor, and lonely; to free people from sin, suffering, and oppression; and to establish Christ’s just, loving, and peaceable rule in the world” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0302(d)). “The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0301).

We invite you to join with us on this adventure, to help us explore hard choices, to hear many voices, to discern God’s calling for us as Presbyterian peacemakers in the twenty-first century.

#### *The Peace Discernment Steering Team*

Members of the Peace Discernment Steering Team are: the Reverend J. Mark Davidson (chair), pastor, Church of Reconciliation, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Dr. Kathryn Poethig, associate professor of global studies, California State Monterey Bay; Shaya Gregory Poku, program associate for Sub-Saharan Africa, Search for Common Ground, Washington, D.C.; Jessica Hawkinson, M.Div. student, Princeton Theological Seminary, and former staff of the Presbyterian UN Office; Shaheen Amjad-Ali, lecturer in world religions, Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, Minnesota; the Reverend Craig Hunter, pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Denton, Texas.

The steering team is being staffed by the Reverend Christian T. Iosso, Ph.D., coordinator of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), and the Reverend Roger Scott Powers, a part-time consultant with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, who also serves as pastor of Light Street Presbyterian Church (Baltimore) and co-moderator of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship.

#### Selected Resources for Further Study

Particularly on Nonviolence and Recent Christian Analysis of War

*General Assembly Social Witness Policy on Peace, Justice, and the Integrity of Creation:*

Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling (1980) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/peacemaking-believers-calling-text/>).

Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age (1988) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/christian-obedience-nuclear-age/>).

Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice (1990) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/restoring-creation-ecology-and-justice-study-guide/>).

Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (1996) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/hope-global-future/>).

Just Peacemaking and the Call for International Intervention for Humanitarian Rescue (1998) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-just-peacemaking-and-call-international/>).

Iraq and Beyond (2003) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/iraq-and-beyond/>).

Violence, Religion, and Terrorism (2004) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-violence-religion-and-terrorism/>).

Iraq: Our Responsibility and the Future (2004) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/iraq-our-responsibility-future/>).

A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century (2008) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/new-social-creed/>).

Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call (2010) (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gun-violence-gospel-values-mobilizing-response-god/>).

*Ecumenical Documents:*

National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. *Christian Understanding of War in an Age of Terror(ism)* (2011). (<http://www.brethren.org/peace/nccddownloads.html>).

World Council of Churches. *An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* (2011). ([http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/ECJustPeace\\_English.pdf](http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/ECJustPeace_English.pdf)).

*Web Resources on Nonviolent Action:*

## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

The Albert Einstein Institution (<http://www.aeinstein.org/>).

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/>).

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/>).

Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (<http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/>).

Waging Nonviolence (<http://www.wagingnonviolence.org/>)

### *Videos Depicting Nonviolent Action:*

*Gandhi* (1982)

*Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years: 1954–1965* (1997)

*A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (2000)

*Bringing Down a Dictator* (2002)

*The Singing Revolution* (2007)

*Orange Revolution* (2007)

*The Power of Forgiveness* (2007)

*How to Start a Revolution* (2011)

(Note: War films are much better known, and often address particular wars, such as *Saving Private Ryan* as a recent film on World War II, *Apocalypse Now*, or *Full Metal Jacket* on Vietnam, and *The Hurt Locker* or *Stop Loss* on the second Iraq War.)

### *Books:*

Ackerman, Peter, and Jack Duvall. *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Bacevich, Andrew J. *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2010.

Barclay, William. *Barclay on Peace*. Nyack, N.Y.: Fellowship Publications, 1983.

Brimlow, Robert W. *What about Hitler? Wrestling with Jesus's Call to Nonviolence in an Evil World*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006.

Butigan, Ken. *From Violence to Wholeness: A Ten-Part Program in the Spirituality and Practice of Active Nonviolence*. Las Vegas: Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center, 1999.

Cahill, Lisa Sowle. *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.

Chenoweth, Erica, and Maria J. Stephan. *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2011.

Chernus, Ira. *American Nonviolence: The History of An Idea*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2004.

Cook, Martin. *The Moral Warrior: Ethics and Service in the U. S. Military*. Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2004.

Crossan, John Dominic. *God & Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

Geyer, Alan, and Barbara G. Green. *Lines in the Sand: Justice and the Gulf War*. Louisville: Westminster/John Know Press, 1992.

Gioseffi, Daniela. *Women on War: An International Anthology of Writings from Antiquity to the Present*. New York: Feminist Press/City University, 2003.

Hauerwas, Stanley. *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Henken, Sarah, and Roger Scott Powers. *Resurrection Living: Journeying with the Nonviolent Christ*. Louisville: Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, 2010. (PDS 24358-10-007).

Holmes, Arthur F., ed. *War and Christian Ethics: Classic and Contemporary Readings on the Morality of War*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Johnson, Chalmers. *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2004.

## 14 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

- Johnson, James Turner. *Can Modern War Be Just?* (New Haven: Yale, 1986).
- Lederach, John Paul. *The Journey Toward Reconciliation*. (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald, 1999).
- Long, Jr., Edward LeRoy. *Facing Terrorism: Responding as Christians*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2004.
- Love, Gregory Anderson. *Love, Violence, and the Cross: How the Nonviolent God Saves Us through the Cross of Christ*. (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2010).
- May, William F. *Testing the National Covenant: Fears & Appetites in American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown, 2011.
- Merton, Thomas. *The Nonviolent Alternative*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980.
- Miller, Richard B., ed. *War in the Twentieth Century: Sources in Theological Ethics*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
- Moser-Puangsuwan, Yeshua, and Thomas Weber. *Nonviolent Intervention Across Borders: A Recurrent Vision*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2000.
- Nagler, Michael N. *Is There No Other Way?: The Search for a Nonviolent Future*. Berkeley: Berkeley Hills Books, 2001.
- Powers, Roger S., and William B Voegelé, eds. *Protest, Power, and Change: An Encyclopedia of Nonviolent Action from ACT-UP to Women's Suffrage*. New York: Garland, 1997.
- Schock, Kurt. *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota, 2005.
- Sharp, Gene. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. (3 Vols.) Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973.
- Sharp, Gene. *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Practice and 21st Century Potential*. Boston: Porter Sargent, 2005.
- Shriver, Jr., Donald W. *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995.
- Stassen, Glen H., ed. *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2008.
- Stone, Ronald H. *Prophetic Realism: Beyond Militarism and Pacifism in an Age of Terror*. New York/London: T&T Clark, 2005.
- Swartley, William M. ed. *The Love of Enemy and Nonretaliation in the New Testament*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
- Trocme, André. *Jesus and the Nonviolent Revolution*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003.
- Wink, Walter. *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Wink, Walter. *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Winn, Albert Curry. *Ain't Gonna Study War No More: Biblical Ambiguity and the Abolition of War*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.
- Yoder, John Howard. *What Would You Do?* Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1992.
- Note: Again, there are many notable books on war, from Sun Tzu, Julius Caesar, and U.S. Grant forward. A listing of “Best Non-Fiction War Books” that includes recent war memoirs by women can be found at: [http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/824.Best\\_Non\\_fiction\\_War\\_Books?page=2](http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/824.Best_Non_fiction_War_Books?page=2).
- Clearly also, there are many novels that might be noted, such as *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy, *Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller, and more recent works. Our sampling here is to provide titles less known but with more church-related reflection.

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### Item 14-NB.

[The approved Item 14-NB. See pp. 61, 63.]

The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Presbyterian Ministry to the UN, and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to study and consider actions to bring justice to the disputed territory of Western Sahara, considered by many international jurists to be illegally occupied by Morocco, including the issue of corporate engagement and the renewal of diplomatic efforts to support self-determination, and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

[Financial Implication: (2013) \$1,753—Per Capita, \$1,752—GAMC—Unrestricted; Financial Implication: (2014) \$3,438—Per Capita, \$3,437—GAMC—Unrestricted]

## 14-Info

### *Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) Agency Summary*

#### 1. *Assigned Responsibilities: Strengthening Presbyterian Social Witness*

Social witness is part of what it means for the church to be “salt” and “light” in the world today. Coming from Jesus’ words in Mt. 5:13–14, the images of Salt & Light also give name to the ACSWP on-line newsletter. They undergird the committee’s faithfulness to its charge:

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) serves the prophetic calling of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by providing the General Assembly with careful studies of pressing moral challenges, media for discussion and discernment of Christian responsibilities, and policy recommendations for faithful action.

This brief narrative summarizes the committee’s responsibilities, its procedures and personnel, its accomplishments and activities.

In every age, the Spirit calls on the church to discern afresh God’s redemptive purpose in our particular time and place in history. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s work is to help the church discern what it means to proclaim and embody the Gospel in relation to contemporary society. In this work, the ACSWP and its task forces draw upon a great wealth of resources:

- the voices of the biblical text;
- the wisdom of theological discourse;
- the guidance of the Reformed confessions;
- the tradition of past policy statements;
- the insights of sociopolitical disciplines;
- the advice of members and all governing bodies of the church;
- the insights of people who are poor, victims of existing policies, and those who have not had a voice in councils of the church; and

• the counsel of ecumenical partners. (*Minutes*, 1993, Part I, p. 769). Social witness can occur at many different points: in a church session, in a presbytery, in an advocacy group, in the participation of Christians in mission, in a meeting of the ecumenical church, in an individual Christian’s brave refusal to “go along” with injustice. For Presbyterians, however, decisions about the church’s social witness are made by persons elected to serve in governing bodies (session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). As councils of the church meet, the elected persons are commissioned “... not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ ...” (*2011–2013 Book of Order*, F-3.0204). The advisory committee’s structure and function go back to 1936 when “consecrated” and justice-oriented persons from the Boards of Christian Education and National Missions were elected to a Social Education and Action Committee. In providing service and resources to meet the needs of congregations, “mid councils,” and the General Assembly, ACSWP members find guidance in the mission statement quoted above. Theologically grounded ethical reflection is part of the salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ACSWP engages with the grassroots in assisting the General Assembly to discern what it means to proclaim and embody the Gospel in a world that remains too grim for too many. At the same time, the committee’s membership contains persons with expertise in theology, social ethics, and various other disciplines, more than half of whom hold advanced degrees.

Making a personal social witness begins with very individual ways of growing and developing as a Christian—prayerfully studying the Scriptures, being inspired by Jesus, the prophets, and courageous stands of the church, gaining insight from past ethical witness, connecting one’s faith with others in the Christian community, and then being faithful in the world beyond the church. The ACSWP seeks to be a partner in the ministry of reconciliation, for “each member [who] is the church in the world ...” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.38).

The churchwide work of the ACSWP is based on ethical guidance from the Scriptures, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*. The 1993 General Assembly policy statement, *Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness* (OGA-93-019), provides extensive documentation of key biblical passages and is a useful document in congregational interpretation of the ACSWP and its mission.

All of those biblical texts have a common theme. The Gospel says that to confess Jesus Christ as Lord is to believe that God can and has overcome the powers of sin in the world. Christians do not work alone, but join the Lord Jesus Christ who is already at work in our world. John Calvin said that social concern, expressed by action on behalf of our neighbors, is a central part of the faith. Our historic confessions, the work of theologians, and the actions of 219 General Assemblies have reaffirmed that message. Our faithfulness as Reformed Christians means action.



a. *New Developments*

In 2011, the Advisory Committee launched an internet justice journal, with the support of the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries Area and the larger General Assembly Mission Council. The new journal, *Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice*, is designed to strengthen the social witness of the whole church and to be an open forum on areas where new witness is needed. The url (internet address) for the journal is <http://justiceunbound.org/>; the name, “unbound,” refers not only to the lack of binding, but to Jesus’ words at the resurrection of Lazarus, “unbind him,” and to images of prisoners freed.

A key goal has been to reach twenty and thirty-something readers, using an intergenerational editorial staff. Despite limitations in the committee’s budget, a recent seminary graduate, Patrick Heery, was hired as managing editor and has done an excellent job. In September 2011, the General Assembly Mission Council designated the journal to be the successor to *Church & Society* magazine, which itself continued the work of print journals going back to 1908 (the *Amethyst*, *Moral Welfare*, and *Social Progress*). Back issues of all of these journals are to be made available through the American Theological Library Association, and will provide depth to go with the very current style of on-line engagement: for the history track, think of a mix-tape with church insights from the 1930s, ’60s, as well as recent General Assemblies.

In addition to the internet journal, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy maintains a website and distributes an e-newsletter, “Salt & Light.” *Unbound* links to these and to the various sites of other compassion, peace, and justice ministries. The emphasis on new technology and nurturing communities of people reflects the findings of the self-study ACSWP presented to and which was approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

Another new development has been the addition of a “Social Teaching” track to the inter-seminary course taught at the General Assembly by former Moderator Jack Rogers and David Tomlinson, both professors at San Francisco Theological Seminary. That course, “*Presbyterianism: Principles, Practice, and Social Teaching*,” is designed for seminarians but also welcomes auditors and others seeking to understand the assembly in-depth and see it as a window into the church. The “Social Teaching” track will be taught by a social ethicist, Teresa Saucedo, and by former Stated Clerk Cliff Kirkpatrick, who will also augment the ecumenical dimension.

Since the 2010 General Assembly, the committee met at Stony Point, New York; San Diego, California; Big Tent, Indianapolis, Indiana; Denver, Colorado; Highland Presbyterian Center, Allenspark, Colorado; and Louisville, Kentucky. At each place, the committee met with representatives of the presbyteries and organizations and congregations doing vital forms of social witness, including:

- At Stony Point Conference Center, their residential program of the three Abrahamic Faiths, their expanded organic gardening initiative, their offerings of spiritual guidance and retreats as well as hospitality, their witness for peace.
- At First Presbyterian Church, San Diego; a panel of speakers on new social ministries in San Diego, including work in public high schools combining tutoring, mentoring, and an in-school food pantry, new church development with young people as leaders, outreach to and inclusion of homeless persons as members of the congregation, an overnight downtown shelter, and other outreach and social service ministries. In addition to orientation from the presbytery executive, the pastor of First Presbyterian Church, San Diego, described social ministries and witness intrinsically linked to witness to the Savior. The committee also heard from a mission co-worker based in Tijuana, a pastor involved in peace education, and a professor opening up moral discourse in adult education programming. The coordinator spoke in a local congregation twice on the near Sunday.
- At Big Tent, the co-chairs of the Economic Crisis study team presented a workshop, inviting input, and ACSWP saw the first prototype of the *Unbound* website, and many names were proposed. The committee also explored formats for the General Assembly “Social Teaching” class, revised its Manual, and heard from Middle East Christians on the impacts of the Iraq war and the beginning of the Arab Awakening.
- In Denver, the committee met with forty members of the presbytery for a hearing on the economic crisis and also held the formal “launch” of *Unbound* at the presbytery offices. A further discussion was held before a presbytery meeting, and a communications specialist from one of the Denver churches also coached the committee on addressing controversial issues with the press.
- In Allenspark, Colorado, ACSWP met with leaders from the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks, discussing the history, situation of rural churches and environmental (especially water) issues in that large presbytery.
- In Louisville, on two occasions, the committee met with a range of staff members, including the deputy director of the General Assembly Mission Council.

b. *Procedures and Personnel*

In support of the work of the assembly, the ACSWP is given direct access to the assembly as it meets biennially. Between sessions of the assembly, the ACSWP also assists the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the

General Assembly (OGA), and other agencies of the church as their work involves the development and interpretation of social witness policy.

The committee carries out its responsibilities in five major ways. They are:

(1) development and recommendation of new social witness and policy for approval by the General Assembly;

(2) interpretation and communication of the General Assembly's social witness and policy, both to the church and the world at large;(3) providing advice and counsel to the entities and governing bodies of the church on matters of social witness policy when developments merit social-ethical attention;(4)providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly when it meets as a governing body (in oral and memoranda form); and(5) monitoring peace and justice concerns per mandates from the General Assembly.The ACSWP develops and recommends new social witness and policies primarily in response to referrals from the General Assembly (GA) and its entities, and in a manner consistent with the *Manual of the General Assembly*, "On Forming Social Policy." This policy development requires depth of theological reflection, breadth of input, and diversity of participation. Before a policy statement is approved, extensive consultation is mandated at all stages of development. Thus, the committee's work is connected to the concerns of Presbyterians gathered in worshiping and serving communities across the land. The two main study teams active in 2010 and 2011 are those on the economic crisis and the discernment of new directions in peacemaking, thirty years after *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*.The committee's Advice and Counsel group carries out the task of providing advice and counsel at the meeting of the General Assembly (GA). This group of elected committee members, together with other staff and resource persons from several General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and Office of the General Assembly (OGA) entities, advises commissioners in assembly committees and other entities about social policies applicable to issues before the assembly. It may also comment on the need or direction for future social policy. Advice and counsel is provided throughout the meeting, through "Advice and Counsel Memoranda," by oral testimony before assembly committees, and informally. The ACSWP chair or a co-chairperson is a corresponding member to both the GA and GAMC. This chair or co-chairperson can offer advice and counsel if called upon in these meetings. The ACSWP has also provided comment to the Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, the GAMC Strategic Directions team, and the Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies.The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) consists of twelve members, nine of whom are at-large members elected by the General Assembly from the whole church and three who are General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) members. The members are: Gloria Albrecht (co-chair), Detroit, Michigan; Arthur William Canada Sr., Charlotte, North Carolina; William W. Capel, Champaign, Illinois; David Cortés-Fuentes, Claremont, California; Christine M. Darden, Hampton, Virginia; Jean Demmler (co-chair), Denver, Colorado; Marsha Fowler, Altadena, California; Eric Mount, Danville, Kentucky; Kathryn Poethig, Watsonville, California; William Saint, Fairfax, Virginia; and Raafat Zaki, Maumee, Ohio. In the spring of 2011, Roger Gench, a member appointed by the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) resigned from the committee. The GAMC appointed William Capel to fill this vacated position. Also in 2011, Dianne Briscoe, Esq., resigned upon her appointment to a judgeship in Denver. Staffing for the committee includes Christian T. Iosso, coordinator; Patrick Heery, editor, *Unbound* journal; and Bonnie M. Hoff, senior administrative assistant.2. *Accomplishments*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) members and staff make themselves available for interpretive events as requested and as time allows. Such events included preaching at Newton Presbyterian Church, Newtown, Pennsylvania; speaking at Christ Presbyterian, Carlsbad, California; a visit to Arcadia University's Peace Studies program, and speaking at three conferences, one with peacemakers, one on the Middle East, and one with Evangelical Christian environmentalists. The committee welcomes inquiries through its office in Louisville. All governing bodies, churches, and members are encouraged to use the "Presbyterian Social Witness Policy Compilation," which contains the core of the assemblies' social policy statements since 1946. It is revised regularly to meet the needs of the church and can be downloaded from the worldwide web at ([www.pcusa.org/acswp](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp)).The ACSWP holds a stated meeting following each General Assembly to discern and prioritize its work; periodically between the assemblies, to review progress on papers and projects; and in January before an assembly, to edit and approve final drafts for submission to the assembly. This year the committee has prepared the following reports to strengthen current social witness policies.

- Human Rights Update 2012
- World of Hurt, Word of Life: Renewing God's Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction
- Interim Report: Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness
- For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World

• ACSWP Agency NarrativeIn preparing this year's General Assembly reports, ACSWP took into consideration the comments and reflections shared by individual Presbyterians and adult education classes, General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) program ministry areas, and other bodies within our church. Staff also consulted with the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association in developing a consultation on criminal justice for early 2012.

From 2010–2011, the committee assisted the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) in the publication of the following reports: *Gun Violence and Gospel Values: Mobilizing to Respond to God's Call*; *Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action*; *Living Through Economic Crisis: The Church's Witness in Troubled Times (A Social Involvement Report)*; *Loving Our Neighbors: For Equity and Quality in Public Education (K-12)*; *Neither Poverty nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church*; and the *Human Rights Update 2010*. These resources can be downloaded at <http://oga.pcusa.org/documents-resources/list/publication/> or <http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/resources.htm>. Committee members and staff also continued to support use of the gun violence and AIDS policy statements. A survey of compensation practices in comparable church and nonprofit groups remains an assignment from the Theology of Compensation policy; the committee revised a study guide on Just Globalization that complements a shorter resource on globalization done for high school and college mission trips. The ACSWP works collaboratively with the six mission and ministry areas of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), other entities of the GAMC, and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The ACSWP has liaisons from the Compassion Peace and Justice ministry area, and from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). When possible, the committee spends time with local church members, relevant presbytery committees, and with ecumenical contacts during its stated meetings. Members of the committee have distributed policy statements and resources at meetings of the Denver and Eastern Virginia presbyteries and participated in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days cosponsored by the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C.

As invited, the committee assists in programming an annual gathering of the Social Ethics Network (SEN) (formerly known as the Theological Educators for Presbyterian Social Witness (TEPSW)). This group is composed primarily of Christian Presbyterian ethicists currently or formerly serving in seminaries and other educational institutions related to and/or in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Since the last General Assembly, the committee assisted with two such gatherings. In the fall of 2010, the SEN met at Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS), Decatur, Georgia; and in the fall of 2011, the Social Ethics Network (SEN) led a Planning Consultation on Peace Teaching and Discernment in Presbyterian Seminaries, Colleges, and Universities at the San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS), San Anselmo, California. The ACSWP also hosts a reception for Presbyterians at the annual meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics; the January 2012 meeting was held at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C. The ACSWP will focus on emerging social witness issues and future priorities at its summer 2012 stated meeting, including the guidance of the General Assembly. Other responses by the committee to General Assembly (GA) work may be found in the responses to referrals section of the reports to the 220th General Assembly (2012).



## Item 15-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 15-01. See p. 41.]

*On Recognizing that Israel's Law and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against Palestinian People—From the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley.*

The Presbytery of Muskingum Valley overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to recognize that Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people. The General Assembly urges its members, congregations, presbyteries, synods, and national staff units, including the Office of Interfaith Relations, to study this matter and to seek appropriate ways to bring an end to Israeli apartheid.

### *Rationale*

#### A. *Purpose*

This overture is pursued with the hope it will lead to a peaceful reconciliation for the people of Israel and Palestine similar to that which occurred in South Africa when apartheid was internationally acknowledged.

Just twenty years ago there was serious injustice, widespread suffering, and major human rights abuses in South Africa because of apartheid laws, practices, and policies that established a preferential legal status and material privileges to one group of people based on their identity while discriminating against another group based on their inferior status. The favored group received preferential access to land, water, other resources, and to government benefits and services while the disfavored group was confined to ever shrinking noncontiguous territorial enclaves. The peaceful reconciliation of the peoples in South Africa and the creation of a stable political state were accomplished only after the churches and the nations of the world recognized that South Africa's laws, practices, and policies constituted apartheid. In the 1990s, South African soccer teams were banned from international soccer competition because of the government's apartheid policies. Twenty years later, South Africa hosted soccer's World Cup, a remarkable demonstration of the political transformation that can take place when the world recognizes apartheid and a government responds by granting human rights for all people. It is hoped that the Israeli government policies toward the Palestinian people will undergo a similar transformation if Israeli apartheid is internationally acknowledged.

#### B. *Why Presbyterians Must Act*

To solve a problem, one has to honestly recognize and acknowledge that the problem exists. The rationale section of this overture will demonstrate how Israel's practices and actions in the occupied Palestinian territories combined with Israel's physical changes to the land and infrastructure of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, fit the United Nations and World Court definitions of apartheid. As Presbyterians we believe the prophetic mission of the church is to speak the Word of God courageously, honestly, and lovingly in the local context and in the midst of daily life. Following the example of Jesus, the church is called to stand alongside the oppressed to help bring about justice, peace, and reconciliation. Christians spoke out in the 1950s against segregation in the United States and later on against apartheid in South Africa. They must again raise their voices and speak out against Israel's forty-four-year-old occupation of Palestinian territories and give a name to the crime against humanity that this occupation represents, the crime of apartheid.

By honestly recognizing the apartheid situation in the holy land, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can add its voice to an international dialog to which Israeli leaders will listen and respond. We ask the church to join the witness of others, such as those quoted below, who have recognized that Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people.

- *Nelson Mandela*, past president of South Africa and Nobel Peace prize winner, said, "Apartheid is a crime against humanity. Israel has deprived millions of Palestinians of their liberty and property. It has perpetuated a system of gross racial discrimination and inequality. It has systematically incarcerated and tortured thousands of Palestinians, contrary to the rules of international law. It has, in particular, waged a war against a civilian population, in particular children." (2001)

- *Archbishop Desmond Tutu*, the South African Nobel Peace prize winner said "If I were to change the names, the description of what is happening in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank could describe events in South Africa." (1989) "I have been to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and I have witnessed the racially segregated roads and housing that reminded me so much of the conditions we experienced in South Africa under the racist system of Apartheid. I have witnessed the humiliation of Palestinian men, women, and children made to wait hours at Israeli military checkpoints routinely when trying to make the most basic of trips to visit relatives or attend school or college, and this humiliation is familiar to me and the many black South Africans who were corralled and regularly insulted by the security forces of the Apartheid government. It is not with rancor that we criticize the Israeli government, but with hope, a hope that a better future can be made for both Israelis and Palestinians." (2010)

- *Jimmy Carter*, former president of the U.S. and Nobel Peace prize winner said: "Israel does occupy this territory deep within the West Bank, and connects 200-or-so settlements with each other, with a road, and then prohibits the Palestini-

ans from using that road, or in many cases even crossing the road. This perpetrates even worse instances of apartness, or apartheid, than we witnessed even in South Africa.” (2006)

- *Israeli human rights group B’Tselem* said: “Israel has created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation based on discrimination, applying two separate systems of law in the same area and basing the rights of individuals on their nationality. This regime ... is reminiscent of distasteful regimes from the past such as the Apartheid regime in South Africa.” (2002)

- *Henry Siegman*, former director of the American Jewish Congress & Synagogue Council of America, said, “successive Israeli governments have long sought to preclude the two-state solution. Israel has crossed the threshold from ‘the only democracy in the Middle East’ to ‘the only apartheid regime in the Western world.’” (2007)

- *Michael Ratner*, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights, after a visit to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem said: “the powerful narrative of the Holocaust that the museum was trying to make me (as a Jew) accept, or at least justify, what was unacceptable: Israel’s apartheid state. ... To truly honor the lessons of the Holocaust would be to end the apartheid system that is the Israel of today.” (2010)

- *Yitzhak Laor*, Israeli playwright and novelist said “the bi-national state is already here. It has a rigid apartheid legal system as the high Court of Justice fades away. The system preserving this apartheid is more ruthless than that seen in South Africa. (2009)

- *Ilan Pappé*, Israeli and former Haifa University history professor said, “Israel is now one of worst apartheid regimes in the world. It controls almost all of Palestine (apart from Gaza which it imprisoned hermetically since 2005). It has the largest number of apartheid laws and regulations than any country in the world and the longest imposition of emergency laws and regulations that rob citizens of their most basic human and civil rights.” (2011)

- *The Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa*, after two years of studying Israeli practices towards the Palestinians, concluded that Israel practices the “three pillars” of apartheid in the occupied territories in a manner calculated to prevent Palestinians from participation in the political, social, and cultural life of their country. (2009)

- Israeli laws and policies establish Jewish identity for purposes of law and afford a preferential legal status and material benefits to Jewish people over non-Jewish people.

- Israel’s policies and practices fragment the Occupied Palestinian Territories and ensure that Palestinians remain confined to the reserves designated for them while Israeli Jews are prohibited from entering those reserves but enjoy freedom of movement throughout much of the Palestinian territory.

- Israel invokes the need for “security” to impose sweeping restrictions on Palestinian rights to freedom of opinion, expression, assembly, association and movement. The true underlying intent is to suppress dissent to its system of domination and maintain control over Palestinians as a group.

### C. *Why Christians Cannot Be Silent*

Palestinian land and businesses have been expropriated, homes demolished, and property and farmland destroyed as a half-a-million Israeli settlers have moved into the West bank, including East Jerusalem. The illegal settlement colonies, the bypass roads that connect them, and the Separation Wall imprison Palestinians in isolated enclaves, eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state. *And the pace of Israeli human rights abuses and violation of international law appears to increase every year.*

The Israeli policies in the West Bank and the infrastructure of the illegal Israeli settlements, bypass roads, checkpoints, and separation wall/barrier that constitute an apartheid regime are in plain view for all to see and have been denounced by the PC(USA) at the last two General Assemblies. However, it is difficult for many Americans and Christians to recognize these Israeli actions as apartheid. One reason may be fear of disturbing our relationships with some of our Jewish or Christian brothers and sisters. It is difficult for many Christians to publicly criticize the policies of Israel’s government for fear that even legitimate criticism may be seen as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic or characterized as “picking on Israel.” Some Christians believe they must silence their criticism of Israel’s policies because of the history of the holocaust and the failure of many Christians to speak out at the time. Some believe that using the word “apartheid” has a harsh or jarring effect that can hamper constructive dialog.

Our call as Christians means we must sometimes get out of our comfort zone and risk controversy and criticism from people or organizations with which we are in relationship. It is because of this call that we must recognize what we witness in occupied Palestine, which is that Israel’s laws, practices, and policies constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people.

The PC(USA) 219th General Assembly (2010) was presented with an overture asking it to recognize that Israel’s laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people. The official action of the General Assembly was to acknowledge the facts on the ground that constitute apartheid by approving parts 1 and 2 of the Middle East Study Report,

but failing to recognize it as such because ““while we are deeply concerned with the policies implemented by Israel in relation to the Palestine territories and Palestinians under its jurisdiction, we believe that dialogue is hampered by words like “apartheid.”” In essence, the PC(USA) chose to be silent on the issue of apartheid because it is a word that might offend Jews and Christians whose relationships we hold dear. *While acknowledging the reality of apartheid, the PC(USA) balked at speaking this reality out loud.*

After World War II, when the horror of the holocaust was revealed, Jews around the world said “never again.” Many Christians around the world were shamed by their silence during the 1930s as Jews in Germany were given special cards identifying their religion, had their businesses shut down, had their land expropriated, and were forced to live in ghettos. Christians vowed that never again would they be silent if a government passed laws establishing and maintaining the domination by one ethnic group over another ethnic group through systematic separation, oppression, and denial of basic human rights. *Silence in the face of evil was wrong then, and it is wrong now.*

#### D. *Overture Rationale Outline*

The rationale portion of this overture is organized by the following sections:

1. Reference Maps
2. PC (USA) statements acknowledging Israeli human rights violations
3. PC (USA) policies and statements on the occupation of the West Bank
4. United Nations and World Court definition of apartheid
5. How Israel’s practices and policies constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people
6. Current PC (USA) statement on Israel apartheid towards Palestinians
7. Responding to criticisms by extreme defenders of Israel’s government actions, right or wrong

##### 1. *Reference Maps*

In order to visualize how the expropriation of Palestinian land and construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank , Israeli only bypass roads, and the separation wall/barrier combine to restrict Palestinians into isolated and ever shrinking enclaves, it is necessary to refer to the four reference maps that are included in this overture. It is helpful to refer to these maps when reading the PC(USA) statements below.

Map 1: Bypass roads linking settlement colonies in the West Bank with Israel allow unrestricted settler movement but allow limited or no access to Palestinians ([see 021-muskval-apartheid-maps](#); also page 1438).

Map 2: The separation wall is not on the internationally recognized Israel and Palestine boundary. Large swaths of Palestinian territory are on the “Israel side” of the wall ([see 021-muskval-apartheid-maps](#); also page 1438).

Map 3: Encircled enclaves (reserves or ghettos) confine Palestinians into 64 isolated and totally surrounded canton-like reserves in the West Bank ([see 021-muskval-apartheid-maps](#); also page 1439).

Map 4: Palestinian Loss of Land 1946–2010 ([see 021-muskval-apartheid-maps](#); also page 1439).

##### 2. *PC(USA) Statements Acknowledging Israeli Human Rights and International Law Violations*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the information, commentary, and policy statements in Chapters 1 and 2 of “Breaking Down the Walls,” a report of the Middle East Study Committee. These chapters of this report were approved by the GA Middle East Peacemaking Issues Committee by a vote of 43-0 and were overwhelmingly approved by the General Assembly. Through its actions at the 219th General Assembly (2010), the church expressed the following statements and concerns about Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. All information below in italics is a direct quote from the statements approved by the General Assembly.

- “The Israeli occupation leads to the denial of many human rights and the violation of international laws” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1046 of the electronic version).
- “One of the hopes of the Oslo Interim agreements was that settlement growth would cease; however, the opposite has occurred, resulting in a current population of the West Bank settlements at 285,000 and 198,700 settlers in East Jerusalem” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version). ([See maps 2, 3, 4.](#))
- “The continued growth of the number of settlements and settlers is perceived by many as an attempt by Israel to prevent the establishment of an economically viable Palestinian state” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version). ([See maps 2, 3, 4.](#))
- “The number of house demolitions is alarming and shocks the human conscience. It is estimated that some 24,145 Palestinian homes have been demolished in the Occupied Territories since 1967” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version).

- “Another concern of the occupation is the number of “Israeli-only bypass roads” that carve up the Palestinian homeland and connect one settlement to another. This has a devastating effect on the ability of Palestinian residents to live out a normal life—to visit family, farm family property; to seek medical treatment; to secure employment; and to travel freely in one’s own country” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version). ([See map 1.](#))
- “While few would deny the right of any government to put a barrier on its own property line ... three-quarters of this barrier is inside the West Bank on Palestinian land. This is often perceived by the Palestinians as an effort to secure an illegal settlement, claim water sources, and annex Palestinian land. The location of the barrier is a violation of international law and thus is perceived as a means to preempt a just peace” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version). ([See map 2.](#))
- “[The] overwhelming consensus of all [Middle East Study committee] members was that Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is a sin against God and other fellow human beings” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1045 of the electronic version).

These facts on the ground are irrefutable and acknowledged by Israel. The settlement colonies, the bypass roads that connect them, and the separation wall/barrier imprison Palestinians in isolated enclaves, eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state. In approving this report, the PC(USA) acknowledged these conditions.

### 3. *PC(USA) Statements Acknowledging Israeli Human Rights Violations*

The PC(USA) 219th General Assembly (2010) reaffirmed “Israel’s right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders in accordance with United Nations resolutions” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1022 of the electronic version; p. 367 of the print version). The General Assembly (GA) also recognized the daunting and mounting obstacles to the viability of a “two-state solution,” and affirmed with great urgency the historic Presbyterian stances with specific regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, calling for:

- an immediate cessation of all violence, whether perpetrated by Israelis or Palestinians; ...
- the end of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and diversion of water resources;
- an immediate freeze both on the establishment or expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and on the Israeli acquisition of Palestinian land and buildings in East Jerusalem;
- the relocation by Israel of the Separation Barrier to the 1967 border;
- the withholding of U.S. government aid to the state of Israel as long as Israel persists in creating new West Bank settlements;
- continuing corporate engagement through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment with companies profiting from the sale and use of their products for non-peaceful purposes and/or the violation of human rights;
- a shared status for Jerusalem;
- equal rights for Palestinian citizens of the state of Israel;
- the cessation of systematic violation of human rights by any party, specifically, practices of administrative detention, collective punishment, the torture of prisoners and suspects, home demolitions and evictions, and the deportation of dissidents
- the immediate resumption by Israel and Palestine of negotiations toward a two-state solution. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 1022–23 of the electronic version; p. 367 of the print version)

In addition, the General Assembly approved the following policies or calls for action:

- “Calls on the U.S. government to exercise strategically its international influence, including ... compliance with international law and peacemaking efforts” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1024 of the electronic version; p. 368 of the print version).
- “Call for the allocation of U.S. military aid funds to be contingent on compliance with”: (a) “the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 which prohibits giving assistance to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of human rights violations;” (b) “the U.S. Arms Export Control Act of 1976 which prohibits using U.S. weapons against civilians and civilian infrastructure;” and (c) “the U.S. foreign policy insofar as it pertains to recommendations for steps toward peace, in this instance, between Israelis and Palestinians.” “Expresses its extreme disappointment with the U.S. government that while the State of Israel has been found not to comply with the above statutes, it continues to be the recipient of U.S. military aid.” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1120 of the electronic version; pp. 370–71 of the print version).
- “... Strongly denounces Caterpillar’s continued profit-making from non-peaceful uses of ... its products [and presses] Caterpillar to [review] carefully its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take



affirmative steps to end its complicity in the violation of human rights” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 986 of the electronic version; p. 363 of the print version).

- “Calls on the Israeli and Egyptian governments to limit their blockade of Gaza solely to military equipment/devices and to guarantee adequate levels of food, medicine, building supplies, and other humanitarian items, and to allow free commercial exchange in and out of Gaza, and calls on the U.S. government to end any support for the blockade that interferes with the adequacy of such items or such exchange” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1024 of the electronic version; p. 368 of the print version).

- Calls on the U.S. government to exercise strategically its international influence and the withholding of financial, economic, and military aid to countries other than Israel, as we might with Israel, until such a time as the civil, religious, and other freedoms of their peoples are fully exercised; and to end U.S. taxpayer support for regimes that perpetuate inequality, and popular frustration (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1025 of the electronic version; p. 369 of the print version).

- Does not recognize that Israel’s laws, polices, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people because “While we are deeply concerned with the policies implemented by Israel in relation to the Palestine territories and Palestinians under its jurisdiction, we believe that dialogue is hampered by words like ‘apartheid’” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 994 of the electronic version; p. 363 of the print version).

The PC(USA) resolutions on Israel-Palestine are consistent with U.N. resolutions regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict and with international law. There have been many PC(USA) resolutions calling for an end to occupation of the West Bank since 1967. Unfortunately, to date these resolutions and words have had no effect on Israel’s occupation of Palestine. Nor have they changed Israel’s disregard for international law in the occupied territories.

It is because Israeli governments have ignored U.S., U.N., PC(USA), and other church and nongovernmental organization (NGO) calls for an end to the occupation for forty-four years that this overture asks the church to recognize that Israel’s laws, practices, and policies towards the Palestinian people constitutes apartheid. Until the churches and others call it what it is, Israel has little motivation to end the occupation and change its laws to conform to UN resolutions and international law.

#### 4. *United Nations and World Court Definition of Apartheid*

Appendix A contains The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid adopted in 1973 by the U.N. General Assembly and the World Court definition of apartheid.

The U.N. Apartheid Convention states that the term “crime of apartheid” applies to acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group over any other racial group and systematically oppressing them. Practices constituting apartheid include:

- Denying basic human freedoms, including the freedom of movement, residence, opinion, expression, and peaceful assembly and freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment.
- Denying basic human rights, including the right to a nationality, to education, to leave and to return to one’s country, to work, and to form recognized trade unions.
- The expropriation of landed property belonging to a racial group or groups or to members thereof.
- Legislative measures, designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or groups.

Government leaders can be accused of committing the crime of apartheid if they institute or administer laws, practices, and policies that establish apartheid conditions. It is up to the United Nations or the World Court to prosecute those guilty of apartheid. However, individuals, and churches can recognize apartheid and witness to that effect. This procedure is much like our criminal justice system. If a citizen who witnesses a crime like a robbery or assault, they can recognize that a crime has been committed and witness to that effect even though only the court system can legally prosecute the crime. The following sections are a witness to how Israel’s practices and policies constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people.

#### 5. *How Israel’s Laws, Policies and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against the Palestinian People*

Israel’s laws, polices, and practices towards Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem establish and maintain the domination of one ethnic group of persons over another ethnic group through systematic discrimination and oppression in violation of the U.N. International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the World Court definition of Crimes Against Humanity.

Israel has created a system where one ethnic group, Israeli Jewish nationals, have a superior status and another ethnic group, Christian and Muslim living in Palestine and Israel, have an inferior status. Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically take actions to prevent Palestinians from participating in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of their country. The expropriation of Palestinian land, restrictions on the freedom of movement and residence, confining Palestinians to ghettos, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of Palestinians, the restriction or denial of Palestinian rights to work, education, peaceful assembly, and religious practices are all part of Israeli measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from full participation in the economic, environmental, and social life of their country. This discriminatory system benefits Israeli Jews and causes irreparable harm to non-Jews both in Israel itself and in the occupied Palestinian territories.

This overture highlights the following seven areas in which the state of Israel's laws, policies, and practices violate the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid ratified by the United Nations.

a. *Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid through the expropriation of landed property belonging to Palestinians.*

- Under the 1947 United Nations Palestine partition Resolution 181, 56 percent of the land area of Palestine was designated for a Jewish state and 44 percent for an Arab state. This resolution stipulated that the equal rights of minorities within each state must be protected. However, in the war that followed Israel's declaration of independence in May 1948, Israel occupied 78 percent of the land thereby expropriating much of the land designated by the United Nations for an independent Arab state.

- In 1947–48, 750,000 non-Jewish residents of land designated by the U.N. for the Jewish state and much of the Arab state were either forcibly removed from their landed property or not allowed to return to their homes in defiance of international law. The land was expropriated by Israel for Jewish housing, farms, roads, businesses, parks, and cemeteries.

- In June 1967, East Jerusalem was occupied by the Israeli military. Twenty-seven square miles of East Jerusalem were annexed to Israel. More than 30 percent of the land in East Jerusalem has been expropriated to build new settlements where approximately 190,000 Israeli's reside in 46,978 units of housing.

- Between 1967 and 2009, vast areas of West Bank land have been expropriated to allow more than 121 settlements and 100 outposts for Jewish residents. Nearly half a million settlers now live in the occupied West Bank, including 190,000 in East Jerusalem.

- Separation walls/barriers are constructed on land in the West bank and will expropriate an additional 11.9 percent of Palestinian land in the West Bank when completed.

- The agricultural Jordan Valley area, about 30 percent of the West Bank, is now off limits to most Palestinians.

- The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually expropriates the landed property of Palestinians in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

b. *Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by denying the right to freedom of residence to Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.*

- Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically prevent Palestinians from freedom of residence through denial of building permits for the construction of Palestinian housing and the demolition of Palestinian housing. In those areas of the West Bank and East Jerusalem where Palestinian housing is destroyed or denied, homes for Jewish settlers are permitted and constructed and only Jewish people can live in the settlement colonies.

- Between 1967 and the end of 2001, almost no Palestinian housing units were given construction permits in East Jerusalem. In that same time period, 46,978 housing units were built for Jewish settlers in East Jerusalem.

- In 1967, the population of East Jerusalem was almost entirely Palestinian. Today there are approximately 190,000 Jewish settlers. Palestinians now constitute one-third of East Jerusalem's population.

- From June 1967 to June 2009, more than 24,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished in the occupied territories.

- The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually denies the freedom of residence to Palestinians in violation of the international conventions on apartheid.

c. *Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by denying Palestinians the right to freedom of movement in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.*

Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically deny Palestinians the right to movement. Israel uses a number of means to restrict Palestinian movement in the West Bank, which include: permanent and temporary checkpoints, physical obstructions, the Separation Wall, roads on which only Israelis can drive, and the movement-permit regime.

- *Checkpoints:* In 2009, more than 600 checkpoints and roadblocks in the occupied West Bank restrict Palestinians' freedom of movement to their homes, businesses, schools, jobs, hospitals, and farms. Palestinians routinely suffer indeterminate waiting, humiliating treatment, uncertainty, and denial of access at checkpoints.

- *Segregated roads:* Segregated roads, which Israel euphemistically calls "bypass roads," link settlement colonies with one another and with Israel. The 493 miles of bypass roads provide unrestricted access to Israeli vehicles but restrict or prohibit Palestinian travel. These roads cut off Palestinians from their agricultural land, schools, hospitals, markets, and extended families and carve up the West Bank into isolated enclaves.

- *Separation Wall:* In the West Bank much of the Separation Wall extends well beyond the internationally recognized border and separates Palestinian homes and their farmland, businesses, schools, hospitals, and the homes of family and friends. In East Jerusalem the Separation Wall is constructed through the middle of a once contiguous city, much like the Berlin Wall. The wall's main purpose is not security, but rather to separate Palestinians from Israeli settlement colonies on expropriated Palestinian land. The Separation Wall cuts deeply into the West Bank in several locations. There is creeping confiscation of land in the areas between the Green Line and the Wall, where severe movement restrictions continue to result in the inability of Palestinian landowners to farm their land. Along this zone between the Green Line and the Wall thousands of Palestinians on both sides of the barrier are being driven into poverty by restrictions on residency, lack of access to farm lands, inability to market their crops, and confiscation of land.

By implementing these means, Israel has split the occupied territories into six geographical areas: North, Center, South, the Jordan Valley, and northern Dead Sea. Movement between the sections and within each section has become, in recent years, hard, slow, and sometimes impossible. Israel almost completely forbids the movement of Palestinians between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and impedes Palestinians from entering Israel and going abroad.

These restrictions significantly affect the daily lives of Palestinians in commerce, in access to medical treatment and educational institutions, and in conducting social activities. Simple actions such as going to work in a nearby town, marketing farm produce, obtaining medical treatment, and visiting relatives entail bureaucratic procedures and great uncertainty.

Israel's restriction on freedom of movement for non-Jewish Palestinians is discrimination based on ethnic origin since these restrictions apply only to Palestinians. Jewish residents are permitted to enter and leave settlements without restriction.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually denies the freedom of movement to Palestinians in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

d. *Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by dividing the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the Palestinians.*

Sections a, b, and c, above, and [maps 1, 2, and 3](#) show how Israeli laws, policies, and practices in the West Bank combined with the infrastructure of illegal settlements, bypass roads, checkpoints, and the separation wall/ barrier systematically create separate reserves or ghettos for Palestinians. Palestinians are forced to live in isolated enclaves that in turn eviscerates the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually divides the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the Palestinians in violation of the international conventions on apartheid.

e. *Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by denying Palestinians the right to a nationality.*

- On November 29, 1947, the United Nations adopted a Partition Plan for Palestine that divided the League of Nations' British Mandate of Palestine. In this partition plan, 44 percent of the land was allocated for an Arab state and 56 percent was allocated for the Jewish state. While Israel did become an independent state in 1948, the independent Arab state did not come into existence because the land designated as an independent Arab state was militarily occupied.

- Between 1948 and 2009, the state of Israel has systematically occupied and/or annexed most of the land that had been designated by the United Nations for an independent Palestinian state. In doing so, Israel has denied the Palestinians a right to a nationality.

- In 1967, Israel annexed East Jerusalem in violation of international law.

- Between 1967 and 2009, Israel has controlled the rural undeveloped part of the West Bank, called Area C in the Oslo Peace agreement. Through the construction of settlement colonies, bypass roads, the separation wall/barrier, buffer zones, and the creation of land reserves, Israel has left Palestinians in control of only 13 percent of the land area of the British mandate of Palestine.

- Israel has failed to implement the November 22, 1967, United Nations Resolution 242 requiring Israel to withdraw its forces from the West Bank and Gaza.

- In 1978, Israeli Menachem Begin signed the Camp David Accords, which stated, “the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by its inhabitants.” By not implementing this agreement to end its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel has denied the Palestinians right to a nationality.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually denies Palestinians the right to a nationality in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

f. *Israel’s laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by deliberate imposition of living conditions calculated to cause the physical destruction of Palestinians in whole or in part.*

The physical wellbeing of any people is determined in large part by their access to adequate housing, drinking water, agricultural irrigation water, food, agricultural areas, utilities, employment, education, and wastewater treatment. The laws, policies, and practices of Israel systematically deprive many Palestinians adequate living conditions in some or all of the above areas. Israeli practices deliberately impose on Palestinians living conditions calculated to make life intolerable. Israel exploits Palestinian natural water and land resources through restricting water supply to Palestinians, not investing in infrastructure for economic development, uprooting olive and fruit trees of Palestinian farmers, and preventing the freedom of commerce for Palestinian farmers and workers.

- Over one and a quarter million olive and fruit trees and thousands of acres of farmland have been destroyed in Palestinian territories since 1967. Nearly 465,000 olive trees were uprooted between 2000 and 2005.

- Since the beginning of the occupation in 1967, Israel’s strict control of the water sector in the occupied territories has prevented development to meet Palestinian water needs, and caused shortages and a water-quality crisis.

- Israel has neglected construction of infrastructure to connect the Palestinian rural population to a running water network as well as proper maintenance of existing networks. In 2008, 227,500 Palestinians in 220 towns and villages were not connected to a water network. Another 190,000 Palestinians are only partially served.

- Of the water available from West Bank aquifers, Israel uses 83 percent, (10 percent for illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank and 73 percent residents in Israel). West Bank Palestinians use the remaining 17 percent.

- Israel generally restricts Palestinian water use to the municipal and limited commercial and industrial sectors by limiting the extraction of groundwater for agricultural irrigation purposes.

- In the West Bank, about 50 groundwater wells and more than 200 cisterns have been destroyed or isolated from their owners by construction of the separation barrier, affecting the domestic and agricultural needs of more than 122,000 people.

- Only 7 percent of the water in the Gaza Strip meets World Health Organization standards.

- West Bank Palestinian water consumption is 40 liters per day less than the minimum global standards set by the World Health Organization.

- Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem pay taxes, but receive few benefits. The municipality has failed to invest significantly in infrastructure and services, such as roads, sidewalks and water and sewage systems, in East Jerusalem’s Palestinian neighborhoods.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and deliberately imposes living conditions calculated to cause the physical destruction of Palestinians in whole or in part, in violation of the international conventions on apartheid.

g. *Israel’s laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid by enacting legislative and other measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from participation in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of their country.*

Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically take actions to prevent Palestinians from participating in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of their occupied country. The expropriation of Palestinian land, restrictions on the freedom of movement and residence, confining Palestinians to ghettos, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of Palestinians, the restriction or denial of Palestinian rights to work, education, peaceful assembly, and religious practices are all part of Israeli measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from full participation in the economic, environmental, and social life of their country. This discriminatory system benefits Israeli Jews and causes irreparable harm to non-Jews both in Israel itself and in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually enacting legislative and other measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the occupied country, in violation of the international conventions on apartheid.

6. *The Current PC(USA) Statement on Israel Apartheid Towards Palestinians.*

Sections 2 and 3 above summarize the actions of the PC(USA) 219th General Assembly (2010), which acknowledge how Israel's laws, practices, and policies in the West Bank, combined with the infrastructure of the illegal settlement colonies, the bypass roads that connect them, and the separation wall/barrier result in the imprisonment of Palestinians in isolated enclaves, eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state.

Section 5 summarizes the ways in which Israel's action in the West Bank constitutes apartheid and the first two pages of the rationale section quote some of the notable Christian and Jewish voices around the world who have named Israeli apartheid. So what is the position of the PC(USA)?

At the 219th General Assembly (2010), the PC(USA) was presented with an overture asking it to recognize that Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people. The official action of the General Assembly was to say this overture was "answered by" the approval of Parts I and II of the Middle East Study Report with the comment that "while we are deeply concerned with the policies implemented by Israel in relation to the Palestine territories and Palestinians under its jurisdiction, we believe that dialogue is hampered by words like 'apartheid'" (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 994 of the electronic version; p. 363 of the print version).

In summary, the General Assembly acknowledged the facts on the ground and the Israeli practices that fit the definition of apartheid by the U.N. and the World Court, but did not want to recognize it was apartheid because using the word "apartheid" creates conflict. Our theological tradition has always recognized that opposition to injustice is part of Jewish and Christian faithfulness to God. In spite of the painful conflict, Jesus declared, "Blessed are the peacemakers."

To help solve a problem, one must accurately name it. Only after the churches and nations of the world acknowledged apartheid and embraced the conflict-filled struggle for change in South Africa was the problem addressed. When the PC(USA) showed leadership to help end segregation in the U.S. in the 1950s and 60s, it took courageous and controversial positions at a time when many white Americans and Christians opposed measures to end it. The church did not refrain from using the word "segregation" because it "hampered dialog." Likewise, when the church evaluated the facts on the ground in South Africa in the 1970s and 80s, it took leadership to help end it and expressed no concern that calling South African practices "apartheid" would hamper dialog. The prophetic voice of the church, while true, is often unsettling to some. But silence in the face of injustice should be more unsettling.

On the other hand, Israel fought a six-day war with Jordan and Egypt in 1967 and occupied the West Bank and Gaza with their infrastructures intact with people who had already enjoyed most of the human rights and freedoms that are characteristic of a modern state. Under Israel's occupation, Palestinians' human rights and freedoms have been drastically diminished each year. The occupation of the West Bank by Israel is not a temporary situation that is getting better, it is a permanent situation that is getting worse. The PC(USA) must recognize the facts on the ground for what they are: apartheid.

7. *Responding to Criticisms by Extreme Defenders of Israel's Government Actions, Right or Wrong.*

Those who criticize Israel's actions in the occupied West Bank are sometimes falsely accused by extreme defenders of Israel, right or wrong, as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic and try to deflect, confuse, and conflate issues to divert attention from the facts on the ground. Those who support this overture may receive such criticism. Below are responses to such criticism.

a. *This overture is not anti-Israel.*

This overture intentionally focuses on Israel's laws, practices, and policies that promote the occupation of Palestinian territories. Most critics of Israel's occupation of Palestine also strongly recognize Israel's existence within the internationally recognized 1967 borders and emphatically condemn violence against civilians by all parties. Israel, like all nations, has the right to provide security for their citizens by taking appropriate measures that are consistent with international law. Holding Israel accountable to these same global standards is not anti-Israel.

Many Israeli and American Jews oppose settlement colonies on Palestinian land, all of which are illegal under international law. Within the Israeli and U.S. Jewish communities there is a growing, active, and passionate debate about whether Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is in the best interest of Israel. Each side in this debate is pro-Israel, trying to discern how to assure a secure, viable, and sustainable state. Christians must support the pro-Israel positions that advocate for human rights and justice for the Palestinian people and reject the positions that promote the systematic oppression of the Palestinian people. When patriotic Americans spoke out against slavery, racial segregation, or the Vietnam and Iraqi wars, some Americans falsely accused them of being anti-American. Critics of Israel's occupation of Palestine may also be falsely accused of being anti-Israel, but they are not. They are pro-human rights.

b. *This overture is not anti-Semitic.*

This overture is not critical of Jews as people or of Jewish religion or culture. It intentionally states it is Israel's laws, policies, and practices towards the Palestinian people that constitute apartheid. Many Jewish individuals and human rights organizations in Israel and the U.S. recognize that Israeli actions in the West Bank and Gaza constitute apartheid. Christians must, with confidence, reject any politically motivated charges of anti-Semitism that are made to silence legitimate criticism of Israel's apartheid practices. This kind of hyperbolic language is untrue, harms civil discourse, and serves to hamper efforts to monitor, and prevent Israeli human rights violations. Not engaging in morally responsible action when faced with the clear findings of human rights organizations and the international community is morally indefensible.

c. *This overture is part of an honest inter-faith dialog between Jews and Christians.*

Building strong interfaith relationships with our Jewish brothers and sisters is important for many Christians and churches. They are built on mutual interest, honesty, and integrity. Interfaith conversations encompass social justice issues such as hunger, homelessness, poverty, discrimination, human rights, war, and peace. Israel's policies in occupied Palestine are but one issue. The Jewish community itself is divided on it. An honest dialog ultimately builds stronger relationships while silence erodes them. Through honest dialog we may find some Jewish people who support the occupation and some who agree it must end. We must have confidence that the interfaith relationships we have built on many social justice issues are strong enough to sustain a disagreement on the wisdom of Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Some relationships may be strengthened and some may be strained, but they are unlikely to break if they are based on honoring each other's call to be faithful to their interpretation of Scripture.

d. *Israel's militarily occupation of Palestine is not needed for security reasons.*

At any time since 1967, Israel could have allowed the United Nations to occupy the West Bank and provide security. U.N. peacekeeping missions have been successful in dozens of countries. However, if the U.N. had occupied Palestine to provide security in 1967 or anytime thereafter, it would have preserved the land for residents of a Palestinian state and not allowed Israel to expropriate Palestinian land to build Jewish settlement colonies. Israel does not need to occupy the West Bank for security reasons. It chooses to occupy the West Bank so it can expand its borders and dominate the Palestinian people.

e. *Is it appropriate to criticize Israel's human rights violations?*

There are human rights violations and injustices in many countries in the Middle East besides Israel, and all such violations should be equally condemned. However, one reason to focus on Israel is that it receives more than one-third of all U.S. foreign aid. Americans therefore have a special responsibility to make sure that money is used to prevent social injustice, not to perpetuate it. Israel is the sixteenth richest country in the world, has the fourth largest army, is the third largest arms producer, the fourth largest nuclear power, refuses to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, and has defied seventy United Nations Security Council resolutions seeking peaceful reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. The U.S. government complicity with Israel obligates us to speak out.

8. *Why the PC(USA) Should Recognize That Israel's Laws, Policies, and Practices Constitute Apartheid.*

Each year the ordeals and injustices suffered by the Palestinian people in the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel continue. Land is expropriated, homes are demolished, and freedom of movement is restricted. The combination of Israeli settlement colonies on Palestinian land, the bypass roads connecting these settlements, and the Separation Wall creates a network of barriers that confine Palestinians to live in separate reserves and ghettos. The rights to work, education, freedom from arbitrary arrest, peaceful assembly, and freedom of expression granted under international law are restricted or denied.

Many political, social, and religious leaders have looked at Israel's laws, policies, and practices in occupied Palestine and have asserted that they constitute apartheid. The PC(USA) has not been one of those voices. Our silence can be seen as complicity with the Israeli government actions. It is time to end our silence and give a name to injustices already condemned by many PC(USA) resolutions. In response to the urgent call from our Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers, now is the time for the PC(USA) to recognize that Israel's laws, policies, and practices constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people.

## Appendix A

## International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid

Adopted and opened for signature, ratification by General Assembly resolution 3068 (XXVIII) of 30 November 1973, *entry into force* 18 July 1976, in accordance with article XV

*The States Parties to the present Convention, have agreed as follows:*

*Article I*

1. The States Parties to the present Convention declare that apartheid is a crime against humanity and that inhuman acts resulting from the policies and practices of apartheid and similar policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination, as defined in article

II of the Convention, are crimes violating the principles of international law, in particular the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and constituting a serious threat to international peace and security.

2. The States Parties to the present Convention declare criminal those organizations, institutions and individuals committing the crime of apartheid.

#### Article II

For the purpose of the present Convention, the term “the crime of apartheid”, which shall include similar policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination as practiced in southern Africa, shall apply to the following inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them:

- a. Denial to a member or members of a racial group or groups of the right to life and liberty of person:
  1. By murder of members of a racial group or groups;
  2. By the infliction upon the members of a racial group or groups of serious bodily or mental harm, by the infringement of their freedom or dignity, or by subjecting them to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
  3. By arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment of the members of a racial group or groups;
- b. Deliberate imposition on a racial group or groups of living conditions calculated to cause its or their physical destruction in whole or in part;
- c. Any legislative measures and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group or groups from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, in particular by denying to members of a racial group or groups basic human rights and freedoms, including the right to work, the right to form recognized trade unions, the right to education, the right to leave and to return to their country, the right to a nationality, the right to freedom of movement and residence, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- d. Any measures, including legislative measures, designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or groups, the prohibition of mixed marriages among members of various racial groups, the expropriation of landed property belonging to a racial group or groups or to members thereof
- e. Exploitation of the labour of the members of a racial group or groups, in particular by submitting them to forced labour;
- f. Persecution of organizations and persons, by depriving them of fundamental rights and freedoms, because they oppose apartheid. <http://www.icc-cpi.int/NR/rdonlyres/6C2AB560-3E9D-401D-ACD8-A6F7C3AA7F6E/248661/372818.PDF>

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#### Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Effective July 1, 2002

##### Article 1: The Court

An International Criminal Court (“the Court”) is hereby established. It shall be a permanent institution and shall have the power to exercise its jurisdiction over persons for the most serious crimes of international concern, as referred to in this Statute, and shall be complementary to national criminal jurisdictions. The jurisdiction and functioning of the Court shall be governed by the provisions of this Statute.

...

##### Article 5: Crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court

The jurisdiction of the Court shall be limited to the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole. The Court has jurisdiction in accordance with this Statute with respect to the following crimes: (a) The crime of genocide; (b) *Crimes against humanity*; (c) War crimes; and (d) The crime of aggression. ...

##### Article 7: Crimes against humanity

7.1 For the purpose of this Statute, “*crime against humanity*” means any one of 11 specifically identified acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, including murder; extermination; deportation or forcible transfer of population; imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law; torture; persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, *the crime of apartheid*, and other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health. ...

7.2.(h) “*The crime of apartheid*” means inhumane acts of a character similar to those referred to in paragraph 7.1, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.

Concurrence to Item 15-01 from the Presbyteries of Palisades, Redwoods, and San Francisco and the Synod of the Covenant.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 15-01 requests the General Assembly to recognize that laws and practices of the State of Israel constitute apartheid or racial-ethnic separation of the Palestinian people from Israelis.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012), in response to Item 15-01, approve the following alternate resolution:

“The 220th General Assembly (2012)

“1. recognizes that the State of Israel’s laws and policies restricting Palestinian movement, legal status, rights of family unification, and the practices of checkpoints, indefinite detention, land confiscation, home demolition, and inferior education, healthcare, and public services constitute a form of apartheid or ethnic separation that systematically favors one ethnic and religious group over another;

“2. directs the Middle East Staff Team to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the legal ramifications if the United Nations were to determine that Israeli controls over the Palestinian population and land constituted apartheid, to provide a listing of specific laws that enforce separation and differential standards between the population groups, and to consult with U.S. State Department and Human Rights organizations on what “crimes of apartheid” might be considered under such a determination;

“3. directs that the information provided in the rationale be posted on the Middle East Liaison Office website, including a concise chart comparing practices in Israel and the occupied territories (Palestine) with the criteria provided in Appendix A; and

“4. urges Presbyterian members and appropriate GAMC offices, to study the situation in Israel and occupied Palestine and to seek ways to bring an end to Israel’s particular form of apartheid or separation.”

#### *Rationale*

Item 15-01 is correct in saying that the word, “apartheid,” is not used primarily so as not to offend members of the Jewish community. It is seen as a conversation-stopper and more, deeply offensive and insulting. Yet in sheer scale, the monumentally ugly separation wall, the Jewish-Israeli only roads, the lack of mobility and rights, the continual violence and brutality around the checkpoints and night raids, all impress South Africans as more stringent than the system of separation they suffered from. This item argues that for the sake of truth, it is time to name a process that has been compared to the construction of a set of open-air prisons or ghettos. And the name that carries with this sense of complete discrimination is apartheid.

Needless to say, there are differences between South African practice and that of Israel. The international legal definition of apartheid indicates that “similar” to South African practice is enough for the determination. Whether or not the word is used, it can be argued that the process of separation under the Israeli occupation has some of the same results, creating more hostility and mistrust than before the violence of the Second Intifada. On April 28, 2012, for example, former Israeli domestic intelligence chief, Yuval Diskin warned of the dangers of general Israeli trends, among settlers in particular:

Over the past 10–15 years Israel has become more and more racist. All of the studies point to this. This is racism toward Arabs and toward foreigners, and we are also becoming a more belligerent society. (<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-s-former-shin-bet-chief-i-have-no-confidence-in-netanyahu-barak-1.426908>)

It should be stated, whether the commissioners wish to approve, reject, or modify the position of this overture, that the use of the word, apartheid, does not materially change the policies of the church. Divestment, in particular, does not require a determination of apartheid. It is a condition of discriminatory racial and ethnic separation that reinforces inequality and does not make for peace.

It should also be noted that the General Assembly positions on Israel and Palestine seek to reflect accurately the far greater power of the State of Israel and do not imply that all Palestinians are innocent victims. The report approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), “Break Down the Walls,” used the work of former Knesset speaker, Avraham Burg, to understand how both Israelis and Palestinians have historic traumas that affect their abilities to understand the suffering of the other group. Those wounded and threatened feelings are significant, yet the power to affect current wounding processes is *more* with those physically in control of the other population. The hope of those advocating use of the word, apartheid, to describe the occupation, is to use another kind of power.



**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-01.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this overture because we agree with B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, who state “Israel has created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation based on discrimination.” The facts on the ground qualify as apartheid according to the U.N. Apartheid Convention because they apply to actions committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial ethnic group over another, and on that basis, result in oppressing an entire ethnicity.

Palestinians are denied nationality, and Israeli Jewish nationals (settlers) have a superior status over Christians and Muslims living in Palestine on the basis of racial ethnic reasons. Jewish settlers live in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) under civil law, while the indigenous people live under military law. The separation is complete and based on race and ethnicity. The ACREC believes this kind of injustice should be confronted and not be conditional on who is being oppressed by whom.

According to The Abraham Fund, an initiative working since 1989 “to promote coexistence and equality among Israel’s Jewish and Arab citizens,” there is great inequality in Israel’s population, which is far worse in the OPT. This wide inequality gap is foundational for keeping Israel’s official policy of *Hafrada* (separation in Hebrew) in place. (*Apartheid* means separation in Afrikaans.)

“Although Israel’s Arab citizens account for one-fifth of the country’s population, the economy of Israel is largely oriented toward its Jewish population. The Poverty Report (National Insurance Institute, 2006) indicates that over 54% of the country’s Arab citizens were living in poverty in 2006, compared to 14.7% of the country’s Jewish citizens. The widespread poverty among Arab families is attributed, for the most part, to the low employment rate of Arab citizens. (The Abraham Fund)

The ACREC points to this data as foundational to attitudes that have developed in Israel and the OPT, which contribute to keeping the populations separate and unequal. As early as 2007, the popular Israeli news source, *Ynet News*, reported on the rise of racism in Israel:

Association for Civil Rights in Israel publishes annual report; reveals country overwhelmed by racism, restriction of personal freedoms, discrimination, especially towards Israeli-Arabs. Report not surprising, say Arab MKs [member of Knesset]

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel’s (ACRI) report on civil rights in Israel paints a bleak picture: Increasing racism, restriction of personal freedoms and discrimination even within the Knesset walls – and that’s just scratching the surface.

Published Saturday, the report revealed that Israeli youths are bombarded with stereotypic, racist imagery, and their opinions have developed accordingly: Over two-thirds of Israeli teens believe Arabs to be less intelligent, uncultured and violent. Over a third of Israeli teens fear Arabs all together.

The report becomes even grimmer, citing the ACRI’s racism poll, taken in March of 2007, in which 50% of Israelis taking part said they would not live in the same building as Arabs, will not befriend, or let their children befriend Arabs and would not let Arabs into their homes.

Fifty percent of those polled also said they believed Israel should encourage its Arab citizens to emigrate. Racism in Israel is on the rise, said the report: in 2006 there was a 26% increase in racist incidents towards Arabs and the general sense of hatred towards them has doubled.

Reinforcing a negative image

The media, said the ACRI, played a major part in fanning the flame, intensifying the Arab image as negative and terrorizing.

The Knesset was not absent from the report as well, as it allows bills which delegitimize Israel’s Arab citizens before the plenum, preconditions social rights in IDF or national service and make its Arab MKs swear allegiance to a Jewish State.

The report devotes a special section to the recently approved JNF bill, which allows Jewish National Fund land – which make up 13% of all State owned land—to be allocated to Jews only.

According to the report, Israeli Arabs are subject to constant racial proofing, which defines them as a security threat; resulting in demeaning and degrading treatment at airports and public venues. Furthermore, in the Second Lebanon War, some 40% of the citizens killed were Israeli-Arabs, mostly due to a severe lack of shelters, but still—the rehabilitation and fortification of Arab towns remains, according to the report, ridiculously low.

“This report doesn’t come as a surprise,” Hadash Chairman MK Mohammad Barakeh told *Ynet* Saturday. “No one should be surprised by them. These findings are a natural outcome of the racial slurs by political leaders and the racial policy that have been implemented by the Israeli governments towards the Arab population for the past 60 years. “Such racism,” added Barakeh, “can only be cured by changing the Israeli government’s racial mentality.”

“Racism has become the norm in Israeli society,” said MK Ahmad Tibi (United Arab List-Ta’al). “Israel is ridden with discrimination through and through. ([Racism in Israel on the rise](#) by Aviram Zino, *Ynet News*, December 8, 2007)

The ACREC notes that the situation has only worsened since this article was written, and settler violence against the indigenous population in the OPT is at an all-time high.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-01

*Comment on Item 15-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The overture accurately describes many laws, policies, and practices of the Israeli government and the suffering and human rights abuses they inflict on the Palestinian people.

Our Palestinian Christian partners, as well as most mission personnel of American mainline denominations serving in the region and some Israeli human rights organizations, describe the situation this creates in Israel/Palestine as apartheid.

In 2009, Palestinian Christians issued a statement, *Kairos Palestine*, in which they request the international community to “stand by the Palestinian people who have faced oppression, displacement, suffering, and clear apartheid for more than six decades. The suffering continues while the international community silently looks on at the occupying State, Israel. Our word is a cry of hope, with love, prayer, and faith in God. We address it first of all to ourselves and then to all the churches and Christians in the world, asking them to stand against injustice and apartheid, urging them to work for a just peace in our region, calling on them to revisit theologies that justify crimes perpetrated against our people and the dispossession of the land” (<http://www.kairospalestine.ps/sites/default/Documents/English.pdf>).

Others in Israel/Palestine do not use the term apartheid to describe the situation and believe the use of that term may undermine progress on improving the situation.

Commissioners will have to discern whether the PC(USA)’s use of the term apartheid will enhance the church’s understanding of the situation in Israel/Palestine and if it will advance the search for a just resolution.

The rationale for this overture refers to the International Criminal Court (ICC) as the “World Court.” However, in international bodies, the term “World Court” actually refers to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The International Court of Justice (ICJ) adjudicates disputes between nations, while the International Criminal Court prosecutes individuals. This correction has no impact on the substance of the overture.

The situation faced by Palestinians and Israelis cries out for continued prayer, study, and faithful engagement by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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## Item 15-02

[The assembly approved Item 15-02 with amendment. See p. 41.]

*On Boycotting Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories and Hadiklaim (an Israeli Date Growers Cooperative)—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. ~~[Condemn the production and sale of Israeli products that come from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.]~~ **[Call upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.]**

2. **Call for the boycott of [all Israeli products coming from the occupied Palestinian Territories, including] AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products[-] [and all date products of Hadiklaim, The Israel Date Growers Co-Operative Ltd, often marked by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River (not Israeli products from Israel.)]**

~~[3. Call for the boycott of all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Cooperative, Ltd., often marketed by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River.]~~

[4.] **[3.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC (USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott [until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.]**

[5.] **[4.] Direct the Stated Clerk to inform [5.] [4.] ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, and call upon them to join in the boycott of these companies.**

### *Rationale*

Since the occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967, Israel has used its military rule to the advantage of Israeli corporations and economic interests, many times to the detriment of the Palestinian economy under its control.

All Palestinian imports and exports have been controlled, restricting the competition with Israeli producers, and making the Palestinian consumer market into a captive market for Israeli goods. Severe restrictions on movement of Palestinian labor and products inside the occupied territories and to neighboring areas have further increased the dependency of the Palestinian economy on Israeli companies as employers and retailers. The growing network of checkpoints and walls has all but destroyed Palestinian local production and the Palestinian labor bargaining power.

Israeli companies have a relatively high concentration of capital, freedom of movement, and favorable legal conditions. When operating in the occupied territories they also enjoy special governmental support, access to cheap resources, tax incentives, and a very lax enforcement of labor laws and environmental protection laws. These advantages often result in the exploitation of Palestinian labor, Palestinian natural resources, and the Palestinian consumer market (<http://www.whoprofits.org/involvement/economic-exploitation>).

#### 1. *What is AHAVA, what international laws does AHAVA violate and why are we calling for a boycott?*

Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories ([www.ahava.co.il](http://www.ahava.co.il)) is a privately held Israeli cosmetics company that manufactures products using minerals and mud from the Dead Sea. Ahava's products—such as Grape & Avocado Body Wash, Dead Sea Mineral Mud, and Mineral Foot Cream—are widely available in high-end department stores and pharmacies throughout the United States and in Europe. The Hebrew word “Ahava” means love, but there is nothing loving about what the company is doing in the Occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank. The company's practices are against international law.

The company's main factory and its visitors' center are located in the Israeli settlement of Mitzpe Shalem in the Occupied West Bank. Ahava products are labeled as of “Israeli origin,” but according to international public law, the West Bank cannot be considered to be part of the State of Israel. Ahava uses in its products mud from the Dead Sea, excavated in an occupied area, and thus it exploits occupied natural resources for profit, which is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (<http://www.stolenbeauty.org/article.php?id=5015>).

#### 2. *What is Hadiklaim and why are we calling for a boycott?*

Hadiklaim is an Israel date growers cooperative that deals with several major supermarkets internationally. Hadiklaim exports under the “King Solomon Dates” and “Jordan River” brand names. Their products are exported by the Israeli company, Almog Tradex Ltd, which claims to export 10,000 tons of Israeli fruits annually. Hadiklaim boasts that Hadiklaim growers and packing houses have approvals from international standard setting bodies (including Bio USDA), as well as the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture and the Bio-Organic Agriculture Association. Hadiklaim packages dates under U.S. supermarket labels, the Hadiklaim name may not show up on the label, yet the fact that the USDA is involved makes it clear that their dates are getting here under some form of packaging.

Hadiklaim signage is displayed on packing houses in the settlements of Beit Ha'Arava, close to the Dead Sea Coast, and Tomer, close to the Palestinian village of Fasayil. In October 2007, a group of campaigners from the Brighton Tubas Friendship and Solidarity Group ([www.brightonpalestine.org](http://www.brightonpalestine.org)) entered Tomer settlement in the occupied Jordan Valley and photographed Hadiklaim medjoul dates, packaged by Carmel Agrexco, labeled “Made in Israel” and marked as bound for Tesco stores (UK). Products exported as “Made in Israel” benefit from the preferential trade terms of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which came into effect in 2000, when ITN (a British broadcaster) screened an expose in 2007 accusing supermarkets of misleading British consumers. Tesco admitted it had acted “in error” and stated that Israeli dates originating solely in the West Bank will (in the future) be labeled as such.

Date picking in the Jordan Valley is a hazardous business. Workers are hoisted into the trees with a cherry picker and are often left to work on a platform high above the ground for the duration of the working day without meal or toilet breaks. The majority of workers are Palestinian or Thai migrants—who are uniformly paid below the minimum wage. For more info on labor conditions for date pickers in the Jordan Valley see Kav'La Oved and UNISON'S 2009 film, *Bitter Dates* at <http://www.leedspsc.org.uk/?p=1671>. <http://corporateoccupation.wordpress.com/2010/08/12/hadiklaim-in-the-jordan-valley/>

#### 3. *Why are AHAVA and Hadiklaim being singled out by the PC(USA)?*

There is a lengthy list of Israeli, U.S., and international companies involved in making a profit as the result of illegal occupation in the Palestinian territories. The AHAVA and Hadiklaim have been named because they are two of the most blatant violators of international law that prohibits exploitation of occupied natural resources for profit.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is no stranger to calling for boycotts, both nationally and internationally, because corporate practices violated the human rights, and even threatened the lives of peoples being exploited. In the early 1980s, it called for a boycott of the Swiss corporation, Nestle, because of its promotion of breast milk substitutes in less economically

developed countries contributing to the unnecessary suffering and deaths of babies. In 2002 it called for the boycott of Taco Bell as a result of its parent company's (Yum Brands Food) exploitation of farm workers from Immokalee, Florida. Both boycotts were successful and achieved their desired ends.

The boycott of AHAVA and Hadiklaim is especially relevant because these companies engage not only in the exploitation of Palestinian workers (along with others), but are also inextricably tied to Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank. This makes these company's activities both illegal, according to international law, and immoral, in accordance with the witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in very recent history.

4. *Does boycotting the Israeli occupation harm Palestinians?*

Yes, it can have an economic impact. Any kind of economic pressure is bound to harm first and foremost the Palestinians, who are already economically vulnerable because of the restrictions that the Israeli occupation imposes on their ability to study, work, and move people or goods. Despite Israel's exploitation of Palestinian labor, Palestinian natural resources, and the captive Palestinian consumer market, Palestinians themselves have asked for boycotts, divestments, and sanctions because they see them as effective tools to express international solidarity to oppose the Israeli occupation.

We call upon the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to remain consistent in its historical witness against human exploitation for the sake of power and profit anywhere that may occur in the global community.

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Concurrence to Item 15-02 from the Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Scioto Valley and the Synod of the Covenant.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 15-02 be approved with amendments as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. [~~Condemn the production and sale of Israeli products that come from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.~~] [Call upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.] ...

“4. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott [, until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.].”

*Rationale*

The language of the first recommendation of Item 15-02 proposed here comes from the action of the United Methodist General Conference on May 2, 2012, and is a public policy position that would reflect the consistent call of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to end support for the forty-five-year-old military occupation of Palestine. The growth of settlements supported by the Israeli government has increased settler population to more than 500,000 persons, making a two-state solution virtually impossible. The new language proposed would be consistent with the intent of the original language and overall set of recommendations. Peter Beinart, author of *The Crisis of Zionism* and supporter of a general boycott of settlement products, maintains that “One of those simple truths is that holding territory in which one ethnic group enjoys citizenship, the right to vote, free movement and due process while another ethnic group is denied those rights is unjust and corrosive of a country's democratic fiber” (*New York Times*, 4/29/12, Book Review, p. 6).

The second amendment proposed clarifies the purpose and potential duration of the boycott, in accordance with criteria suggested for Presbyterian engagement in such acts of advocacy outlined below. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would continue to support commercial activity with enterprises in the State of Israel but not support the continuance of a military occupation and its attendant settlements and resource exploitation.

The item rationale correctly notes that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has approved boycott positions in the past, and notes two dealing with food products: the Nestle Boycott (concerning improperly marketed infant formula in countries lacking adequate clean water) and the Taco Bell Boycott (to increase farm worker wages).

The Presbyterian church's history of “selective patronage” and consumer boycotts is presented more fully in the booklet commended for study by the General Assembly Mission Council in 1979: “[Boycotts: Policy and Criteria](http://www.pcusa.org/resource/boycotts-policy-analysis-and-criteria/)” (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/boycotts-policy-analysis-and-criteria/>). That study notes that all “consumer spending reflects personal and group values,” and is thus broadly selective, while what it terms “selective patronage” is reflected in decisions not to patronize discriminatory businesses (such as in “Project Equality”) as well as alcohol, tobacco, and gambling enterprises.

The basic moral logic of not supporting or profiting from activities contrary to Christian values comes through in a General Assembly action in 1937: “We favor the adoption by the Congress of legislation ... which forbids the shipments of Child Labor goods in interstate commerce, and which requires informative labels to be attached to Child Labor goods” (such labels would assist boycotting).

The language of the principle-based first recommendation would also make it clear that the two Israeli companies in question, Ahava and Hadiklaim, are being named due to their salience in the U.S. marketplace, but are not being focused on in isolation from other enterprises taking advantage of the conditions of occupation. Purchasers would be encouraged to look carefully at all settlement products. This is a position taken not only by U.S. Methodists but also the General Council of the United Church of Canada, meeting this August, which has received a twenty-six-page report recommending that its members:

take concrete actions to support the end of the occupation by:

- a. encouraging members of the United Church to avoid any and all products produced in the settlements;
- b. directing the Executive of the General Council to give high priority to establishing a church-wide campaign of economic action directed against one or more settlement products that can be identified as produced in or related to the settlements or the occupied territories
- c. identifying the goal of the campaign as building awareness of United Church members of the illegal settlements’ unjust continuation of the occupation and its impact on the lives of Palestinians and Israelis. ([www.gc41.ca/sites/default/files/israel-palestine-report.pdf](http://www.gc41.ca/sites/default/files/israel-palestine-report.pdf))

The *Canadian Jewish News* reported the chair of the study committee, former Moderator David Giuliano: “To buy settlement products is the same as buying stolen goods; in other words, benefiting from the crime,” Giuliano said. He added, however, that “this is not a call for a boycott of Israel or Israeli products” (<http://www.cjnews.com/?q=node/89927>).

The 1979 study provides criteria for engaging in boycotts and some theological reflection on how the church takes moral stands. In terms of criteria, these include: consistency with church policy, lack of other alternative means of influence (such as shareholding and U.S. legislation), timeliness, effectiveness, impact on other aspects of our mission, and provision for review. The ACSWP finds that these criteria are generally met by the boycott of Ahava and Hadiklaim products, as such non-violent economic pressure is called for by both Palestinian civil society and broad ecumenical and evangelical groups of Palestinian Christians (in the Kairos Palestine document and more recent “Christ at the checkpoint” conference).

In terms of effectiveness, the Israeli government has passed various measures to prevent or hamper the boycott of settlement products (<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jul/12/world/la-fg-israel-boycott-20110712>; [http://www.thejewishweek.com/editorial\\_opinion/opinion/why\\_anti\\_boycott\\_laws\\_are\\_democratic](http://www.thejewishweek.com/editorial_opinion/opinion/why_anti_boycott_laws_are_democratic)). It has also been argued that both the Gaza blockade by Israel and the restrictions on East Jerusalem and the West Bank constitute boycott and sanctions against Palestinian goods (<http://972mag.com/are-israelis-boycotting-palestinian-goods/37117/>). Thus, while there is little doubt that the boycott action would be timely, its effectiveness needs to be seen in a context where there is little likelihood of negotiations with the current Israeli government. In fact, all words-only efforts have not deterred the Israeli government from expanding settlements, including the purported “legalization” of three once “illegal” settlements in late April. Thus the boycott strategy may be an effective and very participatory way to support greater justice for the Palestinians, and seems to be regarded by the Israeli government and its supporters as a danger to their control.

At this relatively early stage in the Ahava and Hadiklaim boycott efforts, the strictly financial impact seems unclear. Yet even when companies do not lose major market share, they are concerned about damage to their reputation and its influence on retailers who carry their products. The principle behind the boycott would continue to hold: purchasing these products helps support a military occupation that deprives Palestinians of their land and freedom. Thus *not* purchasing those products is a form of practical integrity that applies moral standards to market relationships.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-02 as amended:

“The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

“1. Condemn the production and sale of Israeli products that come from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

“2. Call for the boycott of [all Israeli products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including] AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products, [and all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Cooperative, Ltd., often marketed by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River. (Not Israeli products from Israel).]

~~[3. Call for the boycott of all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Cooperative, Ltd., often marketed by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River.]~~

“[4.] [3.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott.

“[5.] [4.] Direct the Stated Clerk to inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, and call upon them to join in the boycott of these companies.”

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns supports this overture because all Israeli companies operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are exploiting the natural resources of a people and territory that is under military occupation. These people have lost all power to assert their rights.

In light of [the overwhelming vote by our sisters and brothers at the United Methodist General Conference in April 2012](#) for a sweeping boycott of ALL goods from ALL Israeli companies operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, ACREC recommends widening this overture from two companies to all Israeli companies based in the illegal settlements (not Israeli products from Israel).

The ACREC believes that the call by Peter Beinart, to “boycott non-democratic Israel,” meaning the settlements in the West Bank, is an effective non-violent way to protest the exploitation of Palestinian land and people. (See: [To Save Israel, Boycott the Settlements](#), By Peter Beinart, *The New York Times*, Op-Ed March 18, 2012 – Beinart self-identifies as an Orthodox Jewish Zionist).

The call of our Christian sisters and brothers in Palestine to support them by not buying products from companies in the settlements has parallels to the call for boycotts from the African American community during the civil rights movement. The companies in question profit from illegal exploitation of not only natural resources that belong to the rightful owners of the land, but also migrant workers from Thailand, The Philippines, and others.

## Item 15-03

**[The assembly answered Item 15-03 by the action taken on Item 15-11. See p. 41.]**

*On Divestment from Caterpillar—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Affirm that the worsening occupation of Palestine is destroying lives and entire cultures and that it needs to end for the sake of justice between Jews, Christians, and Muslims.
2. Affirm that equipment being used to support this occupation is for Israeli military purposes and violates the investment policy of the PC(USA).
3. Affirm that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), along with its responsibility to all peoples affected by this conflict, has a special obligation and witness to Christian communions in Jerusalem and the West Bank and, as a result, must stand up with its Christian brothers and sisters as their communities of faith face extinction as a result of military oppression.
4. Instruct the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to begin the process of disinvestment from Caterpillar, Inc., and not to reinvest in this corporation unless the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is fully satisfied that Caterpillar, Inc., no longer engages in the selling of equipment to Israel that is used to build illegal Israeli settlements, construct walls that illegally encroach upon Palestinian lands that cut Palestinians off from their own property and natural resources, destroy Palestinian life and property, and otherwise continue to support the occupation of Palestinian territories.
5. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities, and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations that hold assets in Caterpillar, Inc., to divest as well.
6. Direct the Stated Clerk to inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally—particularly within Israel and Palestine—encouraging them to hear this witness and consider following suit in applying social responsibility and human rights criteria to other companies in their portfolios that support the occupation of Palestine.

*Rationale*

The following is a brief history of the PC(USA)’s corporate engagement with Caterpillar, Inc.:

- 2004: The 216th General Assembly (2004), in Richmond, Virginia, voted to begin the process of engaging in selective divestment from U.S. corporations that provide support, technology, and military equipment to the Government

of Israel to sustain the occupation of the Palestinian territories. Caterpillar, Inc., was on the list of five corporations named. In accordance with PC(USA) investment policy, the process of selective divestment began with corporate engagement. (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 66)

2006: At the 217th General Assembly (2006), in Birmingham, Alabama, with new overtures for divestment coming before the assembly, the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) of the PC(USA) reported that corporate engagement with Caterpillar, Inc., and four other corporations was ongoing and yielding positive results. This General Assembly chose against divestment in order to allow corporate engagement to continue as reported. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 944–45)

2008: Once again, divestment overtures came before the 218th General Assembly (2008) in San Jose. By this time, one corporation had been dropped from the potential divestment list and MRTI reported to General Assembly Committee 11 that corporate engagement was continuing with the four other corporations. With three of those corporations there was good progress. It was reported that progress with Caterpillar, Inc. (CAT) was not quite as good as with the other three but that talks were continuing and meetings were taking place. As a result of that report, even though many substantive overtures were passed in support of Palestinians in their struggle, the General Assembly once again opted for corporate engagement rather than divestment. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 47, 116–18)

At the time of this report to the 218th General Assembly (2008), Caterpillar corporate behavior had shown no signs of change. CAT bulldozers were still being used to destroy Palestinian homes and ripping up Palestinian agricultural lands. They also continued to be a primary tool in the nonstop construction of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Following this meeting of General Assembly, no change in CAT corporate behavior was forthcoming.

2009: At Caterpillar’s annual meeting, investors rejected an effort by human rights activists, dissident shareholders, and the interfaith coalition of Christian and Jewish investors with whom the PC(USA) partnered to stop the firm from selling bulldozers to Israel. Corporation CEO, Jim Owens, told the body that: “If you don’t like how CAT does business, you don’t have to hold your shares.”

At its meeting on November 5–7 of that year in Cincinnati, Ohio, it was reported to MRTI that corporate engagement, in the manner in which it had been employed since 2004, was no longer working in regard to CAT. The MRTI voted to recommend to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC)—at its February 2010 meeting—adoption of a statement of denouncement in regard to the behavior of Caterpillar, and send it to the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Minneapolis for action.

2010: The Middle East Study Committee (MESC), which was appointed by the 218th General Assembly (2008) to investigate and examine issues related to the Israel/Palestine conflict and then report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), made its report public in the early part of the year. One of MESC’s recommendations was to denounce Caterpillar, Inc., for its business practices in Israel/Palestine.

Under pressure from interest groups, Caterpillar, Inc. prohibited all its worldwide dealerships from selling equipment to Iran, hence proving to the world that CAT does indeed have control over what their dealerships do with their equipment.

During the Rachel Corrie civil trial, CAT suspended sales of bulldozers to the Israeli military, again proving that the corporation has more control over sales of its products than it has previously said it does.

At the 219th General Assembly (2010) meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the assembly approved an amended version of the MESC report, which included a denouncement of Caterpillar, Inc., for its business practices in Israel Palestine. Although there were two overtures submitted from two PC(USA) presbyteries to divest from CAT, the assembly did not pass either one. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 985–91, 1021–1119 of the electronic version; pp. 50, 52, 362–63, 366–70 of the printed version)

2011: On September 8–10, the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) met in Chicago, Illinois, and approved its report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) recommending that three companies be added to the General Assembly divestment list: Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions. The MRTI chairperson, the Reverend Brian Ellison, made the following statement to the Presbyterian News Service: “The General Assembly asked us to do everything we could to bring about change through dialogue, and we have done this, even asking the assembly for more time over the years. Today we are sadly reporting that these efforts have not produced any substantive change in company policies or practices, and that there is little reason for hope they will do so in the future. According to the assembly’s prior directives and the church’s ordinary engagement process, we have little choice but to recommend divestment.”

The writers and endorsers of this overture believe that the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee has done its due diligence, and commends MRTI for its faithful work at corporate engagement with CAT and other corporations

for more than six years. We also believe that the 216th, 217th, 218th, and 219th General Assemblies of the PC(USA) have been careful to listen to all sides of the debate and have been faithful to MRTI recommendations, trusting that the committees we appoint to do the important work of our denomination do so with responsibility and integrity. We also believe, that as in the past, it is time for the General Assembly to hear and approve the recommendation of a committee that has been both fair and faithful in its assigned task for more than six years. We regret that Caterpillar, Inc., has not been willing to engage in PC(USA) corporate engagement in a meaningful and productive way, but believe that now is the time to disassociate ourselves financially from this company until such time that it shows it is willing to be a good corporate citizen in regard to its business practices throughout the world. This recommendation to divest is not about changing CAT's behavior. Rather, it is about choosing not to invest in a business in which its practices contribute to the loss of Palestinian life, the destruction of Palestinian property, and the ongoing support of illegal and immoral occupation by the Israeli government in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The writers and endorsers of this overture are convinced that as circumstances presently stand, we can do no less than divest from corporations whose business practices violate our church's financial investment policies. If the actions of Caterpillar, Inc., in regard to its business practices with the Israeli government do not violate PC(USA) policy in regard to sustaining a military occupation, what actions ever would? It is our plea that through faithfulness towards the justice taught by our Lord Jesus Christ, the investment policies and decisions of our denomination will be consistent with the following statement: *We are the Church of Jesus Christ. When the powers of the world decide that they will conduct business as usual, and that business is contrary to the teachings of Christ and the will of God for humanity, then it is time for the church to end its complicity in this sinful behavior. If we do not, then we remain unrepentant.*

#### Bibliographical Information:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) information about Israel/Palestine Mission: <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/global/israel-palestine/>

"Breaking Down the Walls," the report of the Middle East Study Committee approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010): <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/breaking-down-walls-approved-219th-ga/>

Presbyterian News Service release regarding the recommendation of MRTI to divest from CAT, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions: <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/9/12/mrti-recommends-pcusa-divestment-caterpillar/>

Israel Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), Demolitions Overview: [http://www.icahd.org/?page\\_id=7762](http://www.icahd.org/?page_id=7762)

*Steadfast Hope*, Israel-Palestine Mission Network of the PC(USA), <http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org>, pp. 28–29 in particular. The accompanying DVD speaks specifically on the use of CAT bulldozers for destruction of Palestinian property, showing footage of such bulldozers at work.

Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gazan Conflict (Goldstone Report): <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>

The most pertinent information is found on pages 210–214 of the report. There are many references to the use of bulldozers in these pages of the report, but in regard to the D-9 CAT bulldozer involvement, note the following footnote #509 on page 212: *One soldier recalls: "There was a point where D-9s were razing areas. It was amazing. At first you go in and see lots of houses. A week later, after the razing, you see the horizon further away, almost to the sea. They simply took down all the houses around so terrorists would have nowhere else to hide."*

Two particular sources for Jim Owens' statement, [www.ramallahonline.com](http://www.ramallahonline.com), search: Jim Owens says (exact phrase), and Sydney Levy of Jewish Voice for Peace, citing witnesses to CEO Jim Owens statement, [www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org](http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org).

Regarding CAT's decision not to do business in Iran: <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/03/06/world/iran-sanctions.html#methodology>

Regarding CAT's suspension of bulldozer sales to Israel during the Rachel Corrie civil trial: <http://wagingnonviolence.org/2010/11/campaign-to-end-caterpillars-bulldozer-sales-to-israel-not-over/> and, <http://corporateoccupation.wordpress.com/2010/11/09/caterpillar-suspends-d9-sales-in-response-to-corrie-trial/>

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**Concurrence to Item 15-03 from the Presbyteries of Charleston Atlantic, Kiskiminetas, New Brunswick, North Puget Sound, Scioto Valley, and Upper Ohio Valley, and the Synod of the Covenant.**

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 15-03 AND 15-08

*Advice and Counsel on Items 15-03 and 15-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Items 15-03 and 15-08, as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]



“5. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate [~~this action~~][an action in support of MRTI recommendations] to all other PC(USA) councils and entities[;] [and to ecumenical partners.] [~~and invite and strongly encourage~~] [encouraging] those groups and organizations that hold assets in Caterpillar, Inc., [Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett Packard.] to divest as well.”

#### *Rationale*

The amendment to this item reflects the agreement of the sponsors of the overture and of its concurrences with the full recommendations of the report of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) committee. That is, they support the divestment of the three corporations recommended by MRTI. Their focus on Caterpillar reflects the use of company equipment in highly visible home demolitions and construction of the separation wall, as well as the legal campaign to have a public investigation of Rachel Corrie’s death. Armored Caterpillar bulldozers were also very active in destroying houses during the 2009–2010 war on Gaza.

The recommendations in MRTI’s report, however, represent a more inclusive, methodical, and ecumenical process that considers the importance of high technology from Motorola Solutions and Hewlett-Packard in the enforcement of control of the Palestinian population, including the protection of illegal settlements. Attempts at reaching even low levels of agreement with all three companies have gone on for more than four years while all have been expanding their strategic business relationships with the occupation. It is consistent with the MRTI recommendations to propose that, if approved, they be shared with ecumenical partners as well as Presbyterian bodies. This Advice and Counsel is thus meant to support MRTI’s recommendations as well (Item 15-11).

The basic argument for divestment is that words-only approaches have simply failed to halt the growth of Israeli settlements and the intensification of the occupation by the separation wall and other means, virtually ending the prospect of a two-state solution and hastening the de-Christianization of Palestine. Several items before the General Assembly address other aspects of the political impasse, religious liberties, and support for a war with Iran. Overall, however, only a deliberate naiveté on the church’s part can ignore the deliberate subversion of the peace process since the death of Yitzak Rabin in 1995.

Commissioners considering the overall divestment recommendations may consider three dimensions of this act of witness:

1. Is it consistent with the theology and policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. Is it an act of investment responsibility that reflects the key moral criteria of integrity, effectiveness, and solidarity?
3. Does it support other witness to the key problem of the occupation and the failure of political, diplomatic, and violent measures to affect the situation?

1. A strong theological and ethical basis for divestment in support of freedom for Palestinian Christians and Muslims can be found not only in The Confession of 1967 (the basis for the 1971 mandate for MRTI itself), but in the Barmen Declaration and A Brief Statement of Faith. In its resolution on the Middle East in 2008, the General Assembly:

Affirms the obligation of the church to speak to the governments of the United States and all other nations where it sees those governments violating the commandments of God. In the words of *The Theological Declaration of Barmen*, which speaks to the dependence of the Church on the Word of God and its independence from any state or ideology, “we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords ... . The state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace ....” (*The Book of Confessions*, 8.15, 8.22). The sovereignty of God thus judges all claims of sovereign nationhood, all boundaries, all exercises of force, and all uses of resources by human beings. The Church is thus called to help discern where the Spirit is working in the world, guided by Scripture and its confessions.

In A Brief Statement of Faith, we affirm that:

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, *to hear the voices of peoples long silenced*, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. [emphasis added] (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

The words in italics, in this case, may refer particularly to the Christians of Palestine and Israel whose voices are often disregarded in deliberations focused on the attitudes of Jews or Muslims.

In terms of policy, the Middle East report approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) introduced its recommendations with several summary statements:

We deeply value our relationships with Jews and Muslims in the United States, Israel, and the predominantly Muslim countries of the Middle East. Yet the bonds of friendship must neither prevent us from speaking, nor limit our empathy for the suffering of others. Inaction and silence on our part enable actions we oppose and consequences we grieve. ...

We also recognize that our concern to end support for both violence in all its forms and the ongoing occupation and settlement of Palestine places demands of integrity on how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) uses its own resources and investments. Let us be clear: we do affirm the legitimacy of Israel as a state, but consider the continuing occupation of Palestine (West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem) to be illegitimate, illegal under international law, and an enduring threat to peace in the region. Furthermore, we recognize that any support for that occupation weakens the moral standing of our nation internationally and our security. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1027 of the electronic version)

2. The General Assembly Mission Council comment describes some of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) policy and process, which include *Military-Related Investment Guidelines* (1982) and an extensive study, *The Divestment Strategy: Ethical and Institutional Context* (1984). The 1982 guidelines led the church to restrict its investments in nuclear warhead makers and the largest military contractors, whose securities continue to be proscribed for church investment agencies. The 1984 study focuses on the two values of effectiveness and integrity, analyzed in light of trusteeship and Christian mission. These values led to a range of strategic criteria that guided the church in the “selective, phased divestment” of securities in thirteen companies as part of the larger campaign against apartheid. In broad strokes, then, there were three key values undergirding considerations such as impact on those suffering, urgency, technical feasibility, coordination with partners, limitation of other strategies, and clarity of message.

In terms of effectiveness, historically, church-led nonviolent economic pressure of all kinds, including divestment, contributed to the eventual departure of 214 of the 324 U.S. corporations operating in South Africa in 1981, representing an equity decline from \$2.6 billion to \$714 million, a substantial move toward isolating South Africa economically. As is well known, after the 1994 end of apartheid, figures such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Allan Boesak credited the churches with decisive impact, as did studies such as Robert K. Massie’s *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (Doubleday, 1998).

The 1984 study describes how divestment of securities, through removing access and influence “inside” a corporation as a stockholder, may have more impact on corporate policy from the “outside.” Divestment’s effectiveness is not primarily financial but impacts the reputation and legitimacy of the behaviors focused on in ecumenical and sometimes international campaigns. Vigorous opposition to divestment by the Israeli government and its supporters indicates a real fear of being associated with the occupation and oppression of Palestinians, affirming that divestment carries an effective message that justice is needed.

In terms of the second criterion, integrity, this is not to be seen as a purity or “cleansing the portfolio.” The Reformed tradition does not favor separation from the world or a position of moral perfection, unattainable in any event. We do, however, affirm that our principles should be backed up by action, lest we profit from practices we decry. The phrase in the Preliminary Principles of the *Book of Order* is that “truth is in order to goodness,” with the implication that the church should be a truth-teller and a truth-doer.

The church’s action, from this perspective, is less about strictly economic consequences and more about the prophetic nature of the church, acting in obedience and without being compromised. Yet seeking integrity can also make for effective witness against practices accepted by majorities or those in power.

The nature of Christian mission in the Middle East involves the church in acts of solidarity with the remaining Christians, and with all who seek a peace with justice. Although support for divestment and other forms of economic pressure is strongly discouraged by the Israeli government, an unprecedented ecumenical group issued the *Kairos Palestine* affirmation in December of 2009. Among the nonviolent methods of resistance to the occupation that they endorse is divestment:

4.2.6 Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation. In this spirit and with this dedication we will eventually reach the longed-for resolution to our problems, as indeed happened in South Africa and with many other liberation movements in the world.

4.3 Through our love, we will overcome injustices and establish foundations for a new society both for us and for our opponents. Our future and their future are one. Either the cycle of violence that destroys both of us or peace that will benefit both. We call on Israel to give up its injustice towards us, not to twist the truth of reality of the occupation by pretending that it is a battle against terrorism... (From *Kairos Palestine Document: A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering*: <http://www.kairopalestine.ps>)

As to overall Palestinian views of the occupation and divestment as a strategy, the position of the Kairos church leaders seems to articulate a broad desire for resistance. An April 22, 2012, report by *60 Minutes* confirms that Christians view the occupation as the primary impetus to their departure (<http://mondoweiss.net/2012/04/60-minutes-profiles-palestinian-christians-michael-oren-falls-on-his-face-defending-israel.html>).

As a strategy, then, the divestment of securities in three key corporations would strengthen the integrity of the church’s moral opposition to the occupation, focus attention effectively on the means by which the occupation is profitably maintained, and be a clear sign of support for the Palestinian Christians and others seeking peace with justice. It would also be an action consistent with international law and a witness against the political failures that enable an oppressive situation to continue.

### 3. Relation of divestment to the “peace process.”

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin by a fundamentalist Jew in 1995, the Oslo peace process has never recovered. The Second Intifada included suicide bombings and severe punitive raids on Palestinians, acts of terrorism fueled by increasing Islamist and Jewish fundamentalism. Settlement growth continued through the 1990s and 2000s, despite

purported suspensions and the removal of 7,500 settlers from Gaza in 2005. Rockets by radical groups—a terrifying, if largely inaccurate, threat—were a cause or pretext for a one-sided war on Gaza (<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=74717>).

The failure of the second Camp David process in 2000, though blamed largely on Yasser Arafat by Israeli and U.S. sources, reflected a substantial Palestinian willingness to concede land colonized by the major settlement cities, but an unwillingness to give up on a coherent Palestinian state with some shared sovereignty in Jerusalem. With the separation wall extensions, continued annexations and removals in East Jerusalem and Area C (60 percent) of the West Bank, strangulation of Palestinian land such as at the Tent of Nations (<http://www.tentofnations.org>), and violent responses to peaceful Palestinian protests, little hope is seen for a renewed peace process.

Public policy advocacy by the churches and human rights groups has been massively outgunned by well-funded groups dedicated to the defense of all Israeli interests, despite the emergence of more critical groups in the U.S. Jewish community. Diplomatically, although the US calls for renewed negotiations, it has blocked international efforts to allow Palestine membership in the United Nations and vetoed efforts to hold Israel accountable to international law more than thirty times, while continuing more than \$3 billion in military aid every year. This one-sided support for the State of Israel and its occupation, along with the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has weakened the international reputation of the United States, particularly among the world's 1.4 billion Muslims.

General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and many other good people have called repeatedly for an effective end of the occupation since 1974, only to see both nonviolent and violent liberation efforts of the Palestinians suppressed. While interfaith dialogue has had some value during this time, the U.S. political and media context allows relatively little debate over the nature of the occupation of Palestine, much less opposition to its continued support. Similarly, the exodus of Christians from the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, will continue unless voices coupled with action are raised challenging the conditions that are designed to push Arabs out of desirable areas.

For the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to back its moral concerns with divestment would be a dramatic act of conscience and leadership. Although the 2009 Presbyterian Panel survey data indicate that a majority of Presbyterians support divestment for human rights reasons, considerable pressure will be applied and allegations of anti-Semitism would be expected, encouraging conflict in the church. Thus commissioners have to determine how important it is to act on a clear matter of justice in the face of open opposition.

#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-03

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 15-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-03.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this item because consecutive General Assemblies have confirmed church policy that we should not be invested in companies profiting from “non-peaceful pursuits.” Caterpillar Inc.’s equipment in particular is crucial to maintaining the infrastructure of the Israeli occupation, including the building of roads in the West Bank connecting the illegal settlement to each other and to Israel proper. These roads are fully segregated and only cars with Israeli license plates are allowed to use them. These roads are built on Palestinian land in the West Bank but Palestinians are not allowed to use them.

Further, Caterpillar (CAT) equipment is used to destroy agricultural lands and civilian homes of Palestinian families; ACREC strongly condemns this destruction. Likewise, CAT equipment is used to build and maintain the Separation Barrier, which is a key cog in the Israeli policy of *Hafrada*, which means “separation” in Hebrew. (*Apartheid* also means separation, in Afrikaans). Israel’s policy of keeping the populations separate based on race and ethnicity is at a minimum highly discriminatory. The ACREC does not condone this separation policy or the use of CAT equipment in building and maintaining this separation policy. Unless the company changes its policy of supporting the infrastructure of occupation and separation, ACREC supports divestment from CAT shares.

#### BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 15-03

*Comment on Item 15-03—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

In all its corporate actions, the Board of Pensions strives to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the social witness policies approved by the General Assembly. Sometimes there is apparent conflict between the social witness desires of the denomination and our legal duties to members of the Benefits Plan. It is clear that our mutually approved long-term policies and procedures have worked well to avoid conflict and we urge the General Assembly to take no actions that would displace these very helpful policies and procedures.

The General Assembly has delegated oversight responsibility for Benefits Plan and Assistance Plan monies to the Board of Pensions. This responsibility makes the Board a “fiduciary,” a status that carries both certain duties and the potential for certain liabilities if carried out improperly. This delegation and separation of oversight duties is intended to relieve the General Assembly from both fiduciary duties and liabilities. The Board of Pensions, acting through its board of directors, chooses the actual investment managers and determines how the money is allocated among various classes of securities to achieve the long-term investment objectives required of the Plans. The Board of Pensions does not select specific investments (either to buy or to sell): security selection is the job of the investment managers themselves.

As indicated below, managers of individually managed portfolios are made aware of our social witness policy and are required to justify to the Board of Pensions any deviation from that policy.

These are all important separations of roles and responsibilities that are in the best interests of commissioners, of the denomination, of the Benefits Plan and of Plan members. For these reasons, the General Assembly does not direct the Board of Pensions to divest the portfolio of an investment held by the Benefits Plan and does not direct that the Board of Pensions affirmatively invest in any specific security.

The General Assembly does, however, determine the social witness policies of the church, including how they pertain to investments of money held by or under the aegis of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It does advise the Board of Pensions (and the Foundation) and it does urge us to take certain actions from time-to-time. We in turn are mindful of the General Assembly’s wishes.

To confuse this important definition of roles and responsibilities, would risk potential liability to the General Assembly, and possibly incur more investment risk for the Pension Trust and other benefits and assistance assets than would otherwise be desirable. We cannot, and the General Assembly would not have us avoid or compromise our legal duties and threaten the security of the Benefits Plan and Assistance Program.

There are two specific duties for us to consider when it comes to the question of divestment.

First, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of loyalty” to act in the sole and exclusive interests of the Benefits Plan members. That means our decisions must be in the interests of that group taken as a whole, not in the interests of the Board, and not in the interests of some other group or some special part of the church. The Board of Pensions has established procedures that it believes are completely faithful to this obligation.

Second, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of care” to see to it that sufficient funds are available to keep the promises made to Plan members, both current and future. Selling or buying securities based on social witness principles alone could easily translate into taking on too much or too little risk at any given point in time. The board of directors has adopted detailed investment policies governing the allocation of the Plan’s investments in various asset classes and the selection of managers for those asset classes. This allocation is the primary way we manage investment risk. The investment managers are responsible for the selection of individual investment holdings. We are responsible for selecting the investment managers, and this selection process is another of our risk management tools, and is an equally important separation of duties. The result is that the Board of Pensions must make its own, independent judgments based on its legal duties of loyalty and care.

Having said that, it is our often-expressed objective to support the declared social witness policies of the denomination as best we can. Fortunately, specific policies on divestment adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 have served our mutual interests well, have promoted a united voice and have avoided conflicts within the denomination.

#### *Divestment*

The Board of Pensions participates in the church’s MRTI activities. Under the 1984 policies of the General Assembly, the denomination’s Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment recommends that a company be added to the General Assembly’s divestment list after several steps. Three of those steps include (a) undertaking a thorough and comprehensive research of the company’s involvement in an objectionable practice, (b) engaging the company in constructive dialogue about those practices through meetings and submission of shareholder resolutions; and (c) it is determined that no lesser alternative to divestment is available. Ultimately the General Assembly determines, upon receiving such a recommendation, what is the effective social witness action for the church and its entities to undertake (including divestment or affirmative investment). The General Assembly has long recognized that the divestment practice of the Board of Pensions is one of a “prohibition of ownership” rather than one of an “immediate sale” of securities listed for divestment.

When and if a security is added to the prohibited securities list (there are currently 631 securities on the list), the Board of Pensions has adopted a formal process to ensure that the failure to own the security will not harm the financial soundness of the Plan. At this point, there are two levels of decision because of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the decision-makers. The first decision is for an investment manager. The investment manager must decide whether *not owning* a divestment list security will harm their portfolio results. If it decides that failure to own *will not* harm results, there is no issue as to portfolio performance, and the security is not held. Since, as a general rule our investment policies provide for ob-

servance of the General Assembly's divestment policies, if the manager decides that failure to own *will* harm portfolio performance, it must ask us and provide justification for an exception.

The second decision now becomes one for the Board of Pensions. It is inappropriate for us to fail to act. In other words, we are obligated to independently decide whether or not to initiate divestment, or to grant an exception. In the event of a request for exception, if the Investment Committee determines that the request is reasonable and appropriate in the context of our duty of care, it may grant the exception. Currently, there is only one security held by the Board of Pensions under an approved exception request.

For example,

Stock A is placed on the divestment list for the first time. Manager X owns Stock A. When the divestment list is updated, we advise Manager X that Stock A may be held as a part of their normal investment program until such time as the security becomes part of the manager's sell discipline for all clients. Any subsequent purchase requires an exception from the Board of Pensions.

If a manager does not own the stock, any purchase requires an exception.

From time to time, securities are removed from the divestment list, and managers are so advised.

#### *Affirmative Investment*

The duties of care and loyalty apply equally as limitations on the purchase of securities. In addition, the separation of roles and responsibilities between the Board of Pensions and our investment managers is breached when we begin telling our investment managers to actively purchase specific securities. At that point we become portfolio managers ourselves, and to date that is not a responsibility we have undertaken because it would impose additional regulatory burdens and administrative expenses on the Plan that we have chosen to avoid.

#### *Shareholder Resolutions and Proxy Voting*

We do hold a small portfolio of securities outside the Benefits Plan specifically at the request of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment in order that the church can use these shares to propose shareholder resolutions from time to time. These holdings are at minimum levels required to submit shareholder resolutions.

It is also appropriate to note that the Board of Pensions does vote all shares held by or through us in accordance with the actions of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment. The Board of Pensions respectfully requests that the General Assembly take this comment into account when considering the several recommendations on divestment or affirmative investment proposed to the General Assembly. The processes in place have served us well for over twenty years, and will continue to serve us well going forward.

## Item 15-04

[The assembly approved Item 15-04 with amendment. See pp. 39, 42.]

*On Supporting a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the U.S.-Iran Issues—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

**The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:**

1. **Acknowledge the church's support of a peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the tensions developing as a result of Iran's nuclear program between the United States[,] ~~and~~ Iran[, European Union nations, Iran's Arab neighbors, and Israel, and affirm that the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should apply to all nations in the region without double standards.**
2. **Call for the direct, unconditional negotiations between the United States and Iran with the goal of finding and implementing a peaceful resolution [and affirm the longer term goal of reestablishing diplomatic relations.]**
3. **Oppose preemptive military action by any nation against Iran [and by Iran against any nation.]**
4. **Call for a renewed effort at all levels—people-to-people, interfaith groups, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government—to help the United States and Iran eliminate the tensions that have existed between our two nations and to unite the ~~[American and Iranian people in a common effort to solve the problems of poverty, illness, and climate change]~~ [people of the United States and Iran in efforts for their common good]."**

**[5. Encourage members, councils, and appropriate offices of the General Assembly Mission Council/Presbyterian Mission Agency to support measures both to prevent war and to open channels for citizen diplomacy, cultural exchange, and rebuilding long-valued relationships with the church in Iran in a new context.]**

**[5.] [6.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this resolution to the church, and to the president of the United States, the secretary of state of the United States, every member of Congress, [the government of Iran,] the secretary general of the United Nations, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, and all missions to the United Nations.**

### *Rationale*

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has called upon us to be peacemakers: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt. 5:9).

The people of the United States and Iran want to live in peace. They do not want war. Visits by citizen peace delegations have shown that there is much goodwill on the part of Iranians toward Americans.

We are convinced that collateral damage and loss of innocent civilian life would be severe and unjustified in any such attack, let alone the possible deaths of millions of civilians should the war escalate or become nuclear.

Such a war would likely cause Iran to strike against U.S. interests in the Middle East.

Such a war could lead to moves by Iran through its surrogates Hamas and Hezbollah that would greatly complicate the process of finding a basis for peace in Israel-Palestine.

We are not confident, judging from past experience, that the U.S.A. has given sufficient thought and planning to the consequences of such an attack in Iran itself and across the Middle East.

United States or Israeli military action against Iran would likely cause increased terrorism throughout the world, including here in the United States.

War with Iran could result in a partial or complete shutdown in the flow of Persian Gulf oil, causing a massive increase in the price of fuel and a major economic crisis.

With a weakened economy and consumer and investor confidence already shaken by a series of financial crises, another major shock such as war with Iran and the shutdown of Persian Gulf oil could be the straw that breaks the camel’s back and sends the world into a prolonged recession or even a depression. Millions of people would suffer greatly if this comes to pass.

This resolution is in harmony with the peacemaking principles of the PC(USA) as recognized by the 210th General Assembly (1998), including “the promotion and preferential use of nonviolent means for conflict resolution and social change,” “the strengthening of international cooperation through the United Nations, including its peacemaking and peacekeeping roles,” “the use of unilateral [peacemaking] initiatives to reduce risks of conflict,” and “the importance of self-examination and repentance in international relations as steps in the healing of conflict and the promotion of reconciliation” (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, pp.75, 457).

A successful, peaceful, diplomatic solution to the U.S.-Iran issues would give humanity renewed hope that lasting peace and justice are indeed possible and plant the seeds of future peacemaking endeavors all over the world.

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### **Concurrence to Item 15-04 from the Presbytery of New York City.**

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### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04**

#### *Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 15-04 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

“1. [~~Acknowledge~~] [Affirm] the church’s support of [a] peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the tensions developing as a result of Iran’s nuclear program, between the United States and Iran[, and affirm that the provisions of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act should apply to all nations in the region without double standards].

“2. Call for the direct, unconditional negotiations between the United States and Iran with the goal of finding and implementing a peaceful resolution [and with the longer term goal of reestablishing diplomatic relations].”

“[Text for Recommendations 3.–4. remains unchanged.]

“[5. Encourage members, councils, and appropriate offices of the General Assembly Mission Council/Presbyterian Mission Agency to support measures both to prevent war and to open channels for citizen diplomacy, cultural exchange, and rebuilding long-valued relationships with the church in Iran in a new context.]”

“~~[5.]~~ [6.] Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this resolution to the church, and to the president of the United States, the secretary of state of the United States, every member of Congress, the secretary general of the United Nations, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, and all missions to the United Nations.”

#### *Rationale*

Commissioners need to evaluate the dangers posed *both* by a potential Iranian nuclear weapons program and by a potential Israeli or Israeli/U.S. preemptive strike on Iran. The *overture* rightly cites General Assembly policy guidance from 1998. The 2008 Social Creed also summarizes the PC(USA) position: “Peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force ... and a strengthening of the United Nations and the rule of international law.”

The amendments proposed are designed to increase the long-term role of international law and diplomacy in a situation that is likely to remain a political rallying point in Israel and the United States, despite the beginning of negotiations with Iran and the imposition of sanctions, and increasingly vocal opposition by intelligence and military analysts (as cited below). The added language would also remind Presbyterians of our significant mission history in Iran and the continuing presence of Christians, Jews, and other religious minorities in that country. None of the additions idealize the current Iranian government, which might be strengthened by outside attack.

On February 21, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons wrote President Obama in opposition to the campaign for war in Iran:

The Christian tradition we share urges us to seek limits to violence and, therefore, requires us to oppose any rush to initiate another war in the Middle East. It seems that the lessons of the second Iraq war and the continuing war in Afghanistan are being ignored, and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, including our own soldiers, are being disregarded. As you know, representatives of almost all churches in the U.S.-and many around the world-opposed the second Iraq war and were proven right as to its lack of sufficient cause and enormously tragic consequences.

In light of uncertainties regarding the actual status of Iran's nuclear program and doubts raised about its intent and time line by your own advisors and many in the Israeli intelligence service, we strongly encourage you to take the greatest possible steps to prevent hasty action on either side. Such initiatives should involve the wider international community, which is already engaged in recently intensified economic sanctions. A firm stand by you cautioning against any sort of preemptive military attack on Iran is all the more imperative in light of statements by Israeli leaders that clearly raise the danger of escalation.

From your speech in receiving the Nobel peace prize, and from your measured support of the Libyan insurgency, we are aware that you are familiar with Just War criteria, such as the use of force as a last resort in defense, legitimate authorization, proportionality, and the probability of a just order after hostilities. At this time, we do not see that any of these criteria for war have been met; therefore, our intention should be focused on improving options for the Iranian people and seeking to reduce rather than magnify tensions.

We are aware that the U.S. is sending more forces into the Persian Gulf, and that various members of Congress are proposing legislation that would restrict diplomacy and further demonize Iran. Yet, just peace is the larger goal toward which we believe the United States should deploy its “hard” and “soft” power.

As of late April, no Iranian nuclear weapons program has been confirmed, although some observers believe that Iran is enriching uranium so that it may have the capacity to build a bomb at some future date. Iran’s leadership is seen as divided, with the Supreme Ayatollah condemning nuclear weapons but its partly figurehead President Ahmadinejad sometimes making defiant but ambiguous statements. The Israeli government is considered the source of the “stuxnet” virus that damaged Iranian computers and the assassinations of nuclear scientists and technical personnel. Joint military maneuvers between Israel and the U.S. were allegedly scheduled to rehearse responses to a potential Iranian counterstrike, but have been postponed. Majority Israeli opinion sees Iran as a threat, but less than half are willing to go to war without U.S. support. Both U.S. and Israeli leaders say that “all options are on the table.”

Resistance to war threats by Israeli President Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak:

On March 11, 2012, “Former Mossad chief Meir Dagan said that an Israeli strike on Iran would lead to a missile attack on Israel that would have a ‘devastating impact’ on the country, in an interview that aired Sunday on CBS’s *60 Minutes*. According to Dagan, an attack will start a regional war. ‘And wars, you know how they start. You never know how you are ending it,’ he said” (<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/ex-israeli-spy-master-iran-response-to-israeli-attack-would-be-devastating-1.417898>).

Dan Meridor, Deputy Premier and Minister for Intelligence and Atomic Energy, on April 16, 2012, while noting that Iranian leaders disdain Israel, admits that the claim that Ahmadinejad wanted Israel “wiped off the map” was mistranslated, however frequently repeated (<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/2012/04/2012413151613293582.html>).

Military Chief of Staff General Benny Gantz affirms on April 25, 2012, that Iranian leaders are rational and do not have a nuclear weapons program (<http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/25/world/meast/israel-iran/>).

Former head of domestic intelligence, Yuval Diskin, on April 28, 2012, states his distrust of the “messianic feelings” of Netanyahu and Barak: “They are misleading the public on the Iran issue. They tell the public that if Israel acts, Iran won’t have a nuclear bomb. This is misleading. Actually, many experts say that an Israeli attack would accelerate the Iranian nuclear race” (<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-s-former-shin-bet-chief-i-have-no-confidence-in-netanyahu-barak-1.426908>).

A U.S. intelligence summary:

The current March/April issue of *Foreign Affairs* magazine contains an article, “Clear and Present Safety,” that illuminates the overall exaggeration of military threats to the United States pervasive in U.S. politics and military spending justifications. Authors Micah Zenko and Michael A. Cohen maintain that despite political and economic insecurities, and a continuously stoked fear of terrorism, the U.S. is vastly stronger than any potential threat within “a world with fewer violent conflicts and greater political freedom than at virtually any other point in human history” (p. 80). As for a threat from Iran, “then the U.S. can breathe easy: Iran is a weak military power. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Iran’s ‘military forces have almost no modern armor, artillery, aircraft or major combat ships, and UN sanctions will likely obstruct the purchase of high-technology weapons for the foreseeable future’” (p. 87; <http://justiceunbound.org/action-alerts/iran-bombing-threat-creating-a-mindset-that-leads-to-war/>).

In sum, this item remains timely and points to the continued power of Israeli and U.S. political leaders and interests who favor unilateral war, despite the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-04.

##### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns agrees with this peacemaking overture and supports a diplomatic approach as a solution to differences between the U.S. and Iran. As stated in the rationale of the overture, the 210th General Assembly approved “the promotion and preferential use of nonviolent means for conflict resolution” and ACREC strongly supports pressing for diplomacy over use of military force. The Presbyterian church has a long history of working with the people of Iran going back to the early years of mission in the mid 1800s. In the current standoff, we should not forget our historic connection to the people of Iran, with whom Presbyterian mission workers established many schools, hospitals, and churches.

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#### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-04.

##### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and would further lift up the importance of the role of women in peacemaking efforts. The ACWC would encourage future peacemaking reports and resolutions to include an affirmation of the essential role that women play in peacemaking, in much the same way that the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 cites the importance of “*Reaffirming* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.”<sup>1</sup>

The ACWC lifts this up for the consideration of those writing future resolutions.

##### Endnotes

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). ([http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf))

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-04

*Comment on Item 15-04—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Iranian minority Christians are concerned over the escalating war rhetoric and the possibility of a strike against their country. Iranian church leaders of all denominations (Orthodox, Assyrian, and Protestant) have expressed their opposition to such a military strike, and believe it would have dire consequences for not only Iran, but also the region and the United



States. They urge the continuation of negotiation and diplomatic means to mitigate the tension between their government and the United States.

## Item 15-05

[The assembly answered Item 15-05 by the action taken on Item 15-11. See pp. 41, 42.]

*On Ethical Investment and Divestment—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.*

The Presbytery of New Covenant respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to:

1. Express appreciation to Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) for their diligent efforts to ensure that the investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reflect the principles of ethical Christians.
2. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to expend no further efforts in regard to the instruction of the 216th General Assembly (2004).
3. Disapprove the MRTI's recommendation of divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions.
4. Encourage future General Assemblies to thoroughly document, discuss, and debate the rationale for phased selective divestment of specific companies before initiating the process of phased selective divestment.
5. Direct MRTI to include information in future efforts on phased selective divestment regarding the existence and implementation of corporate policies in each company being investigated including, but not limited to, environmental stewardship, fair hiring and employment practices, and pursuits that encourage and/or support peace so that the General Assembly may have a more comprehensive understanding of how investment in these companies does and does not reflect business principles which the PC(USA) supports.
6. Direct MRTI to provide information in the future concerning the underlying investments, including the number and value of shares outstanding for each company being investigated on the date the members of MRTI agree on a divestment as well as the number and value of shares owned by PC(USA)-related entities that might be sold pursuant to a divestment decision on that same date.
7. Direct that all PC(USA)-related entities whose investment practices are affected by General Assembly decisions to divest publish electronically a list of all organizations in which those entities currently have investments with such lists to be updated annually.
8. Direct the MRTI, the Stated Clerk, and the General Assembly Mission Council to provide more information to the members of the PC(USA) about ethical investment and divestment, including clear explanations of General Assembly investment policies and what divestment is as well as clarification about the relationship, or lack thereof, between ethical investment and the mission of peacemaking, through electronic articles, publication in existing PC(USA) journals and newspapers, statements through other already-existing means of communication, and other means of education and discussion within the PC(USA).

### *Rationale*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) instructed Mission Responsibility through Investment (MRTI) to begin "a process of phased selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel, in accordance to General Assembly policy on social investing, and to make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly Council for action" (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 66) without prior General Assembly study.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) replaced those instructions with the following: "To urge that financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investments of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 944).

The 217th General Assembly (2006) stated in reference to the action of the 216th General Assembly (2004) on phased selective divestment, "We acknowledge that the actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) caused hurt and misunderstanding among many members of the Jewish community and within our Presbyterian communion. We are grieved by the pain that this has caused, accept responsibility for the flaws in our process, and ask for a new season of mutual understanding and dialogue" (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 944).

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed

## 15 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES

Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to ensure that its strategies for engaging corporations with regard to Israeli and Palestinian territories:

- a. Reflect the application of fundamental principles of justice and peace common to Christianity, Islam, and Judaism that are appropriate to the practical realities of Israeli and Palestinian societies.
- b. Reflect commitment to positive outcomes.
- c. Reflect awareness of potential impact upon the stability, future viability, and prosperity of both the Israeli and Palestinian economies.
- d. Identify affirmative investment opportunities as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 945)

Singling out a country as a basis for phased selective divestment is an extraordinary step, which should be based on evidence of singularly egregious behavior.

Multiple nations involved in the Middle East have exhibited non-peaceful intent and behavior worthy of our attention.

Identifying Israel as a focus of phased selective divestment has damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews.

The Presbytery of New Covenant believes the 216th General Assembly (2004) did err in initiating a process of phased selective divestment without the benefit of prior substantiated, objective, and verifiable documentation of companies operating in Israel in opposition to the General Assembly policy on social investing.

The MRTI has discharged the instructions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) by engaging, or attempting to engage, corporations doing business in Israel in which PC(USA)-related entities have investments in order to discourage those corporations from pursuing non-peaceful profits.

The charge to MRTI did not include instruction to consider how corporations doing business in Israel follow the corporate practices encouraged by the PC(USA) as well as how such corporations pursue non-peaceful profits.

Some reaction to MRTI’s recommendation has indicated that the General Assembly policies concerning investment as well as the implications of divestment are not clearly understood by all members of the PC(USA).

There appears to be some confusion in the PC(USA) and among the general public about the relationship between divestment and peacemaking.

### *Additional Rationale*

In the mid-afternoon of Friday, July 2, 2004, the 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a response to an overture seeking support for the Geneva Accord. This response, written by commissioners on the General Assembly Committee on Peacemaking, raised twelve points regarding peace between Israel and the Palestinians, ranging from “the sovereignty of God over all nations, states, governments, and peoples,” to a call to all governments to forge “negotiated compromises that open a path to peace.” The last of these points was a one-sentence historic call for Mission Responsibility Through Investment “to initiate a process of phased selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel, in accordance to General Assembly policy on social investing, and to make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly Council for action.” This action was taken by the General Assembly despite having no detailed information on why Israel, of all nations in the world, should be singled out as deserving the potential punishment of divestment or which corporations would be targeted. In essence the General Assembly gave “carte blanche” to the MRTI to find corporations operating in Israel in which the PC(USA) has investments that might be in opposition to our policy on social investing.

Two years later, on Wednesday afternoon, June 21, 2006, the 217th General Assembly (2006) approved a resolution to “replace” the instructions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) to MRTI with the following: “To urge that financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investments of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal.” This resolution was written by commissioners serving on the General Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues in response to overtures from seventeen presbyteries (10 percent of all presbyteries) calling the General Assembly to rescind the instructions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) to the MRTI initiating a process of phased selective divestment.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) issued the following extraordinary statement to clarify its desire to change the direction set in motion by the flawed process of the 216th General Assembly (2004): “We acknowledge that the actions of the 216th General Assembly (2004) caused hurt and misunderstanding among many members of the Jewish community and within our Presbyterian communion. We are grieved by the pain that this has caused, accept responsibility for the flaws in our process, and ask for a new season of mutual understanding and dialogue.”

We believe that the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) redirected the MRTI Committee away from a divestment process and toward a peaceful investment process. However, the MRTI Committee has continued to operate as if their

2004 instructions for phased selective divestment were still in place and has moved us inexorably to a point of potential divestment from three corporations operating in Israel: Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett-Packard.

We believe the 220th General Assembly (2012) needs to issue clear, unequivocal, and binding instructions to MRTI to cease pursuit of a strategy that was replaced in 2006 and to disapprove their recommendation of divestment. We prayerfully and strongly encourage the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide clear instruction to MRTI regarding the types of information the General Assembly expects if it is asked to initiate a process of phased selective divestment or approve divestment from specific corporations. We ask the 220th General Assembly (2012) to advise future General Assemblies to require thorough documentation, discussion, and debate of the rationale for initiating a process of phased selective divestment prior to making such an historic decision. If phased selective divestment is a viable strategy for peacemaking in today's complex world, we believe PC(USA) members should receive more information about ethical investing and the mission of peacemaking.

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 15-05 AND 15-07

*Advice & Counsel on Items 15-05, and 15-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

These items would specifically forbid the church to engage in divestment in pursuit of justice for Palestine and restrict the church's peacemaking efforts to a set of actions focused largely on dialogue with the U.S. Jewish community and the Israeli government. They would not prohibit the church from pursuing divestment in other areas, but would effectively re-write the mandate of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

The ACSWP advises that Items 15-05 and 15-07 be disapproved.

These overtures would restrict both the witness of the church and the hope of the Palestinians for justice. Items 15-05, 15-07, and 15-10 advocate a words-only approach that has failed to achieve a two-state solution and is enabling the de-Christianization of Palestine. These overtures would prevent the full exercise of corporate responsibility by the church itself, regardless of the facts on the ground in occupied Palestine. They confuse the church's calling to be a truthful place with being a neutral place, and attempt to equate the negotiating position of a long-subjugated people with that of a powerful and prosperous nuclear-armed state. And they ignore the call for solidarity from the Christians in Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Commissioners are faced with a stark choice: to believe the evidence of Palestinians—Christian and Muslim—who experience the daily restrictions and humiliations of the occupation, or to accept the arguments of an Israeli government that repeatedly invokes the Holocaust experience and perceptions of anti-Semitism to ward off nonviolent economic pressure. Many commissioners will have heard from representatives of the American Jewish community who make solidarity with Israel—no matter what its policies—a test of friendship and cooperation. Some may have accepted tours paid for by U.S. and Israeli organizations seeking to influence their votes. The church, however, must apply its own ethical judgment to this emotionally charged situation, based upon its own theology, values, and identity as an international community dedicated to love and justice.

Our concern to repent of past anti-Semitism is clear and often repeated, as is our concern for the safety of Israelis as well as Palestinians. Yet it should be equally clear that criticism of the policies of hardline Israeli governments is not anti-Semitism. This is a position supported by a growing number of American Jews who are dismayed at the anti-democratic consequences of the occupation. Just like the Christian and Muslim communities, the Jewish community is not monolithic. More and more courageous Jews are speaking out, some publicly supporting divestment. A recent book by Peter Beinart, a former neoconservative voice for Israel and the Iraq war, has attracted notable discussion for proposing a boycott of settlement products as a means to end the occupation and preserve democracy.

Our support for the divestment strategy, based on the three criteria of effectiveness, integrity, and solidarity developed by the General Assembly in 1984, is stated in the Advice & Counsel memoranda on Items 15-03 and 15-08. Good Calvinist investment policy assumes that no one has a monopoly on virtue but that meaningful distinctions can be made. In 2004, the General Assembly vote for divestment from companies supporting the military occupation and violence revealed that many Presbyterians were already convinced that the "words-only" approach had reached a dead-end. Item 15-05 makes much of a 2006 statement that the 2004 General Assembly had not signaled its divestment action before that action was taken, and, by selective quotation, tries to separate that initial action from the careful development of a corporate engagement process focused on companies supporting the occupation.

Item 15-05 purports to instruct MRTI on its mandate, but does not mention the *Military Related Investment Guidelines* adopted in 1982, which have restricted investments in nuclear warhead makers and other contractors. Nor does it mention the extensive study of 1984, *The Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria*, which provided the framework for the 1985 "selective, phased divestment" of strategic investments undergirding apartheid in South Africa. By neglecting to understand how the "customary corporate engagement process" seeks to change corporate policy, in this case toward "peaceful pursuits," item 15-05 mistakenly speaks of "singling out a country" rather than key corporations engaged in non-peaceful pursuits.

Items 15-05 and 15-10 call for “positive investment” but do not provide any examples or documentation on how this is to be done effectively under the restrictions of occupation. Certainly the Palestinian Authority under Salam Fayyad has done much with the aid it receives, but numerous studies confirm why foreign enterprises do not invest in the semi-isolated Palestinian cities and cannot invest with Palestinians in Area C (60 percent of the West Bank) or in Gaza due to the blockade. In the words of a 2010 Norwegian government/World Bank study:

The uncertainty and lack of a political horizon created by Israeli closure regime are hindering the potential of any future investments. The combined effect of the closure regime in the West Bank, the restrictions on the access and movement of investors, and the constricted trade between West Bank and Gaza have resulted in substantial increase in transaction costs, lowered the competitiveness of Palestinian products, and created a very poor investment climate in Palestine. ([www.paltrade.org/.../Investment%20in%20Palestine%20-%20The%20](http://www.paltrade.org/.../Investment%20in%20Palestine%20-%20The%20)...)

In fact, many Presbyterians have worked diligently to contribute to the building up of the Palestinian economy. They have been guided by a study by Dr. Don Mead, Michigan State professor emeritus of agricultural economics. They have focused on the tourism industry by leading group visits to Palestine; the sale of Palestinian crafts, art work, and olive oil; and agricultural initiatives for planting olive trees and aiding in the harvest. While these acts of solidarity have supplemented some incomes, and built and cemented relationships between Presbyterians and Palestinians, they have not slowed the Occupation, or prevented the Israeli military from uprooting thousands of olive trees in the meantime.

Commenting on the three settlements “legalized” by the Israeli government in late April, 2012, *The Financial Times*, saw this as yet another setback to peace. Their editorial reads:

Mr. Netanyahu is unlikely to be impressed by words, or swayed by those Israelis who care what the world says. Countries that want Israel to be safe—which requires a peaceful resolution of the conflict—must look for ways to go beyond mere rhetorical condemnation.

As millions of Palestinians continue to languish under Israeli control but without a vote in Israeli affairs, the conflict will look ever more like an anti-apartheid struggle. Most Israelis know this is a battle they would be likely to lose.” (*The Financial Times*, April 25, 2012).

The “occupation” is a term for the entire military and economic enterprise of taking land slated to become a Palestinian state, restricting the Arab population to smaller and smaller areas by an extensive wall, and a network of surveillance and checkpoint installations. Armored Caterpillar bulldozers have been key in home demolitions, in destroying parts of Gaza, and in constructing the security or separation wall. Hewlett Packard biometric security equipment and Motorola Solutions surveillance and motion-detection equipment form an integral part of the military occupation. Consequently, these firms and their products are not engaged in peaceful purposes.

Item 15-10 cites the 2008 General Assembly’s statement advising against approving a “caricature” that would oversimplify the Israeli-Palestine conflict. That same assembly, however, recognized the enormous power imbalance, pledged not to abandon the Palestinians, continued the MRTI process, and invoked the clear judgment of the Barmen Declaration on “the responsibility both of ruler and of the ruled.”

In this context, Items 15-05, 15-07, and 15-10 would not only restrict the church’s voice and action, but they would place the church in the same political impasse that has immobilized the U.S. government, to the detriment of U.S. interests and reputation in the region and throughout the world. What the three overtures against MRTI seek to avoid is making a tough moral choice. Sometimes obeying Christ means making such a choice and standing with the weak. Divestment exemplifies choice. In this case, it is a very Presbyterian choice made “decently and in order,” after a solid process and repeated debate over eight years. It is also a very “positive” choice that affirms that God is sovereign over our economic resources, and that there should be no wall of separation between our moral and financial stewardship.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 15-05.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns believes this item does not fully acknowledge the long and careful process that Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) has followed since its mandate from the 216th General Assembly (2004). The MRTI report carefully documents the reasons why the committee has arrived at the final step of corporate engagement, but this item does not take into account those reasons and the years of work by MRTI.

The item does not provide any reasons why past General Assembly policies identifying specific human rights abuses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) as obstacles to peace should be contravened. The ACREC holds that as long as the denomination policy holds that we should not profit from “non-peaceful pursuits,” and as long as the three U.S. companies identified by MRTI are doing so, it is the policy of the church not to profit from these companies’ shares.

Further, this item claims that “identifying Israel as a focus of phased selective divestment has damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews.” This is an inaccurate statement at multiple levels:

The 216th General Assembly (2004) did not “identify Israel as a focus” of phased selective divestment; it called for identifying U.S. companies profiting from the Israeli Occupation of the OPT.

While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said the 216th General Assembly (2004) directive to not profit from the Israeli Occupation has “damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews,” not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, the call for divestment has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation, as evidenced by the support for MRTI from the Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAH) and the Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace.

The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in some kind of blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category.

General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-05

*Comment on Item 15-05—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

This overture addresses corporate engagement of some corporations doing business in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories as assigned by the 216th General Assembly (2004), and affirmed by the General Assemblies in 2006, 2008, and 2010. This work has been carried out according to the policy of the 116th General Assembly (1976) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1976, Part I, pp. 513–18) on Social Responsibility and Investments that listed eight investor actions, including divestment that can be utilized to assess corporate practices, and if appropriate, promote a change in those practices. The 196th General Assembly (1984) (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 193–94) affirmed the use of divestment as an ethical strategy for socially responsible investment, and outlined principles and criteria for its use. The following year, the 197th General Assembly (1985) (*Minutes*, 1985, Part I, pp. 228–32) adopted a process of “selective, phased divestment” built around a corporate engagement process of careful research informed by General Assembly policies on the issues involved, interaction with identified corporations, use of engagement tools available to shareholders (correspondence, dialogues, proxy voting, posing questions at corporate annual meetings, and filing of shareholder resolutions that may lead to further dialogue), and ecumenical consultation whenever possible. As a last resort, divestment may be recommended to the General Assembly if corporate engagement has not succeeded, and is unlikely to succeed in the future in changing corporate practices. Thus, General Assembly policies on socially responsible investing are rooted in how the church can use whatever investments it has, however large or modest, to promote its mission goals and values. Past General Assemblies have entrusted similar assignments to MRTI regarding corporate activity in Sudan and Burma.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved MRTI’s report on its work since 2004, and clearly stated its goal that “financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investments of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal.” Divestment is the final step of the “customary corporate engagement process” when all other efforts are unsuccessful and when future efforts are not likely to produce results. Both the Assembly committee and the full Assembly were clearly informed of this fact prior to their votes affirming the process.

The extensive work of MRTI on this assignment has been publicized throughout the church. In addition, full reports were made to each meeting of the General Assembly Mission Council, and to the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010), which affirmed MRTI’s continued work on its assigned task. Those reports, along with the MRTI report to the 2012 General Assembly also note that the customary corporate engagement process has achieved positive and constructive outcomes with some companies (Citigroup, ITT Industries, and United Technologies). Interpretative materials and General Assembly policies on socially responsible investing and the PC(USA) are available in printed form on the MRTI web site and Facebook page. Stories of MRTI’s work have appeared in the Presbyterian News Service, *Presbyterians Today*, and other publications.

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## Item 15-06

**[The assembly answered Item 15-06 by the action taken on Items 15-02, 15-10, and 15-11. See pp. 41, 42.]**

*On Responding to the Call from Palestinian Christians for Economic Solidarity—From the Presbytery of Scioto Valley.*

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to encourage all Presbyterians, as individuals and in their lives together as congregations, presbyteries, and institutions to prayerfully

1. consider how to respond to the call of “A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith and Hope from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering” (the Palestinian Christian Kairos document) “to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land”;
2. examine the ways in which our economic power as consumers and investors may be complicit with the abuses of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land; and
3. consider how to respond to the call of the Palestinian Christian Kairos document to engage in “boycott and divestment as tools of nonviolence for justice, peace, and security for all.”

### *Rationale*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) commended for study the Kairos Palestine document, and endorsed the document’s emphasis on hope for liberation, nonviolence, love of enemy, and reconciliation. Many Presbyterians have responded to the invitation to read and study this document, and have found in it a compelling call to action.

As the document explains, “Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies, and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly [and] sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation. In this spirit and with this dedication we will eventually reach the longed-for resolution to our problems, as indeed happened in South Africa and with many other liberation movements in the world” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1012 of the electronic version).

Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, teaches “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt. 5:9). *The Book of Confessions* states “God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ is the ground of the peace, justice, and freedom among nations which all powers of government are called to serve and defend. The church, in its own life, is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace. This search requires that the nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at risk to national security, to reduce areas of strife and to broaden international understanding” (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.45). Our church Constitution also states “Wherever there is brokenness, violence, and injustice the people of God are called to peacemaking” (*Book of Order*, W-7.4003). We believe that Christians bear a significant responsibility to listen to, respect, and strive to understand the history of the Jewish people, and the ways in which Christians so often have been perpetrators of violence against Jews throughout our two thousand year history. We are particularly aware of the ugly, horrific reality of the Holocaust and seek to be sensitive to its impact on Jews both in Israel and around the world. It is impossible for us to fully comprehend the insecurity felt by the Jewish people in the wake of the murder of six million Jews just a generation ago.

Similarly, our relationship with our Muslim sisters and brothers has been fraught with violence, in too many instances initiated by Christians. In various moments, each of our communities has been both victim and perpetrator. As we work with Muslims regarding Israel and Palestine, we attempt to understand the implications of the Nakba for the Palestinian people, and to appreciate the impact of the unrelenting devastation that event and the ensuing occupation has meant for Muslims in Israel and Palestine and around the world.

We are painfully aware of the growing insecurity and desperation of our Christian sisters and brothers in Palestine and Israel and throughout the Middle East. In too many places, Christians have been forced to flee their own homes in order to save themselves and their families. When church leaders from this region of the world speak, we listen with the greatest attention, and we feel a special responsibility to lift up and respond to the voices of this ever-shrinking minority of those with whom we feel the closest possible bond. Their common faithfulness to Jesus over the centuries, shared among numerous Christian traditions, is an inspiration to us.

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Concurrence to Item 15-06 from the Presbyteries of Genesee Valley, Northern New England and the Synod of the Covenant.

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### **ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-06.

### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this item because economic solidarity with oppressed peoples is a time-honored principle and practice of the church. This call from the Holy Land is not only in line with that tradition, but it is also in accord with calls from our Christian sisters and brothers in Palestine. The Palestinian Christian

call for boycott and divestment has been influenced by our church's position that popular resistance to the Israeli occupation must be through non-violent means.

The shrinking numbers in the Palestinian Christian population through emigration because of occupation and oppression in Palestine must be a matter of great concern for all Christians everywhere. Today, Palestinian Christians represent the closest historical link to the New Testament Church. The continued flight of Palestinian Christians from the birthplace of Christianity will not only serve to diminish Palestinian culture as a whole but also contribute to the destabilization of Israel as Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims continue to oppose each other without the moderating witness and influence of the Palestinian Christian community.

The PC(USA) should continue to foster interfaith relations with the American and Israeli Jewish communities, but not at the expense of the ancient Christian community in Palestine. Ours must be a prophetic stance in which we speak truth not only to power, but also to friends and partners in the interfaith community.

## Item 15-07

**[The assembly answered Item 15-07 by the action taken on Item 15-11. See pp. 41, 42.]**

*On Rejecting the Use of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction Policies in Peacemaking Efforts Between Israelis and Palestinians—From the Presbytery of National Capital.*

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:

1. Reject the MRTI recommendation to divest from Caterpillar, Motorola, and Hewlett-Packard.
2. Reject any use of boycott, divestment, and sanction policies in peacemaking efforts between Palestinians and Israelis.
3. Commit itself to remaining an advocate for peace in the Middle East, with special attention to
  - a. the region's changing dynamics in reaction to the "Arab Spring" movements,
  - b. the widespread pattern of attacks on Christians in the region,
  - c. affirming the PC(USA)'s historical position in favor of a two-state solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict,
  - d. the need for Israel to stop all settlement construction,
  - e. a return by all parties to the negotiating table.

### *Rationale*

There is a long and ugly history of Christians using economic boycotts and sanctions against Jews and, given that history, the economic divestment issue has placed enormous strains on Jewish-PC(USA) relations since 2004. The American Jewish community was quite open to PC(USA) statements critical of Israel's policies prior to 2004 but highly critical of PC(USA) actions related to possible divestment decisions aimed at Israel since 2004.

The American Jewish community has been open even to strident advocacy against Palestinian suffering in the statements and actions of other Protestant denominations that have taken the particular tool of divestment off the table. The passage of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) recommendations to divest from Caterpillar, Motorola, and Hewlett-Packard for reasons related to their business activity in Israel threatens to end Jewish-PC(USA) dialogues and collaboration on social justice concerns in many parts of the country.

There are many ways other than economic boycotts, divestments, and sanctions to express PC(USA) opinions and values regarding peacemaking in the Middle East and for the PC(USA) to play an active role in promoting justice and peace.

### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 15-05 AND 15-07**

*Advice & Counsel on Items 15-05, and 15-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

These items would specifically forbid the church to engage in divestment in pursuit of justice for Palestine and restrict the church's peacemaking efforts to a set of actions focused largely on dialogue with the U.S. Jewish community and the Israeli government. They would not prohibit the church from pursuing divestment in other areas, but would effectively re-write the mandate of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

The ACSWP advises that Items 15-05 and 15-07 be disapproved.

These overtures would restrict both the witness of the church and the hope of the Palestinians for justice. Items 15-05, 15-07, and 15-10 advocate a words-only approach that has failed to achieve a two-state solution and is enabling the de-Christianization of Palestine. These overtures would prevent the full exercise of corporate responsibility by the church itself, regardless of the facts on the ground in occupied Palestine. They confuse the church's calling to be a truthful place with being a neutral place, and attempt to equate the negotiating position of a long-subjugated people with that of a powerful and prosperous nuclear-armed state. And they ignore the call for solidarity from the Christians in Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Commissioners are faced with a stark choice: to believe the evidence of Palestinians—Christian and Muslim—who experience the daily restrictions and humiliations of the occupation, or to accept the arguments of an Israeli government that repeatedly invokes the Holocaust experience and perceptions of anti-Semitism to ward off nonviolent economic pressure. Many commissioners will have heard from representatives of the American Jewish community who make solidarity with Israel—no matter what its policies—a test of friendship and cooperation. Some may have accepted tours paid for by U.S. and Israeli organizations seeking to influence their votes. The church, however, must apply its own ethical judgment to this emotionally charged situation, based upon its own theology, values, and identity as an international community dedicated to love and justice.

Our concern to repent of past anti-Semitism is clear and often repeated, as is our concern for the safety of Israelis as well as Palestinians. Yet it should be equally clear that criticism of the policies of hardline Israeli governments is not anti-Semitism. This is a position supported by a growing number of American Jews who are dismayed at the anti-democratic consequences of the occupation. Just like the Christian and Muslim communities, the Jewish community is not monolithic. More and more courageous Jews are speaking out, some publicly supporting divestment. A recent book by Peter Beinart, a former neoconservative voice for Israel and the Iraq war, has attracted notable discussion for proposing a boycott of settlement products as a means to end the occupation and preserve democracy.

Our support for the divestment strategy, based on the three criteria of effectiveness, integrity, and solidarity developed by the General Assembly in 1984, is stated in the Advice & Counsel memoranda on Items 15-03 and 15-08. Good Calvinist investment policy assumes that no one has a monopoly on virtue but that meaningful distinctions can be made. In 2004, the General Assembly vote for divestment from companies supporting the military occupation and violence revealed that many Presbyterians were already convinced that the “words-only” approach had reached a dead-end. Item 15-05 makes much of a 2006 statement that the 2004 General Assembly had not signaled its divestment action before that action was taken, and, by selective quotation, tries to separate that initial action from the careful development of a corporate engagement process focused on companies supporting the occupation.

Item 15-05 purports to instruct MRTI on its mandate, but does not mention the *Military Related Investment Guidelines* adopted in 1982, which have restricted investments in nuclear warhead makers and other contractors. Nor does it mention the extensive study of 1984, *The Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria*, which provided the framework for the 1985 “selective, phased divestment” of strategic investments undergirding apartheid in South Africa. By neglecting to understand how the “customary corporate engagement process” seeks to change corporate policy, in this case toward “peaceful pursuits,” item 15-05 mistakenly speaks of “singling out a country” rather than key corporations engaged in non-peaceful pursuits.

Items 15-05 and 15-10 call for “positive investment” but do not provide any examples or documentation on how this is to be done effectively under the restrictions of occupation. Certainly the Palestinian Authority under Salam Fayyad has done much with the aid it receives, but numerous studies confirm why foreign enterprises do not invest in the semi-isolated Palestinian cities and cannot invest with Palestinians in Area C (60 percent of the West Bank) or in Gaza due to the blockade. In the words of a 2010 Norwegian government/World Bank study:

The uncertainty and lack of a political horizon created by Israeli closure regime are hindering the potential of any future investments. The combined effect of the closure regime in the West Bank, the restrictions on the access and movement of investors, and the constricted trade between West Bank and Gaza have resulted in substantial increase in transaction costs, lowered the competitiveness of Palestinian products, and created a very poor investment climate in Palestine. ([www.paltrade.org/.../Investment%20in%20Palestine%20-%20The%2...](http://www.paltrade.org/.../Investment%20in%20Palestine%20-%20The%2...))

In fact, many Presbyterians have worked diligently to contribute to the building up of the Palestinian economy. They have been guided by a study by Dr. Don Mead, Michigan State professor emeritus of agricultural economics. They have focused on the tourism industry by leading group visits to Palestine; the sale of Palestinian crafts, art work, and olive oil; and agricultural initiatives for planting olive trees and aiding in the harvest. While these acts of solidarity have supplemented some incomes, and built and cemented relationships between Presbyterians and Palestinians, they have not slowed the Occupation, or prevented the Israeli military from uprooting thousands of olive trees in the meantime.

Commenting on the three settlements “legalized” by the Israeli government in late April, 2012, *The Financial Times*, saw this as yet another setback to peace. Their editorial reads:

Mr. Netanyahu is unlikely to be impressed by words, or swayed by those Israelis who care what the world says. Countries that want Israel to be safe—which requires a peaceful resolution of the conflict—must look for ways to go beyond mere rhetorical condemnation.



## 15 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES

As millions of Palestinians continue to languish under Israeli control but without a vote in Israeli affairs, the conflict will look ever more like an anti-apartheid struggle. Most Israelis know this is a battle they would be likely to lose.” (*The Financial Times*, April 25, 2012).

The “occupation” is a term for the entire military and economic enterprise of taking land slated to become a Palestinian state, restricting the Arab population to smaller and smaller areas by an extensive wall, and a network of surveillance and checkpoint installations. Armored Caterpillar bulldozers have been key in home demolitions, in destroying parts of Gaza, and in constructing the security or separation wall. Hewlett Packard biometric security equipment and Motorola Solutions surveillance and motion-detection equipment form an integral part of the military occupation. Consequently, these firms and their products are not engaged in peaceful purposes.

Item 15-10 cites the 2008 General Assembly’s statement advising against approving a “caricature” that would oversimplify the Israeli-Palestine conflict. That same assembly, however, recognized the enormous power imbalance, pledged not to abandon the Palestinians, continued the MRTI process, and invoked the clear judgment of the Barmen Declaration on “the responsibility both of ruler and of the ruled.”

In this context, Items 15-05, 15-07, and 15-10 would not only restrict the church’s voice and action, but they would place the church in the same political impasse that has immobilized the U.S. government, to the detriment of U.S. interests and reputation in the region and throughout the world. What the three overtures against MRTI seek to avoid is making a tough moral choice. Sometimes obeying Christ means making such a choice and standing with the weak. Divestment exemplifies choice. In this case, it is a very Presbyterian choice made “decently and in order,” after a solid process and repeated debate over eight years. It is also a very “positive” choice that affirms that God is sovereign over our economic resources, and that there should be no wall of separation between our moral and financial stewardship.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-07

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 15-07.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly opposes this overture because it is replete with misleading oversimplifications and does not address the fundamental problem on the ground, which is a military occupation. The rationale equates criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism, and conflates non-violent economic pressure with Jewish persecution.

The item converges three very separate issues into one: financial divestment, the Arab Spring, and the situation of the various Christian communities across the region. This item makes wide generalizations about the Christians of the Middle East and stereotypes them into one group with one set of values and problems. Each Christian community in each country across the region has a different situation resulting from different political problems. (For example, the Christians of Iraq lived in harmony with their Muslim neighbors for millennia until the U.S. invasion of 2003 when they became a proxy easy target for the Christian West).

Furthermore, the generalization of widespread attacks on Christians across the Middle East is not accurate—rather it is true only in isolated and very limited scale given the history of co-existence over centuries. This is confirmed by our Middle Eastern church partners who reject the claim that Christians are leaving the holy land because of persecution by Muslims. They have repeatedly indicated that the primary reason for their emigration is the human rights abuses inflicted on them by the Israeli military occupation that equally affects their Muslim neighbors with whom they share a culture, language, and deep bond.

Finally, this item claims that “the economic divestment issue has placed enormous strains on Jewish-PC(USA) relations since 2004” and that the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) recommendation “threatens to end Jewish-PC(USA) dialogues and collaboration on social justice concerns.”

This is blatant and dangerous stereotyping of both Jews and Presbyterians:

- While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said the 216th General Assembly (2004) directive to not profit from the Israeli Occupation has “damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews,” not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, the call for divestment has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation, as evidenced by the support for MRTI from the Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAHD) and the Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace.

- The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in some kind of blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category. General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-07**

*Comment on Item 15-07—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

This overture seeks to end corporate engagement of some corporations doing business in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories as assigned by the 216th General Assembly (2004), and affirmed by the General Assemblies in 2006, 2008, and 2010. This work has been carried out according to the policy of 116th General Assembly (1976 of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1976, Part I, pp. 513–18) on Social Responsibility and Investments that listed eight investor actions, including divestment, that can be utilized to assess corporate practices, and if appropriate, promote a change in those practices. The 196th General Assembly (1984) (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 193–94) affirmed the use of divestment as an ethical strategy for socially responsible investment, and outlined principles and criteria for its use. The following year, the 197th General Assembly (1985) (*Minutes*, 1985, Part I, pp. 228–32) adopted a process of “selective, phased divestment” built around a corporate engagement process of careful research informed by General Assembly policies on the issues involved, interaction with identified corporations, use of engagement tools available to shareholders (correspondence, dialogues, proxy voting, posing questions at corporate annual meetings, and filing of shareholder resolutions that may lead to further dialogue), and ecumenical consultation whenever possible. As a last resort, divestment may be recommended to the General Assembly if corporate engagement has not succeeded, and is unlikely to succeed in the future in changing corporate practices. Thus, General Assembly policies on socially responsible investing are rooted in how the church can use whatever investments it has, however large or modest, to promote its mission goals and values. Past General Assemblies have entrusted similar assignments to MRTI regarding corporate activity in Sudan and Burma.

The General Assembly should be aware that MRTI’s recommendation comes as a direct result of the actions of the General Assembly in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010. It is part of the customary corporate engagement process. It is not a response to, nor a part of, any broader movement advocating boycott/divestment/sanctions against Israel or any other country. The General Assembly has not acted upon any proposal to participate in such a movement and MRTI only enacts the General Assembly’s directives. The MRTI recommendations make no mention of a boycott or of sanctions against Israel. And the divestment recommended is not a general divestment, nor one aimed at companies who merely do business in Israel. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies invest—and will continue to invest—in many companies doing business in Israel but who are not, to our knowledge, involved in non-peaceful pursuits. Examples include American Express, Intel, Proctor & Gamble, Coca-Cola, Oracle, among others. The three named companies in the MRTI recommendation are American companies, not Israeli, profiting from particular pursuits identified as roadblocks to peace, as explained in the report.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved MRTI’s report on its work since 2004, and clearly stated its goal that “financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investments of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal.” Divestment is the final step of the “customary corporate engagement process” when all other efforts are unsuccessful and when future efforts are not likely to produce results. Both the assembly committee and the full assembly were clearly informed of this fact prior to their votes affirming the process.

It should be noted that the 1984 General Assembly’s principles and criteria for considering divestment includes the desire that the church addresses the issue, in this case the establishment of a just peace in Israel and Palestine, in a variety of ways. Decades of General Assembly statements have been coupled with educational efforts, support for PC(USA) partners in the region, advocacy at the United Nations and with the U.S. and Israeli governments and the Palestinian Authority, and corporate engagement since 2004. Corporate engagement has been pursued on an ecumenical basis drawing upon the research, documentation, and collaboration with Palestinians, Israelis, and Jewish Americans who share a commitment to ending the Occupation, and corporate profiting from roadblocks to peace.

The extensive work of MRTI on this assignment has been publicized throughout the church. In addition, full reports were made to each meeting of the General Assembly Mission Council, and to the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010), which affirmed MRTI’s continued work on its assigned task. Those reports, along with the MRTI report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) also note that the customary corporate engagement process has achieved positive and constructive outcomes with some companies (Citigroup, ITT Industries, and United Technologies).

**Item 15-08**

**[The assembly answered Item 15-08 by the action taken on Item 15-11. See pp. 41, 42.]**

*On Approving the GAMC’s Recommendations on Selective Divestment Made by MRTI—From the Presbytery of the Palisades.*

The Presbytery of the Palisades overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve the recommendations on selective divestment made by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI), and to proceed to approval and timely implementation of all of the recommendations that were passed by the General Assembly Mission Council at its appointed meeting on February 17, 2012. (See Item 15-11).

## ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEMS 15-03 AND 15-08

*Advice and Counsel on Items 15-03 and 15-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Items 15-03 and 15-08, as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“5. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate [~~this action~~][an action in support of MRTI recommendations] to all other PC(USA) councils and entities[;] [and to ecumenical partners,] [~~and invite and strongly encourage~~] [encouraging] those groups and organizations that hold assets in Caterpillar, Inc., [Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett Packard,] to divest as well.”

*Rationale*

The amendment to this item reflects the agreement of the sponsors of the overture and of its concurrences with the full recommendations of the report of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) committee. That is, they support the divestment of the three corporations recommended by MRTI. Their focus on Caterpillar reflects the use of company equipment in highly visible home demolitions and construction of the separation wall, as well as the legal campaign to have a public investigation of Rachel Corrie’s death. Armored Caterpillar bulldozers were also very active in destroying houses during the 2009–2010 war on Gaza.

The recommendations in MRTI’s report, however, represent a more inclusive, methodical, and ecumenical process that considers the importance of high technology from Motorola Solutions and Hewlett-Packard in the enforcement of control of the Palestinian population, including the protection of illegal settlements. Attempts at reaching even low levels of agreement with all three companies have gone on for more than four years while all have been expanding their strategic business relationships with the occupation. It is consistent with the MRTI recommendations to propose that, if approved, they be shared with ecumenical partners as well as Presbyterian bodies. This Advice and Counsel is thus meant to support MRTI’s recommendations as well (Item 15-11).

The basic argument for divestment is that words-only approaches have simply failed to halt the growth of Israeli settlements and the intensification of the occupation by the separation wall and other means, virtually ending the prospect of a two-state solution and hastening the de-Christianization of Palestine. Several items before the General Assembly address other aspects of the political impasse, religious liberties, and support for a war with Iran. Overall, however, only a deliberate naiveté on the church’s part can ignore the deliberate subversion of the peace process since the death of Yitzak Rabin in 1995.

Commissioners considering the overall divestment recommendations may consider three dimensions of this act of witness:

1. Is it consistent with the theology and policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. Is it an act of investment responsibility that reflects the key moral criteria of integrity, effectiveness, and solidarity?
3. Does it support other witness to the key problem of the occupation and the failure of political, diplomatic, and violent measures to affect the situation?

1. A strong theological and ethical basis for divestment in support of freedom for Palestinian Christians and Muslims can be found not only in The Confession of 1967 (the basis for the 1971 mandate for MRTI itself), but in the Barmen Declaration and A Brief Statement of Faith. In its resolution on the Middle East in 2008, the General Assembly:

Affirms the obligation of the church to speak to the governments of the United States and all other nations where it sees those governments violating the commandments of God. In the words of *The Theological Declaration of Barmen*, which speaks to the dependence of the Church on the Word of God and its independence from any state or ideology, “we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords ... . The state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace ...” (*The Book of Confessions*, 8.15, 8.22). The sovereignty of God thus judges all claims of sovereign nationhood, all boundaries, all exercises of force, and all uses of resources by human beings. The Church is thus called to help discern where the Spirit is working in the world, guided by Scripture and its confessions.

In A Brief Statement of Faith, we affirm that:

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, *to hear the voices of peoples long silenced*, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. [emphasis added] (*The Book of Confessions*, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

The words in italics, in this case, may refer particularly to the Christians of Palestine and Israel whose voices are often disregarded in deliberations focused on the attitudes of Jews or Muslims.

In terms of policy, the Middle East report approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) introduced its recommendations with several summary statements:

We deeply value our relationships with Jews and Muslims in the United States, Israel, and the predominantly Muslim countries of the Middle East. Yet the bonds of friendship must neither prevent us from speaking, nor limit our empathy for the suffering of others. Inaction and silence on our part enable actions we oppose and consequences we grieve. ...

We also recognize that our concern to end support for both violence in all its forms and the ongoing occupation and settlement of Palestine places demands of integrity on how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) uses its own resources and investments. Let us be clear: we do affirm the legitimacy of Israel as a state, but consider the continuing occupation of Palestine (West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem) to be illegitimate, illegal under international law, and an enduring threat to peace in the region. Furthermore, we recognize that any support for that occupation weakens the moral standing of our nation internationally and our security. (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1027 of the electronic version)

2. The General Assembly Mission Council comment describes some of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) policy and process, which include *Military-Related Investment Guidelines* (1982) and an extensive study, *The Divestment Strategy: Ethical and Institutional Context* (1984). The 1982 guidelines led the church to restrict its investments in nuclear warhead makers and the largest military contractors, whose securities continue to be proscribed for church investment agencies. The 1984 study focuses on the two values of effectiveness and integrity, analyzed in light of trusteeship and Christian mission. These values led to a range of strategic criteria that guided the church in the “selective, phased divestment” of securities in thirteen companies as part of the larger campaign against apartheid. In broad strokes, then, there were three key values undergirding considerations such as impact on those suffering, urgency, technical feasibility, coordination with partners, limitation of other strategies, and clarity of message.

In terms of effectiveness, historically, church-led nonviolent economic pressure of all kinds, including divestment, contributed to the eventual departure of 214 of the 324 U.S. corporations operating in South Africa in 1981, representing an equity decline from \$2.6 billion to \$714 million, a substantial move toward isolating South Africa economically. As is well known, after the 1994 end of apartheid, figures such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Allan Boesak credited the churches with decisive impact, as did studies such as Robert K. Massie’s *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (Doubleday, 1998).

The 1984 study describes how divestment of securities, through removing access and influence “inside” a corporation as a stockholder, may have more impact on corporate policy from the “outside.” Divestment’s effectiveness is not primarily financial but impacts the reputation and legitimacy of the behaviors focused on in ecumenical and sometimes international campaigns. Vigorous opposition to divestment by the Israeli government and its supporters indicates a real fear of being associated with the occupation and oppression of Palestinians, affirming that divestment carries an effective message that justice is needed.

In terms of the second criterion, integrity, this is not to be seen as a purity or “cleansing the portfolio.” The Reformed tradition does not favor separation from the world or a position of moral perfection, unattainable in any event. We do, however, affirm that our principles should be backed up by action, lest we profit from practices we decry. The phrase in the Preliminary Principles of the *Book of Order* is that “truth is in order to goodness,” with the implication that the church should be a truth-teller and a truth-doer.

The church’s action, from this perspective, is less about strictly economic consequences and more about the prophetic nature of the church, acting in obedience and without being compromised. Yet seeking integrity can also make for effective witness against practices accepted by majorities or those in power.

The nature of Christian mission in the Middle East involves the church in acts of solidarity with the remaining Christians, and with all who seek a peace with justice. Although support for divestment and other forms of economic pressure is strongly discouraged by the Israeli government, an unprecedented ecumenical group issued the *Kairos* Palestine affirmation in December of 2009. Among the nonviolent methods of resistance to the occupation that they endorse is divestment:

4.2.6 Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation. In this spirit and with this dedication we will eventually reach the longed-for resolution to our problems, as indeed happened in South Africa and with many other liberation movements in the world.

4.3 Through our love, we will overcome injustices and establish foundations for a new society both for us and for our opponents. Our future and their future are one. Either the cycle of violence that destroys both of us or peace that will benefit both. We call on Israel to give up its injustice towards us, not to twist the truth of reality of the occupation by pretending that it is a battle against terrorism... (From *Kairos Palestine Document: A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering*: <http://www.kairopalestine.ps>)

As to overall Palestinian views of the occupation and divestment as a strategy, the position of the *Kairos* church leaders seems to articulate a broad desire for resistance. An April 22, 2012, report by *60 Minutes* confirms that Christians view the occupation as the primary impetus to their departure (<http://mondoweiss.net/2012/04/60-minutes-profiles-palestinian-christians-michael-oren-falls-on-his-face-defending-israel.html>).

As a strategy, then, the divestment of securities in three key corporations would strengthen the integrity of the church’s moral opposition to the occupation, focus attention effectively on the means by which the occupation is profitably maintained, and be a clear sign of support for the Palestinian Christians and others seeking peace with justice. It would also be an action consistent with international law and a witness against the political failures that enable an oppressive situation to continue.

## 3. Relation of divestment to the “peace process.”

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin by a fundamentalist Jew in 1995, the Oslo peace process has never recovered. The Second Intifada included suicide bombings and severe punitive raids on Palestinians, acts of terrorism fueled by increasing Islamist and Jewish fundamentalism. Settlement growth continued through the 1990s and 2000s, despite purported suspensions and the removal of 7,500 settlers from Gaza in 2005. Rockets by radical groups—a terrifying, if largely inaccurate, threat—were a cause or pretext for a one-sided war on Gaza (<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=74717>).

The failure of the second Camp David process in 2000, though blamed largely on Yasser Arafat by Israeli and U.S. sources, reflected a substantial Palestinian willingness to concede land colonized by the major settlement cities, but an unwillingness to give up on a coherent Palestinian state with some shared sovereignty in Jerusalem. With the separation wall extensions, continued annexations and removals in East Jerusalem and Area C (60 percent) of the West Bank, strangulation of Palestinian land such as at the Tent of Nations (<http://www.tentofnations.org>), and violent responses to peaceful Palestinian protests, little hope is seen for a renewed peace process.

Public policy advocacy by the churches and human rights groups has been massively outgunned by well-funded groups dedicated to the defense of all Israeli interests, despite the emergence of more critical groups in the U.S. Jewish community. Diplomatically, although the US calls for renewed negotiations, it has blocked international efforts to allow Palestine membership in the United Nations and vetoed efforts to hold Israel accountable to international law more than thirty times, while continuing more than \$3 billion in military aid every year. This one-sided support for the State of Israel and its occupation, along with the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has weakened the international reputation of the United States, particularly among the world’s 1.4 billion Muslims.

General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and many other good people have called repeatedly for an effective end of the occupation since 1974, only to see both nonviolent and violent liberation efforts of the Palestinians suppressed. While interfaith dialogue has had some value during this time, the U.S. political and media context allows relatively little debate over the nature of the occupation of Palestine, much less opposition to its continued support. Similarly, the exodus of Christians from the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, will continue unless voices coupled with action are raised challenging the conditions that are designed to push Arabs out of desirable areas.

For the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to back its moral concerns with divestment would be a dramatic act of conscience and leadership. Although the 2009 Presbyterian Panel survey data indicate that a majority of Presbyterians support divestment for human rights reasons, considerable pressure will be applied and allegations of anti-Semitism would be expected, encouraging conflict in the church. Thus commissioners have to determine how important it is to act on a clear matter of justice in the face of open opposition.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-08

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-08.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns sees this item as one that recognizes the long and careful process followed by MRTI, which was given a mandate by the 216th General Assembly (2004) on the Israel/Palestine issue. This mandate was to engage with U.S. corporations in an attempt to change their policies that result in profiting from the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian Territories. This item acknowledges MRTI’s faithful and methodical eight-year process and agrees that the church has exhausted all other avenues.

The ACREC believes that the same standards that have guided votes on MRTI recommendations over the last forty years of corporate engagement by the committee, should also guide the General Assembly on this vote, no matter who is committing the human rights violations, where, and against whom. To use different standards to judge the evidence is at best, discriminatory, and at worst, sets a bad precedent of racism that will diminish the effectiveness of MRTI’s future work.

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## Item 15-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 15-09 See pp. 41, 42.]

*On Human Rights and Religious Freedom of Arab Christians and Other Palestinian Citizens—From the Presbytery of San Jose.*

The Presbytery of San Jose respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to:

1. Commend the U. S. State Department for its annual published listing of incidents of religious discrimination by the State of Israel affecting the human rights and religious freedom of Arab Christians and other Palestinian citizens.
2. Commend the U. S. State Department for reporting on the failure of Israel to protect Christian Holy sites throughout Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.
3. Urge the Israeli government to end any and all religious discriminatory practices.
4. Urge the Israeli government to enforce its own legal obligation to protect Christian holy sites throughout Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.
5. Direct that the Stated Clerk contact President Obama and the Israeli ambassador to the U. S. asking them to assist in ending all religious discriminatory practices and to protect religious groups' holy sites in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.

### *Rationale*

The decline of the population of the Arab Christian community has been reported by many sources including the State Department, the World Council of Churches, and the Palestinian Authority.<sup>1</sup> The Jewish Council for Public Affairs [JCPA] describes the pressures faced by the Christian community including “restrictions on visas and travel, family reunification, poor economic opportunities, and the difficulties of everyday life including checkpoints and in some instances residential separation from places of work due to the security barrier. These conditions are real.”<sup>2</sup>

In its 2009 Human Rights Report the U. S. State department described a failure by Israel to protect Christian holy sites. It reports that while “the 1967 [Israeli] Protection of Holy Sites Law applies to holy sites of all religious groups within the country and in all of Jerusalem ... the Government implements regulations only for Jewish sites. [emphasis added] Non-Jewish holy sites do not enjoy legal protection under it because the Government does not recognize them as official holy sites.”<sup>3</sup>

At the end of 2008, there were 137 designated holy sites, all of which were Jewish. Furthermore, the government has drafted regulations to identify, protect, and fund only Jewish holy sites ... many Muslim and Christian sites are neglected, inaccessible, or threatened by property developers and municipalities. The Christian pilgrimage sites around the Sea of Galilee face periodic threats of encroachment from district planners who want to use parts of their properties for recreation. In the past, only diplomatic interventions have forestalled such efforts by the U. S. State Department.”<sup>4</sup>

Religion-based violence against civilians has been reported by the U. S. State Department in its International Religious Freedom Report on Israel and the Occupied Territory. “Israeli settlers in the West Bank on several occasions during the reporting period framed violence against Palestinian persons and property as necessary for the defense of Judaism. *In November 2009 the dean of the extremist Od Yosef Hai yeshiva in the West Bank settlement of Yitzhar published what he described as a guide to killing non-Jews, which condoned among other things the killing of Christian and Muslim infants.*”<sup>5</sup>

A World Council of Churches delegation has commented that “In every country that respects and implements freedom of worship, worshipers of different faiths live their faith and express their prayers without restrictions from the governing authorities. ... In Jerusalem, and for the past decade, this has not been the case. The occupying power is denying free access to holy places of worship to both Christians and Muslims on several important occasions ... the local faithful see that the restrictions made against them are violations of basic human rights and religious freedom as well as a violation of ... centuries of religious traditions for the indigenous Christians of this land.”<sup>6</sup>

The World Council of Churches delegation also observed that “many factors were contributing to the high rates of emigration of Palestinian Christians ... including discriminatory housing policies, the demolition of Palestinian homes to make way for Israeli settlements, high rates of unemployment, and violence from Israeli settlers. ... The Israeli government severely restricts, or in many cases prohibits, the movement of Palestinians within (and to and from) the West Bank. These restrictions affect all aspects of Palestinian life, making everyday activities like selling farming produce, obtaining access to medical treatment, obtaining education and visiting friends and relatives difficult, hazardous and often impossible.”<sup>7</sup>

### Endnotes

1. “Israeli Occupation Puts Strain on Palestinian Christians,” World Council of Churches, February 4, 2009 at <http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/news-and-events/news/dov-news-english/article/6661/israeli-occupation-puts-s.html>.
2. Ethan Felson, Jewish Council for Public Relations Background Paper: The Palestinian Christian Population,” 2011.
3. U. S. State Department, 2009 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, International Religious Freedom Report, October 26, 2009.
4. U. S. State Department, 2008 Human Rights Report: Israel and the occupied territories; Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, February 25, 2009.
5. Ibid.
6. “Israeli Occupation Puts Strain on Palestinian Christians,” World Council of Churches, February 4, 2009 at <http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/news-and-events/news/dov-news-english/article/6661/israeli-occupation-puts-s.html>.
7. See also B-Tselem. The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories at <http://www.btselem.org/>.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 15-09 be approved, as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of San Jose respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to:

“1. [Text remains unchanged.]

“2. [Text remains unchanged.]

“3. Urge the Israeli government to end any and all religious discriminatory practices [such as those regarding employment, permits for family reunification, residency, visas (including non-Jewish religious pilgrims, mission volunteers, and mission staff), travel (particularly on holy days), construction of religious facilities or employee housing (as at the Lutheran Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem), and annexation of religious properties].

“4. [Text remains unchanged.]

“5. Direct that the Stated Clerk contact President Obama and the Israeli ambassador to the U.S. asking them to assist in ending all religious discriminatory practices and to protect religious groups’ holy sites in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza [and that the Stated Clerk make publically available his correspondence on the other four matters].”

*Rationale*

The decline of the Christian population in occupied Palestine is due to a number of factors, some listed in the documentation provided for this overture. The lack of equal rights and religious freedom for both Christian and Muslim Palestinians is clearly part of the picture. The overture calls for specific advocacy for Christian Palestinians while also, in Recommendations 1, 3, and 5, including Muslim Palestinians. Likewise, it is appropriate to focus on the lack of protection for Christian holy sites in particular as many Presbyterians will seek to visit them and not realize that they are vulnerable to encroachment by commercial development, lack of access, and possible disruption due to archeological efforts. The political nature of much archeology in Jerusalem is particularly notable, as indicated the examples of excavations at Silwan (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1957350-2,00.html>) and on the Mamilla cemetery (<http://www.haaretz.com/museum-of-tolerance-special-report-introduction-tolerance-takes-its-toll-1.290946>).

The amendment to Recommendation 3 is made to focus on particular concerns that restrict the lives of both native Palestinian Christians and Muslims, and the capacity of internationally supported Christian institutions to maintain their historic missions. As written, though clear in principle and in theory the practice of any democratic state, the recommendation could be read to challenge the officially Jewish nature of Israel, which is always in some tension with its treatment of non-Orthodox Jews, Christians and Muslims. Israel does not have a formal constitution but relies on several interrelated laws, as summarized in the 2009 U.S. State Department Religious Liberty report:

While the Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty does not specifically refer to freedom of religion, it does refer to the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, which explicitly provides for the protection of religious freedom. In addition, numerous Supreme Court rulings incorporate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including their religious freedom provisions, into the country's body of law. The Declaration describes the country as a Jewish state, establishing Judaism as the dominant religion while also promising full social and political equality, regardless of religious affiliation. The Basic Law describes the country as a "Jewish and democratic state." Government policy continued to support the generally free practice of religion, although governmental and legal discrimination against non-Jews and non-Orthodox streams of Judaism continued. (<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2009/127349.htm>)

The amendment to Recommendation 5 simply clarifies who will be the General Assembly’s agent and that the Stated Clerk’s letters, and any replies, will be available to Presbyterians.

It is expected that the 2011 Religious Liberties report of the State Department will be published in June of 2012, and thus may be available at the General Assembly.

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-09.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns is very troubled by the lack of protection for Christian and Muslim holy sites by the government of Israel. The failure to protect Christian holy sites throughout Israel/Palestine is a problem and challenge for all Christians throughout the world who look to this land as the birthplace of their faith. Likewise, because Jeru-

salem is home to the third most holy site for Muslims, the lack of protection of Muslim holy sites concerns all Muslims around the world.

The Israeli military occupation, now in its fifth decade, has made life more and more difficult for Christians and Muslims who are the indigenous people of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), which is leading to emigration. Lack of access to holy sites, and a continuing and progressive lack of permits to live where they have ancestral connections, is seen as a policy of forced separation.

Example: When a Palestinian from Israel-proper marries a Palestinian from the West Bank, they are not given permits to live together in Israel-proper. The same holds if a Palestinian in the West Bank marries a Palestinian from the Diaspora in other parts of the world; Israel does not allow the couple to live in the West Bank. This forced separation is seen by some human rights groups as a form of ethnic cleansing, as it makes life so difficult for the indigenous people, that they often abandon their ancestral lands and home. The fact that any Jewish person from the Jewish Diaspora can get instant residency aggravates the situation.

The ACREC believes that Israel should afford its citizens equal rights as stated in their Declaration of Independence, and not discriminate, especially in regards to access to holy sites.

## Item 15-10

[The assembly answered Item 15-10 by the action taken on Item 15-11. See pp. 39, 41, 42.]

*On Pursuing a Creative Course of Action Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict—From the Presbytery of Philadelphia.*

The Presbytery of Philadelphia overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to

1. call for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to pursue a positive and creative course of action with respect to the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict that will make a difference in the lives of those who are most vulnerable on all sides and that will preserve an effective witness to peace in the entire region;
2. call for a process of engagement that will bring Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the U.S. into effective partnering for study, travel, and social action;
3. advocate for the development of educational programs that expose U.S. Christians, Jews, and Muslims to the varied experiences of both Palestinians and Israelis;
4. devise a plan of active investment in projects that will support collaboration among Christians, Jews, and Muslims and help in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state. We also encourage greater denominational engagement with Christians in the West Bank around issues of job creation and economic development.

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has consistently affirmed the right of the State of Israel to exist and to thrive within secure and internationally recognized borders, while simultaneously acknowledging the legitimate claims of the Palestinian people to its own national homeland.

It strives to avoid policies and recommendations that exacerbate tensions between Israelis and Palestinians, while recognizing that the burden and the responsibility for the current stalemate falls on all participants in this conflict. As stated at the 2008 assembly, “We will avoid taking broad stands that simplify a very complex situation into a caricature of reality where one side clearly is at fault and the other side is the victim.”

The General Assembly has repeatedly called on the Israeli government to halt the construction of settlements within the occupied territories and called on Palestinians to pursue their political goals through nonviolent activities. It has continued to advocate regional and international negotiations that will lead to a two-state solution. Presbyterians recognize that the long-term success and effectiveness of any response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will require the active participation of both Israelis and Palestinians, and include Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the region, the United States, and around the world.

Our denomination has developed deep friendships with American Jews and is actively engaging larger numbers of Muslims in interfaith initiatives who share a commitment to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. One of our continuing contributions to the larger Christian church is that we model successful ecumenical collaboration and interfaith partnerships on international, national, state, presbytery, congregational, and interpersonal levels.

We therefore reject a policy of divestment that polarizes and antagonizes Christians, Jews, and Muslims within both the United States and Israel.



We ask the General Assembly to

1. reject a strategy of economic coercion that singles out Israel as the source of the conflict and the ongoing obstacle to peace;
2. reject a policy that goes beyond a constructive critique and condemns Israel as an apartheid state;
3. reject the use of threats and intimidation (such as the withholding of economic aid); this tactic is inconsistent with the demands of the gospel and has failed to produce positive changes in Israeli policies in the past;
4. reject the targeting of companies who are used as a proxy for Israel, and who would be required to implement policies that are illegal under American law.

The Middle East is in the midst of a seismic political, cultural, and religious transformation. The region remains in flux, and civil unrest threatens the emergence of a stable and democratic rule of law. Various ethnic and religious groups are particularly vulnerable. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a vital role to play in presenting a balanced and constructive witness to interfaith collaboration and peacemaking. In addition to calling the international community, most especially our own government, to safeguard the basic rights of minorities, we urge the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to pursue a course of action that offers substantive grounds for hope among Palestinians and Israelis and that provides a model of cultural and economic partnerships in which Christians, Jews, and Muslims work together for the common good.

### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON 15-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 15-10 requests engagement, education, and “active investment” in projects that will provide infrastructure, jobs, and development in the West Bank.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that this overture be disapproved.

The objectives of this item—long practiced and attempted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its ecumenical and interfaith partners—have been insufficient to affect the growth of settlements, the exodus of Christians, and the virtual end of the two-state solution. Like Items 15-05 and 15-07, this overture is designed to oppose the corporate engagement of Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), as is made clear in its rationale. It terms the church’s corporate engagement, “economic coercion,” and alleges falsely that MRTI requests U.S. companies to adopt “policies that are illegal under American law.” This item, in fact, takes the side of the actual economic coercion of the occupation and conveys a false neutrality between a powerful state and a people under unrelenting pressure and dispossession. While we share the hope of nonviolent social change, Palestinians are the main parties practicing nonviolence at this point (as in the recent hunger strikes among the thousands of uncharged Palestinian prisoners). They see nonviolent economic pressure and international solidarity among their chief hopes in the face of violent settlers under Israeli army protection taking their land.

In this context—which the overture avoids considering—the hope of “positive investment” has been investigated over the years, but founders on the fact that capital is not the chief Palestinian need. Instead, they need: secure property rights; freedom of travel, transportation, and communication; dependable water and electricity, and a range of other factors that Palestinians are prevented from having, especially in Gaza and Area C of the West Bank (60 percent, where no Palestinian development is allowed). Responding to a commissioners’ resolution in 2004, a Presbyterian economist conducted a survey of business opportunities in the West Bank and found that only travel, crafts, and housing were competitive without major subsidies from outside (Item 12-09 in 2004; Feasibility Study on Economic Development in Israel/Palestine). In other words, under the network of Israeli settlements, Israeli-only roads, and the Wall, the West Bank is not a viable economic unit, and Gaza is under a rigorous economic and military blockade.<sup>1</sup>

The overall obstacles to the engagement and economic development desired by this item are summarized in a recent European Union report:

The 27 foreign ministers of the European Union published on Monday (May 14, 2012) a strong denunciation of Israel’s policies in the West Bank. The announcement, reported for the first time by *Haaretz*, says that Israel’s policies pose a threat to a two-state solution.”

“The viability of a two-state-solution must be maintained,” the message reads. “The EU expresses deep concern about developments on the ground which threaten to make a two-state solution impossible.”

The announcement criticizes settler violence against Palestinians. “The EU expresses deep concern regarding settler extremism and incitement by settlers in the West Bank,” the statement read. “The EU condemns continuous settler violence and deliberate provocations against Palestinian civilians. It calls on the government of Israel to bring the perpetrators to justice and to comply with its obligations under international law.

The announcement lists a series of actions taken by Israel in the West Bank in recent months - marked acceleration of settlement construction following the end of the 2010 Moratorium, the decision grant legal status to the Bruchin, Sansana and Rechalim outposts, and the plan to move the illegal outpost of Migron to a different area in the West Bank and create a new settlement.

## 15 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST PEACEMAKING ISSUES

The foreign ministers also point to the continued house demolitions in East Jerusalem, the expansion of Jewish neighborhood and “the prevention of peaceful Palestinian cultural, economic, social or political activities.”

They also said that their living conditions in Area C, in which Israel has civilian and security control, have deteriorated: “There are limitations for the PA to promote the economic development of Palestinian communities in Area C,” they said. “Social and economic developments in Area C are of critical importance for the viability of a future Palestinian state, as Area C is its main land reserve. The EU calls upon Israel to meet its obligations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian population in Area C, including... forced transfer of population and demolition of Palestinian housing.”

The EU document also states that “settlements remain illegal under international law, irrespective of recent decisions by the government of Israel. The EU reiterates that it will not recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties.” They also reaffirmed their commitment to implement existing EU legislation applicable to settlement products. <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/eu-israel-s-policies-in-the-west-bank-endanger-two-state-solution-1.430421>

Item 15-10 also calls for support of a peace process that the two architects of the Oslo accords see as defunct: (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/apr/24/middle-east-two-state-solution>)

The kind of “peace” efforts that Item 15-10 advocates also do not recognize the political realities in Israel. A recent interview with the former head of the Shin Bet, or Israeli FBI, Yuval Diskin, directly contradicts the claim of Item 15-10 that “the burden and responsibility for the current stalemate falls on all participants in this conflict.” According to Jodi Rudoren of *The New York Times*,

Many here saw Mr. Diskin’s comments on the government’s dealings with the Palestinians, which was in his direct purview, as even more significant than those on Iran. While Mr. Netanyahu has insisted that the peace process is stalled because he does not have a willing partner, Mr. Diskin declared: “This government has no interest in talking with the Palestinians period. It certainly has no interest in resolving anything with the Palestinians, period.” (*New York Times*, April 29, 2012, p. 17)

Item 15-10 cites one statement from the 218th General Assembly (2008) cautioning against oversimplifying the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but neglects the overall witness of the 219th General Assembly (2010) report, “Breaking Down the Walls,” which recognizes the great power imbalance between the two main parties in the conflict, while refusing to idealize either party. Item 5-10 also neglects the initial statement of the 218th General Assembly (2008) about the Israel Palestine struggle, which was to invoke the Barmen Declaration against Nazi domination as an example of when the church needs to speak out against unjust rule. As Noelle Damico of the Presbyterian Hunger Program has said, the church is called to be “a truthful place, not a neutral place,” if such a place were possible to find.

If the General Assembly were to want to reassure the more pro-occupation parts of the Jewish community of its desire to maintain friendly relations, it could approve a statement such as: “We are bound by the witness of Palestinian Christian community and the larger standards of international law to seek nonviolent diplomatic and economic measures to help bring an end to the occupation of Palestine. In the absence of a meaningful peace process, and with continuing settlements and denial of citizenship rights or independence for Palestinians, this means that our unwavering support for Israel’s right to safe, secure, and internationally accepted borders is coupled with an insistence on justice as the key to peace. Our friendship and respect for the Jewish people and the witness of Judaism are reflected in the prophetic fairness we honor in the Hebrew Scriptures and seek to apply in a difficult situation.

As we seek to stand by the dispossessed, we do not forget the humanity and aspirations of all who love Israel and Palestine. Thus we seek to engage in dialogue, honest debate, education, and engagement toward the clearest understanding of how attitudes and policies can be changed in the direction of peace with justice. May the One God help us all take responsibility for the influence and power we have and give us an awareness of the risks that all sides must make for peace to be achieved.”

### Endnote

1. Two studies from last year provide more detail on Palestinian constraints: <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/study-palestinians-invest-twice-as-much-in-israel-as-they-do-in-west-bank-1.396979>.

“Israeli control of 60 percent of the area of the West Bank, its control of the water sources, the restrictions on the movement of people and goods within and outside the West Bank, the Israeli market’s blockage of Palestinian goods, the lengthy process of importing raw materials from abroad and of exporting - all these limitations mean the Palestinian manufacturers’ inputs are much higher than the Israelis’. Land for leasing or purchase is more expensive because of its scarcity, water and electricity cost more and a Palestinian manufacturer’s waiting time for raw materials is longer than that of his Israeli counterpart. Therefore production in the PA areas of the West Bank are more expensive by 30 to 40 percent than production in neighboring countries....

Smeirat’s findings reinforce the Palestinian national economy ministry’s view as manifested in its study of the price the occupation exacts from the Palestinian economy. According to this study (*Haaretz*, November 11 2011), the Israeli restrictions depicted as security restrictions are connected to the colonial nature of the Israeli occupation, and are aimed at preventing competition from the Palestinian economy.” <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/the-real-cost-of-israel-s-occupation-of-the-palestinians-1.395839>

“The Israeli occupation is exacting a high price on the Palestinian economy, according to a report by the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy and the Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem - which puts the damage at \$6.9 billion a year - what it calls a conservative estimate. The figure is about 85% of the Palestinian GDP for 2010, \$8.124 billion.

The calculation includes the suspension of economic activity in the Gaza Strip because of Israel's blockade, the prevention of income from the natural resources Israel is exploiting because of its direct control over most of the territory and the additional costs for the Palestinian expenses due to restrictions on movement, use of land and production imposed by Israel. ..."

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-10

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 15-10.

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly opposes this item because the committee believes it fails to recognize that a military occupation, not lack of investment, is the cause of hardship, misery, and collective punishment for all innocent Palestinians. It is presumptuous of American Christians to define what we believe Palestinians need, i.e. "positive investment," when Palestinians themselves have been calling for divestment from the occupation since 2005.

Dominant cultures easily miss signals given by people living under oppression, but we have no excuse when it comes to knowing what the Palestinians are asking for. *Kairos Palestine, A Moment of Truth*, is a confessional document signed by all Palestinian Christian leadership calling for non-violent action through hope, peace, and love. They ask Christians around the world to stand with them in this hour of need by non-violent actions such as boycott, divestment, and sanctions. They do not ask for us to "invest" in Palestine; quite to the contrary, they have been saying, "do not invest in our prison," so that the system that enforces the "imprisonment" will end.

The ACREC finds the language of this overture deceptive. Effective investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is simply not possible without deconstructing the Israeli-imposed matrix of control. This matrix is an infrastructure that supports the expansion of massive, illegal Jewish-only settlements on Palestinian land, and restricts the movement of Palestinians on the segregated Israeli-only roads. None of the recommendations of this overture will be helpful in ending this decades-long occupation.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-10

*Comment on Item 15-10—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Our Palestinian Christian partners have called for selective disinvestment and/or boycott as nonviolent means to end the Israeli military occupation of Palestine. Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christians throughout the Middle East have repeatedly called for nonviolent direct action by Christians everywhere to help end the suffering of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation. In 2009, Palestinian Christians issued a statement in which they state:

Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation....

We ask our sister Churches not to offer a theological cover-up for the injustice we suffer, for the sin of the occupation imposed upon us. Our question to our brothers and sisters in the Churches today is: Are you able to help us get our freedom back, for this is the only way you can help the two peoples attain justice, peace, security and love?

We call on you [the Churches of the world] to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and disinvestment as tools of non violence for justice, peace and security for all. (*Kairos Palestine*, <http://www.kairospalestine.ps/sites/default/Documents/English.pdf>)

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## Item 15-11

**[In response to Item 15-11, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 39, 42–43.]**

The General Assembly Mission Council, upon recommendation from the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Receive the report of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) of its engagement with corporations involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.

2. Joining previous General Assemblies, we call all corporations doing business in the region to confine their business activity solely to peaceful pursuits, and refrain from allowing their products or services to support or facilitate violent acts by Israelis or Palestinians against innocent civilians, construction and maintenance of settlements or Israeli-only roads in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, and construction of the Separation Barrier as it extends beyond the 1967 “Green Line” into Palestinian territories.

3. Continue to urge all corporations doing business in the region to seek proactive ways to promote respect for human rights, peace building, and equal employment opportunity.

4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to conclude the corporate engagement process with ITT, since the company now appears on the General Assembly divestment list as a large military contractor; and with Motorola Mobility, as it appears that its business no longer includes profiting from non-peaceful pursuits.

5. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to continue the corporate engagement process with United Technologies, together with ecumenical partners, as part of MRTI’s regular work plan, in accordance with the previously identified positions and priorities of the General Assembly, and subject to ordinary reporting to the next General Assembly.

6. Approve the following resolution:

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment has been seeking to engage companies profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine since the directive of the 216th General Assembly (2004) and the reaffirmations and actions of each subsequent assembly. This process of engagement has, in the case of three companies, produced no substantive change and, in the judgment of this assembly, is likely not to do so in the future. Under the church’s regular process of corporate engagement (approved by the 116th General Assembly (1976) of the PCUS and reaffirmed as policy after reunion), the final step is to recommend divestment from companies where engagement is not resulting in any change. Therefore, in accordance with the actions of prior assemblies, we direct that Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions be placed on the General Assembly Divestment List until such time as they have ceased profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine, as defined by prior General Assembly actions.

#### **Alternate Resolution**

**1. call for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to pursue a positive and creative course of action with respect to the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict that will make a difference in the lives of those who are most vulnerable on all sides and that will preserve an effective witness to peace in the entire region;**

**2. call for a process of engagement that will bring Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the U.S. into effective partnering for study, travel, and social action;**

**3. advocate for the development of educational programs that expose U.S. Christians, Jews, and Muslims to the varied experiences of both Palestinians and Israelis;**

4. devise a plan of active investment in projects that will support collaboration among Christians, Jews, and Muslims and help in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state. We also encourage greater denominational engagement with Christians in the West Bank around issues of job creation and economic development.

**15. The 220 General Assembly (2012) instructs the GAMC to create a process to raise funds to invest in the West Bank and the program will be inaugurated no later than the meeting of the 221st General Assembly (2014).]**

#### ***Rationale***

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:

*2008 Referral: Alternate Resolution to Item 11-01. On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel, Recommendation 6. Instruct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Report Regularly to the General Assembly Mission Council on Its Communication and the Compliance, or Lack Thereof, by Caterpillar, Motorola, and Other Corporations Involved with Regard to General Assembly Guidelines and Concerns for Justice and Human Rights—From the 218th General Assembly (2008) (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 45, 46, 1137–39).*

*2008 Referral: Item 11-27. Report of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Recommendation 4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, to Continue the Corporate Engagement Process, and Report on Its Status with Any Recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 46, 47, 1223–25).*

*2010 Referral: Item 14-03. MRTI Report of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council, Through Its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), to Continue the Corporate Engagement Process with Identified Companies Doing Business in the Region, as Follows: (a) That the Engagement with Motorola, ITT, United Technologies, and Hewlett-Packard Be Continued, Together with Ecumenical Partners, as Part of MRTI's Regular Work Plan, in Accordance with the Previously Identified Positions and Priorities of the General Assembly, and Subject to Ordinary Reporting to Each General Assembly and Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on Its Work Including Appropriate Recommendations (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 985–93).*

#### A. *Historical Background: 2004–2006*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) instructed the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to begin a process of “phased, selective divestment” related to corporations doing business in Israel. Following the assembly, MRTI initiated a process consistent with General Assembly (GA) policy. First, MRTI reviewed the 1984 GA policy on the use of divestment as a strategy for socially responsible investing, and the criteria for consideration of any recommendation for divestment. Also reviewed was the 1985 GA policy describing the process of phased, selective divestment.

In November 2004, at its first meeting following the General Assembly, MRTI identified GA policy positions on the obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine. These included the ongoing violence perpetrated by Israelis and Palestinians against innocent people; the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and United Nations’ resolutions; the presence of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; the construction of the separation barrier; and the need for a viable Palestinian economy to enhance the possibility of a successful Palestinian state. These GA policies were incorporated into criteria to focus the research into corporations that may be profiting from involvement in any of the obstacles to a just peace. The MRTI also adopted a clear statement on the process of progressive engagement of any such companies that affirmed the cycle of dialogue, shareholder resolutions and proxy voting and more dialogue before MRTI would be in any position to consider recommending possible divestment action to the General Assembly. This was reported to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) in 2005, and publicized widely through the PC(USA) web site.

The MRTI conducted research to determine which corporations, if any, met the criteria. In August 2005, MRTI reviewed the research to select from among the identified companies an initial group to engage. These were Caterpillar, Citigroup, ITT Industries, Motorola, and United Technologies. The MRTI also maintained contact with various ecumenical partners that were committed to engaging companies on the issue of their involvement in Israel and Palestine. These included the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, and several Roman Catholic religious orders.

The MRTI began the process of contacting and meeting with the five companies (meetings were held with Citigroup on February 2, 2006, ITT Industries on February 3, 2006, and Motorola on November 10, 2005), communication with the presbyteries where the companies are headquartered, and continued interpretation of the process to the church and the general public. The MRTI also worked ecumenically on strategies for proactive investment in Israel and Palestine by churches and corporations in consultation with James Wolfensohn, special envoy for the Quartet (the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Russia), whose charge included helping to rebuild the Palestinian economy.

#### B. *2006–2008*

The 217th General Assembly (2006) responded to numerous overtures regarding corporate engagement on Israel-Palestine issues, and approved a statement urging that “... financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal”(Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 944).

##### 1. *Ecumenical Activities*

The MRTI continued its work with considerable time devoted to fostering ecumenical cooperation on engagement. To that end, an informal table called the Ecumenical Action Group: Investment for a Just Peace in Israel-Palestine (EAG) was created. As a result, corporate dialogues were expanded to include participation by representatives of other Protestant denominations and Roman Catholic religious orders. These have included the Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church (General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Church

and Society, General Board of Pensions and Benefits, and the New England Conference), United Church of Canada, Mercy Asset Management, the Passionists, Ursuline Sisters, and the Dominican Sisters. Also participating has been KAIROS Canada and the World Council of Churches.

In October 2007, the World Council of Churches convened a meeting of U.S., Canadian and European churches working on corporate engagement. As a result, there has been increased sharing of research, and broader participation in dialogues and shareholder resolutions. United States and Canadian churches continue to cooperate in the EAG.

In Europe, churches in the Netherlands have reported on engagements with Heineken. The Dutch company owned 40 percent of Tempo Beer Industry whose Israeli subsidiary subsequently moved its facilities out of the Barkan Industrial Zone in the occupied West Bank, and back into Israel proper. Swedish churches were instrumental in convincing Assa Abloy, a locksmithing company, to move its facility out of the Barkan settlement in the West Bank to the other side of the Green Line. This ecumenical cooperation has helped identify several European and other companies with extensive ties to the Occupation including Veolia, AIG, Ahava, and Alstom.

## 2. *Corporate Engagement*

During 2006 to 2008, dialogues were held with the five companies (described below). These dialogues were the first step of the corporate engagement mandated by the 216th and 217th General Assemblies (2004 and 2006). Corporate engagement is a deliberate process outlined in the basic policies of the General Assembly on socially responsible investment, dating to 1971, 1976, and 1984. Elements of this process include research, correspondence, dialogue, proxy voting, and the possible filing of shareholder resolutions. Only after all other options fail to achieve the desired results, the committee on MRTI, through the GAMC, may recommend to the General Assembly (GA) divestment from particular corporations.

### a. *Citigroup*

The Citigroup dialogue of February 2, 2006, was highly productive. The primary concern with Citigroup involved an allegation that Citigroup had provided insufficient controls to prevent the transfer of funds to Palestinian organizations supporting violence. In conversation with MRTI representatives, the company provided assurance that the bank had robust controls in place to monitor and prevent questionable money transfers. There have been no subsequent reports alleging inappropriate funds transfers by Citigroup. In addition, Citigroup expressed willingness to assist the religious community with exploring how to increase microcredit lending in the region to address the lack of adequate investment opportunities in Palestine. Therefore, in June 2007, MRTI removed Citigroup from its focus list of companies for corporate engagement.

### b. *Motorola*

The dialogue on June 18, 2007, focused on human rights standards and conventions, and explored the company's involvement in the occupation through sales of military communications products, fuses for bombs, security technology for Jewish Israeli settlements on the West Bank, and operating a cell phone business in the West Bank. Motorola denied that any of its activities implicate it in the Israeli occupation, or raise human rights concerns. A shareholder resolution addressing broader human rights issues was filed by several religious shareholders in the fall of 2007. In response, Motorola requested a follow-up meeting, which occurred on January 7, 2008. The company indicated its intent to review and amend its policies but would not specify the particular changes under consideration and made clear that its human rights policies would not be applied to their business relationships with foreign governments. This lack of clarity and limited scope led the religious investors, including MRTI representatives, to decline to withdraw their resolution, which went to a vote at the annual shareholders meeting on May 5, 2008. It received more than 12 percent of the shareholder vote, enough to be resubmitted in 2009. Although the conversation with Motorola has been less productive than hoped, religious shareholders agree that more in-depth dialogue on corporate social responsibility and human rights might potentially create a more productive arena for analyzing the Israel-Palestine conflict and other world situations and ought to be continued.

### c. *Caterpillar*

The shareholder resolution at Caterpillar was submitted in the fall of 2007 for consideration at the 2008 annual meeting. It requested the board of directors to review the company's human rights policies and amend them where applicable. Caterpillar also received a resolution on foreign military sales from a coalition of shareholders including several Roman Catholic religious orders and Jewish Voice for Peace.

There were two developments at Caterpillar. First, several religious shareholders sent a letter to the company requesting a meeting to discuss non-military sales of company products in Israel and Palestine. The company replied by letter on December 13, 2007. While not responding to the request for a meeting, the company said for the first time that "As an industry leader, Caterpillar advocates responsible use of our equipment. We expect our customers to use the products they purchase from us in environmentally responsible ways and consistent with human rights and requirements of international humanitarian law."

Secondly, the resolution submitted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Dominican Sisters produced a dialogue on January 30, 2008. Caterpillar representatives reviewed their Worldwide Code of Business Conduct. Discussion focused on

the human rights dimensions of the code, what it included or omitted, and who beyond the company's employees it affected or not. Religious shareholders, including MRTI representatives, raised the need to address the end-use of company products, particularly in countries with human rights challenges. After further discussions, the shareholders agreed to withdraw the resolution from consideration at the 2008 annual meeting in exchange for an ecumenical dialogue with the company on human rights and the end use of Caterpillar products.

The dialogue was held in July 18, 2008, on the subject of the end-use of Caterpillar products in light of the company's statement on its expectations for the use of its products. The dialogue included the Episcopal Church, Mercy Asset Management, United Church of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and three Boards of the United Methodist Church. The discussion focused on human rights and humanitarian law and conventions, and the company's expectation that its customers would abide by these standards. The company considers its dealers as its customers. While it meets with its dealers regularly, and would terminate this relationship if it learned that a dealer was offering bribes, it has no mechanism for enforcement of its human rights expectations. The church representatives also requested information from Caterpillar on the customers of its Israeli dealer, particularly major construction companies that are involved in building the illegal settlements and roads that Palestinians are prohibited from using in the Occupied Territories, the construction of the separation barrier on Palestinian land, and the demolition of Palestinian homes.

#### d. *ITT Industries*

The resolution at ITT Industries requested a report on foreign military sales. On March 4, 2008, religious shareholders, including MRTI representatives, met with ITT Industries. The company wanted to discuss its new corporate ethics program rather than foreign military sales. The position of ITT is that it will not disclose its foreign military sales claiming that all the information is publicly available. The ITT had challenged the resolution at the Securities and Exchange Commission. The SEC's decision upholding the shareholders was announced later in March. Sister Valerie Heinonen of the Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk presented the resolution when it was voted on at the ITT Industries annual meeting on May 13, 2008, receiving more than 7 percent of the proxy vote.

#### e. *United Technologies*

The resolution to United Technologies requested that ethical criteria be applied to foreign military contracts, and, with the Episcopal Church as the primary filer, was supported by 23.8 percent of shareholders voting at the annual meeting; a very strong showing, considering resolutions of this nature submitted to major defense contractors routinely receive 3 to 5 percent of the shareholder vote. The vote was sufficient to qualify the resolution for automatic reconsideration at next year's annual meeting. The Episcopal Church had a brief phone conversation with company officials, and received a commitment to a dialogue on developing a human rights policy.

### C. *218th General Assembly (2008)*

Regular reports on the corporate engagement process were made to the GAMC from 2005 to 2008. The 218th General Assembly (2008) received a comprehensive report on MRTI work that included the committee's belief that more engagement was the appropriate course of action at that time. The General Assembly also called upon corporations doing business in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank "... to confine their business activity solely to peaceful pursuits, and refrain from allowing their products or services to support or facilitate violent acts by Israelis or Palestinians against innocent civilians, construction and maintenance of settlements or Israeli-only roads in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, and construction of the Separation Barrier as it extends beyond the 1967 'Green Line' into Palestinian territories" (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 1223).

The General Assembly also directed MRTI "to continue the corporate engagement process, and report on its status with any recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010)" (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 1223).

Similarly, the 219th General Assembly (2010) received MRTI's report, and renewed the calls of previous General Assemblies to all corporations to cease any involvement in road blocks to a just peace in Israel and Palestine. It also continued to urge all corporations doing business in the region to seek proactive ways to promote respect for human rights, peace building, and equal employment opportunity. The General Assembly also called for continued corporate engagement with Hewlett Packard, ITT Industries, Motorola, and United Technologies. With Caterpillar, the General Assembly called for continued engagement in the context of statement of denunciation (see below).

### D. *2008–2011 Summary of Corporate Engagement*

In accordance with this directive, the corporate engagement process continued through late 2011.

#### 1. *Caterpillar*

A second dialogue was held on September 10, 2009, to continue the discussion of the previous year. Additional information had become public that was added to the agenda for discussion. An article in *Haaretz*, an Israeli newspaper, dated

March 11, 2009, reported on the close relationship between Caterpillar's Israeli dealership and the Israeli military. This includes selling the Caterpillar D-9 bulldozers to the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) who has them weaponized by an Israeli company. The article notes that the IDF has used these bulldozers from the mid 1980s, and has hundreds of them in its arsenal. After that, the Caterpillar dealer provides maintenance work. The dealership's mechanics provided maintenance in the recent Gaza war (these dealership employees maintained and serviced Caterpillar equipment near the battlefield during the Gaza War of January 2009, when more than 1,300 civilians were killed and the entire civilian infrastructure of the territory was destroyed) and the Second Lebanon War. The dealership noted publicly its close working relationship with the IDF, according to *Haaretz* in an article dated March 17, 2009, the IDF also "is planning to draft civilian bulldozer-maintenance personnel for reserve duty, marking the first time the army will be conscripting the staff of a private firm in wartime." This would permit the IDF to use Caterpillar dealership employees on the battlefield in future operations.

The dialogue clarified several issues, but did not produce any progress. Company officials made it clear that the company took no responsibility for the use of its products even by its dealers (the only party considered to be a customer), had no procedure in place for monitoring or ensuring compliance with Caterpillar's stated expectations even in a situation with a documented historic pattern of the equipment being used in human rights violations, and no desire to develop such a procedure. Further, they indicated that Caterpillar, although a global company doing business in virtually every country except where prohibited by U.S. law, had no capacity to evaluate whether particular actions are in accord with human rights conventions or international humanitarian law. Finally, Caterpillar did not provide information on whether its dealership was selling equipment to major construction companies building the illegal settlements, the separation barrier, or the Jewish Israeli-only roads in the occupied territories as requested.

Meanwhile, a shareholder resolution requesting a report on foreign military sales was refiled by Jewish Voice for Peace and several Roman Catholic religious orders for consideration at the 2009 stockholders meeting in June. The resolution garnered slightly less than 6 percent of the shareholder vote, and failed to re-qualify automatically for the 2010 meeting. Thus, the resolution for the 2010 shareholders meeting was altered to call for the company to review and amend its human rights policy to bring it into greater conformity with human rights and international humanitarian law. The company did not take advantage of this additional opportunity to discuss the resolution, and also declined to facilitate a requested meeting in February 2010 between church members of the Ecumenical Action Group and Caterpillar's dealer in Israel. When the annual meeting was held in June 2010, the resolution received 24.9 percent of the proxy vote.

Under pressure from non-shareholder interest groups, Caterpillar announced that it was instructing its European dealerships not to sell any Caterpillar products that might then be transshipped to Iran. This violated Caterpillar's previous statements to religious shareholders that the company did not have the authority to tell its dealers where and to whom they could sell Caterpillar products. A letter from the United Methodist Board of Church and Society on behalf of eight religious shareholders (including PC(USA)) to the then-CEO James Owens was sent on June 8, 2010, seeking clarification of this contradiction. There was no response.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) action called for continued engagement within the context of the following clear and public policy denouncing the company from profiting from involvement in serious human rights violations and obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine: "... the [General Assembly] strongly denounces Caterpillar's continued profit-making from non-peaceful uses of a number of its products. We call upon Caterpillar to carefully review its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take affirmative steps to end its complicity in the violation of human rights. We hope that, by God's grace, Caterpillar will come to exercise its considerable power and influence in the service of a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine" (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 363 of the printed version, p. 986 of the electronic version).

While the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) denouncing the company's continued profiting from its involvement in human rights violations was designed in large measure to convince Caterpillar that the church was serious about the gravity of this complicity, the company remained unresponsive. On April 19, 2011, MRTI sent its own letter to new CEO Douglas Oberhelmer, expressing hope for a new spirit of conversation around these issues and requesting dialogue (see Appendix 1 in *gamic-mrti-recommendations-appendix1.pdf*; also page 1440). There was no response. On July 26, 2011, the United Methodist Board of Church and Society retransmitted the 2010 letter (see above) from eight religious shareholders to the new CEO requesting a meeting to discuss the issues described in the correspondence. Again, there was no response.

These attempts at correspondence were carried out against the backdrop of ongoing submission of shareholder resolutions in 2010 and 2011, each of which presented an opportunity for dialogue. There was no response; indeed, our shareholder resolution on human rights was challenged by company management with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Their challenge was rejected, and the resolution received another strong vote: 25.2 percent. However, despite the strong shareholder votes in 2010 and 2011, new CEO Oberhelmer reiterated to shareholders that Caterpillar has not changed its policies regarding involvement in Israel-Palestine. Because the number of votes significantly exceeded the required threshold, the resolution can be resubmitted for 2012.

Through this multiyear process, MRTI met several times with representatives of the Presbytery of Great Rivers where Caterpillar is headquartered. A listening session was held in 2005 at the outset of the process, and presbytery staff and leader-



ship have met with the full committee and separately with staff. Throughout, MRTI has kept the presbytery informed of the filing of resolutions and the status of communications with the company.

## 2. *Motorola*

A shareholder resolution similar to the one from 2008 was filed with Motorola requesting that the company amend its human rights policies “to conform more fully with international human rights and humanitarian standards. . . .” The resolution was co-filed by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church, Mercy Investment Program, and the Episcopal Church. The company did not respond to a request in the filing letter for a meeting to discuss the resolution. When the filers tried to set one up following the annual meeting, the company declined, but offered to answer written questions. The stockholder meeting was held on May 4, 2009. Speaking in support of the resolution, which received 9.7 percent of the vote, were representatives of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Following the 2009 annual meeting, religious shareholders requested another dialogue, but on June 12, an e-mail from Motorola’s legal department refused to meet in person saying the company would only answer questions in writing. Questions were submitted, but answers did not adequately respond to the concerns expressed. In an email of January 13, 2010, the company also declined to facilitate a meeting with Motorola Israel during the February 2010 visit of religious shareholders to Israel and Palestine. The 2010 shareholders meeting was held on May 3 where the human rights resolution was voted on again. It received a vote of 11.8 percent. Motorola also announced that it would be splitting into two new companies by the end of 2010: Motorola Solutions and Motorola Mobility.

Meanwhile, the involvement of Motorola in the Occupation lessened in some important ways. The sale of armaments work by Motorola Israel meant that it no longer made bomb fuses for the Israeli military. Motorola also announced its intention to sell its Israeli cell phone company, and has sought bids from potential buyers. The company supplied cell phones to the Israeli soldiers operating in the Occupied Territories, and built cell towers in the illegal settlements. However, the company maintained its stance of no face-to-face dialogues, but would answer some written questions.

On November 4, 2010, in the filing of the shareholder resolution on human rights for the 2011 annual meeting, MRTI expressed its hope that the company would respond positively through constructive dialogue. The company did not respond. The corporate restructure was completed on schedule. The shareholder resolution was voted on at the annual meeting of Motorola Solutions on May 2, 2011. However, this time it received a lower vote total (5.4 percent), and could not be resubmitted for 2012. At the meeting, the CEO of Motorola Solutions announced that the company would be concentrating on the Middle East for its integrated communications products. Following the meeting, MRTI sought to determine how the restructure had affected the company’s business in Israel-Palestine. Motorola Mobility confirmed that the Israeli cell phone company had been sold to a French company, and that its business was now limited to marketing cell phones in civilian markets. It also confirmed that the business lines with the Israeli government remained with Motorola Solutions. Motorola Solutions did not respond to MRTI’s information request of July 11, 2011.

As noted, representatives of the Presbytery of Chicago attended the first dialogue with Motorola, and have been kept apprised of subsequent engagement, filing of shareholder resolutions, and MRTI decisions related to the company.

## 3. *ITT Industries*

The company has supplied the Israeli military with night-vision and communications equipment. Following up on the resolution from last year, an updated version was filed requesting a report on the company’s foreign military sales (ITT Industries derived 46 percent of its fiscal 2007 revenue from military business). The resolution was co-filed by the Dominican Sisters of Hope, the Mercy Investment Program, and the Episcopal Church. A meeting was held on March 4, 2009, at the company’s offices. The company was represented by its senior corporate counsel, the counsel for its defense division, and its public affairs official. The staff of MRTI was joined by a representative of the Presbytery of Hudson River, and Sr. Valerie Heinonen of the Mercy Investment Program. The ITT Industries continues to maintain, however, that it cannot discuss specific sales, even in countries with serious human rights’ challenges. However, as the company is currently barred from military contracts unless a special exemption is given, there does not appear to be recent sales to the IDF. The ITT Industries is interested in developing a more specific human rights policy, but has made clear it would not prohibit future sales to the IDF.

The resolution received nearly 7 percent of the shareholder vote at the May 2009 annual meeting where the Reverend Bruce Tischler, representing the Presbytery of Hudson River, presented the resolution. In 2010, Elizabeth Letzler, a member of the MRTI committee presented the resolution, which received a similar 7 percent vote. On April 8th, prior to the 2010 annual meeting, a dialogue was held with ITT about its emerging human rights policy and foreign military sales, but no progress was made. In 2011, MRTI member Noushin Framke presented the resolution at the annual meeting where it again received 7 percent of the proxy vote.

The major development with ITT was the company’s announcement that it would split into three separate companies at the end of 2011. These would be a company focused on its water related products and services, a company devoted to its manufacture of electronic components, and a company focused on its military-related business including its night vision and communications equipment. The size of ITT’s military-related business already had found the company affected by the Gen-

eral Assembly's divestment criteria, and it was already on the one-year waiting period required by the General Assembly divestment policy. When the corporate restructure occurs, the new military-related company will be on the 2012 General Assembly divestment list.

Throughout this multiyear process, representatives of the Presbytery of Hudson River supported the work of MRTI by participating in the dialogues and shareholder meetings as their schedules permitted, and they were kept informed of resolution filings and communications with the company.

#### 4. *United Technologies*

The Episcopal Church filed a resolution with United Technologies asking for a report on the ethical criteria for its foreign military sales. The company agreed to develop the report, and a meeting was held on August 17, 2009, to discuss how the report and a policy on sales would be implemented. This was the first meeting with company officials, and was a productive session according to the participants. Subsequently, the engagement with the company in 2010 has focused on the implementation of a policy and developing benchmarks for performance.

#### 5. *Hewlett-Packard*

On March 5, 2009, several religious shareholders were scheduled to hold a conference call with Hewlett-Packard (HP), and had submitted a detailed list of questions for the discussion. The company then cancelled the call saying it would respond in writing, and only then consider a meeting. The shareholders reviewed the company's written answers, and noted that they were vague or incomplete. The General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church contacted the company to renew the request for a dialogue. Hewlett-Packard again declined saying they would only respond in writing. Two rounds of letters produced only vague answers to the shareholders' questions.

The company sells hardware to the Israeli Navy, and as a contractor manages all Information Technology (IT) including its operational communications, logistics, and planning including the ongoing naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. This blockade has included interdicting humanitarian supplies by attacking or turning back international vessels carrying the supplies, and attacks on Palestinian fishermen.

The company also is involved through its ownership of Electronic Data Systems in providing electronic biometric identification scanning equipment to monitor only Palestinians at several checkpoints inside the West Bank, including as part of the separate road system, restricting Palestinian movement. At these checkpoints, the 2.4 million West Bank Palestinians are required to submit to lengthy waits as well as the mandatory biometric scanning, while Israelis and other passport holders transit without scanning or comparable delays.

Hewlett-Packard also has extensive involvement with the Israeli Army. Soldiers in the IDF are issued a Tadiran Communications ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) based on the Hewlett Packard IPAQ (handhelds and smart phones) as part of Israel's Anog soldier modernization program. This equipment is used to enforce the Occupation. In July 2009, Hewlett-Packard won a contract for the installation of software products in a three-year IDF virtualization tender worth an estimated \$15 million, with a two-year option to extend.

Hewlett-Packard also has business relationships with the illegal settlements in the West Bank. A subsidiary, HP Invent, outsources information technology services to Matrix and to its subsidiary Talpiot, which has its main outsourcing center in the illegal West Bank settlement of Modi'in Illit. By using Talpiot's services, clients of the company are profiting from the company's relationship with an illegal settlement and are helping solidify the Occupation.

In addition, Hewlett-Packard worked with the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank to develop specialized solutions for government data storage, and used this project in marketing publicity. Despite the fact that Ariel is deep in the Occupied West Bank, the company's published description of this work claims that Ariel is within Israel, including the use of a map making no reference to the West Bank as a separate occupied territory.

In addition, as with Motorola Israel, its Israeli subsidiary does not disclose its equal employment opportunity record of its hiring practices.

A shareholder resolution was developed requesting a review of Hewlett-Packard's human rights policies, and a report on their implementation. It was filed by the PC(USA), United Methodist General Board of Pensions and Benefits, and four Roman Catholic religious orders. The filing letters requested an opportunity for dialogue, and prompted a positive response by the company. On October 28, 2009, several religious participants met with company officials by conference call. The discussion reviewed Hewlett-Packard's policies and procedures, and identified issues of concern for further discussion. Participants were grateful for the positive atmosphere, and willingness to cooperate. As the company agreed to initiate a board of directors level review of its human rights policy, and committed to positive follow-up to the issues identified in the dialogue, the shareholders decided to withdraw the resolution.

However, the follow-up was spotty in some areas, and nonexistent in others. One positive aspect of the engagement though was meeting with a representative of HP Israel in Jerusalem in February 2010. The discussion was informative about the extent and variety of Hewlett-Packard's businesses. Requested information on the company's employment practices and how the human rights policy influences the company's business with governments was not provided.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed MRTI to continue its efforts to engage Hewlett-Packard on these issues. Although efforts began to schedule dialogue with company management in November 2010, the company repeatedly deferred and postponed this meeting. Attempts to schedule conference calls met with delays, but one was finally held on April 19, 2011. Unfortunately, it was not a productive dialogue. While the religious shareholders had communicated clearly their desire for an in-depth discussion of the biometric scanners at the checkpoints, Hewlett-Packard's representatives, including its person in charge of implementing its human rights policy, said that they were not knowledgeable on the issue and could not discuss it. They also did not offer to set up a subsequent call with Hewlett-Packard representatives who could. In addition, they announced that the human rights assessment they were conducting (which would include Israel-Palestine) would concentrate on systems evaluation, and any specifics would not be included in Hewlett-Packard's public reporting. Indeed, Hewlett-Packard's public report contained no reference to its business operations in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Hewlett-Packard produced a Global Citizenship Report for 2010, its most recent one. It states in its Global Issues section: "At HP, we believe technology is a driver of social progress, environmental sustainability and economic opportunity. We're committed to helping individuals everywhere use technology to connect and create a better world." The company reviews its involvement in the United Nations Global Compact, and its support for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It notes that it is one of eight founding members of the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI). However, nowhere does Hewlett-Packard discuss the relationship of its policy commitments to its involvements in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine.

The MRTI also kept the Presbytery of San Jose, where HP is headquartered, informed about shareholder resolution filing, and the status of dialogue with Hewlett-Packard.

#### 6. *Additional Companies*

In the past two years, initial letters were sent to Microsoft regarding its human rights policy and the company's provision of specialized software to the Israeli Navy and the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel. In addition, the Israeli research organization, Who Profits, has released a detailed report on the important role Israeli banks and financial institutions, many of them publicly traded, play in the illegal settlement enterprise. The Ecumenical Action Group is researching whether international banks operating in Israel are similarly involved.

#### E. *Summary*

The roadblocks to a just peace in Israel-Palestine could not be sustained or be so effective without the complicity of private corporations and their involvement in the infrastructure of violence and occupation that violates human rights and degrades human dignity. Accordingly, the General Assembly has stated that the church's investments in companies doing business in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank be in companies involved in only peaceful pursuits. For eight years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through its Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), and other ecumenical partners have worked diligently to engage several companies about their involvement and complicity in non-peaceful pursuits and human rights violations.

While this corporate engagement has taken place, the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories has deteriorated. The obstacles to a just peace identified in 2004 remain, and have become more intractable. The continued building of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, illegal under international law, has picked up renewed speed leading to the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) increasing 57 percent from 191,000 to 297,000 between 2000 to 2009 (Peace Now) while the Israeli population as a whole increased only 19 percent between 1999 to 2009 [Israel Central Bureau of Statistics]. The total number of Jewish settlers living on Palestinian land is nearly half a million, including 191,960 in East Jerusalem (Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies). With the illegal settlements comes the construction of Israeli only roads on Palestinian land, and continued construction of the Separation Barrier beyond the 1967 borders, known as the "Green Line." This leads to a deterioration of Palestinian life as access to agricultural land is restricted, Palestinian land is confiscated, housing permits for Palestinians are denied while home demolitions increase, Palestinian movement on the West Bank is further limited through checkpoints, barriers, and prohibition of using some roads. Increased settler violence against Palestinians grows as settlements expand, and Israeli military and police action increases. Access to water is restricted as allocations to the illegal settlements far outstrip allocations for Palestinians. For example, the water allocation to the illegal settlements in the Jordan Valley and the Northern Dead Sea regions (for less than 10,000 illegal settlers) is almost one-third of the quantity of water that is accessible to the 2.5 million Palestinians living in the West Bank (B'Tselem: May 2011). All of the companies being engaged continue to profit from their involvement in the occupation and the violation of human rights in the region.

The results of corporate engagement with the companies:

With Motorola's separation into two companies, the problematic involvements in non-peaceful pursuits are now primarily confined to Motorola Solutions. These involvements remain significant. However, Motorola Solutions is unresponsive to all efforts by religious shareholders to engage in serious discussions about its involvement in non-peaceful pursuits. There is no indication that the company's position will change through continued corporate engagement.

The restructuring of ITT into three separate companies has changed the situation significantly. All of the company's involvements in non-peaceful pursuits will be confined to the new company that focuses on military-related contracts. Already, the sharp rise in military-related contracts has meant that ITT, even before the separation, receives more than 50 percent of its revenue from military contracts, and is now affected by the General Assembly's military-related investment guidelines. This will place the current company on the 2012 General Assembly Divestment List anyway, and certainly place the new company devoted to military-related products on the General Assembly divestment list in future years.

United Technologies was always less involved in the region than some others, with most of their involvement coming as a subcontractor for companies with larger financial stakes. The company is open to further conversation.

Although Hewlett-Packard (HP) has been open to meet with religious shareholders on an annual basis, the discussions have been very disappointing. The company declines to engage the serious issues of its involvement in non-peaceful pursuits. It has never addressed the issue of how its human rights policy, about which the company is very proud, informs its decisions about its business with governments, especially governments involved in serious human rights violations. Without a major change in HP's willingness to engage in serious discussions, corporate engagement is not likely to achieve positive results. Regrettably, there is no indication at present that Hewlett-Packard will change its present course.

Caterpillar's serious involvement in non-peaceful pursuits led the 219th General Assembly (2010) to denounce the company's profiting from involvement in human rights violations. Sadly, despite significant support for the shareholder resolution calling for a review of its human rights policy, Caterpillar has become even more intransigent. It has cut off all communication with the religious shareholders. Caterpillar continues to accept no responsibility for the end use of their products. Over many years, the company has not indicated a willingness to review its policies for distribution or sales in conflicted areas like Israel-Palestine, and does not acknowledge a responsibility for its dealers' adherence to human rights law in these areas. Caterpillar's stated commitment to global citizenship is being undermined by its unwillingness to critically self-assess its own conduct in Israel-Palestine. It is the conclusion of MRTI that further efforts to engage Caterpillar through ordinary means (including shareholder resolutions, and written and oral communications) will not be successful.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-11

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 15-11.

#### *Rationale*

The MRTI was given a mandate by the 216th General Assembly (2004) on the Israel/Palestine issue to engage with U.S. corporations in an attempt to change their policies that result in our church funds profiting from the Israeli military occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The ACREC acknowledges MRTI's methodical eight-year process and thanks them for their faithful service. The ACREC agrees that the church has exhausted all avenues to bring about changes in corporate policies through corporate engagement. The ACREC also agrees that as long as the denomination's policy holds that we should not profit from "non-peaceful pursuits," and as long as the three U.S. companies identified by MRTI are doing so, it is the policy of the church not to profit from these companies' shares.

The ACREC believes that the same standards that have guided votes on MRTI recommendations over the last forty years of corporate engagement by the committee, should also guide the General Assembly on this vote, no matter who is committing the human rights violations, where, and against whom. To use different standards to judge the evidence is at best, discriminatory, and at worst, sets a bad precedent of racism that will diminish the effectiveness of MRTI's future work.

Further, ACREC believes groups who claim that the PC(USA) was "identifying Israel as a focus of phased selective divestment has damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews" are in fact promoting inaccuracies at multiple levels:

- The 216th General Assembly (2004) did not "identify Israel as a focus" of phased selective divestment; this is a mis-interpretation. The assembly called for identifying U.S. companies profiting from the Israeli Occupation of the OPT.
- While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said the 216th General Assembly (2004) directive to not profit from the Israeli Occupation has "damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews," not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, in some cases, the opposite is true. The call for not profiting from the occupa-

tion has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation. This is evidenced by the support for MRTI from

—[The Israeli Committee Against House Demolition](#) (ICAHD)

—The [Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace](#).

- The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in a blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category. General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

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### BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 15-11

*Comment on Item 15-11—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

In all its corporate actions, the Board of Pensions strives to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the social witness policies approved by the General Assembly. Sometimes there is apparent conflict between the social witness desires of the denomination and our legal duties to members of the Benefits Plan. It is clear that our mutually approved long-term policies and procedures have worked well to avoid conflict and we urge the General Assembly to take no actions that would displace these very helpful policies and procedures.

The General Assembly has delegated oversight responsibility for Benefits Plan and Assistance Plan monies to the Board of Pensions. This responsibility makes the Board a “fiduciary,” a status that carries both certain duties and the potential for certain liabilities if carried out improperly. This delegation and separation of oversight duties is intended to relieve the General Assembly from both fiduciary duties and liabilities. The Board of Pensions, acting through its board of directors, chooses the actual investment managers and determines how the money is allocated among various classes of securities to achieve the long-term investment objectives required of the Plans. The Board of Pensions does not select specific investments (either to buy or to sell): security selection is the job of the investment managers themselves.

As indicated below, managers of individually managed portfolios are made aware of our social witness policy and are required to justify to the Board of Pensions any deviation from that policy.

These are all important separations of roles and responsibilities that are in the best interests of commissioners, of the denomination, of the Benefits Plan and of Plan members. For these reasons, the General Assembly does not direct the Board of Pensions to divest the portfolio of an investment held by the Benefits Plan and does not direct that the Board of Pensions affirmatively invest in any specific security.

The General Assembly does, however, determine the social witness policies of the church, including how they pertain to investments of money held by or under the aegis of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It does advise the Board of Pensions (and the Foundation) and it does urge us to take certain actions from time-to-time. We in turn are mindful of the General Assembly’s wishes.

To confuse this important definition of roles and responsibilities, would risk potential liability to the General Assembly, and possibly incur more investment risk for the Pension Trust and other benefits and assistance assets than would otherwise be desirable. We cannot, and the General Assembly would not have us avoid or compromise our legal duties and threaten the security of the Benefits Plan and Assistance Program.

There are two specific duties for us to consider when it comes to the question of divestment.

First, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of loyalty” to act in the sole and exclusive interests of the Benefits Plan members. That means our decisions must be in the interests of that group taken as a whole, not in the interests of the Board, and not in the interests of some other group or some special part of the church. The Board of Pensions has established procedures that it believes are completely faithful to this obligation.

Second, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of care” to see to it that sufficient funds are available to keep the promises made to Plan members, both current and future. Selling or buying securities based on social witness principles alone could easily translate into taking on too much or too little risk at any given point in time. The board of directors has adopted detailed investment policies governing the allocation of the Plan’s investments in various asset classes and the selection of managers for those asset classes. This allocation is the primary way we manage investment risk. The investment managers are responsible for the selection of individual investment holdings. We are responsible for selecting the investment managers, and this selection process is another of our risk management tools, and is an equally important separation of duties. The result is that the Board of Pensions must make its own, independent judgments based on its legal duties of loyalty and care.

Having said that, it is our often-expressed objective to support the declared social witness policies of the denomination as best we can. Fortunately, specific policies on divestment adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 have served our mutual interests well, have promoted a united voice and have avoided conflicts within the denomination.

### *Divestment*

The Board of Pensions participates in the church's MRTI activities. Under the 1984 policies of the General Assembly, the denomination's Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment recommends that a company be added to the General Assembly's divestment list after several steps. Three of those steps include (a) undertaking a thorough and comprehensive research of the company's involvement in an objectionable practice, (b) engaging the company in constructive dialogue about those practices through meetings and submission of shareholder resolutions; and (c) it is determined that no lesser alternative to divestment is available. Ultimately the General Assembly determines, upon receiving such a recommendation, what is the effective social witness action for the church and its entities to undertake (including divestment or affirmative investment). The General Assembly has long recognized that the divestment practice of the Board of Pensions is one of a "prohibition of ownership" rather than one of an "immediate sale" of securities listed for divestment.

When and if a security is added to the prohibited securities list (there are currently 631 securities on the list), the Board of Pensions has adopted a formal process to ensure that the failure to own the security will not harm the financial soundness of the Plan. At this point, there are two levels of decision because of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the decision-makers. The first decision is for an investment manager. The investment manager must decide whether *not owning* a divestment list security will harm their portfolio results. If it decides that failure to own *will not* harm results, there is no issue as to portfolio performance, and the security is not held. Since, as a general rule our investment policies provide for observance of the General Assembly's divestment policies, if the manager decides that failure to own *will* harm portfolio performance, it must ask us and provide justification for an exception.

The second decision now becomes one for the Board of Pensions. It is inappropriate for us to fail to act. In other words, we are obligated to independently decide whether or not to initiate divestment, or to grant an exception. In the event of a request for exception, if the Investment Committee determines that the request is reasonable and appropriate in the context of our duty of care, it may grant the exception. Currently, there is only one security held by the Board of Pensions under an approved exception request.

For example,

Stock A is placed on the divestment list for the first time. Manager X owns Stock A. When the divestment list is updated, we advise Manager X that Stock A may be held as a part of their normal investment program until such time as the security becomes part of the manager's sell discipline for all clients. Any subsequent purchase requires an exception from the Board of Pensions.

If a manager does not own the stock, any purchase requires an exception.

From time to time, securities are removed from the divestment list, and managers are so advised.

### *Affirmative Investment*

The duties of care and loyalty apply equally as limitations on the purchase of securities. In addition, the separation of roles and responsibilities between the Board of Pensions and our investment managers is breached when we begin telling our investment managers to actively purchase specific securities. At that point we become portfolio managers ourselves, and to date that is not a responsibility we have undertaken because it would impose additional regulatory burdens and administrative expenses on the Plan that we have chosen to avoid.

### *Shareholder Resolutions and Proxy Voting*

We do hold a small portfolio of securities outside the Benefits Plan specifically at the request of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment in order that the church can use these shares to propose shareholder resolutions from time to time. These holdings are at minimum levels required to submit shareholder resolutions.

It is also appropriate to note that the Board of Pensions does vote all shares held by or through us in accordance with the actions of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment. The Board of Pensions respectfully requests that the General Assembly take this comment into account when considering the several recommendations on divestment or affirmative investment proposed to the General Assembly. The processes in place have served us well for over twenty years, and will continue to serve us well going forward.

## Item 15-12

[The assembly approved Item 15-12 with amendment. See pp. 41, 43.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Prayer and Action for Syria.*

Responding to the ongoing agony of a virtual civil war in Syria, the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) calls for the following steps of prayer, witness, and action on behalf of the Syrian people:

**1. Invite all Presbyterians to join in prayer for Syria, using this one and others:**

“Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, as you appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus, shine forth in these dark days to show us your way of peace. Put an end to violence and murderous threats. Fill every heart with the Spirit of peace; in your holy name we pray. Amen” (based on Acts 9).

**2. Stand with the Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, our partner church, and other churches who [are facing unprecedented challenges now and are attempting to respond through new forms of witness] [have already themselves helped Christian refugees from Iraq, understanding the dangers that surround religious and other minorities in times of violence].**

**3. Encourage Presbyterians to become more fully informed about what is actually happening in Syria and with in the peace-seeking efforts of the international community.**

**4. Request the Middle East Office, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, and other offices of the General Assembly Mission Council to post this resolution and other relevant information online, including communication from our partner churches, noting that objective information is often scarce and highly politicized.**

**5. Respond to this ongoing tragedy by generously giving to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and to the designated giving account DR000081 – Middle East/Syria.**

**6. Urge the U.S. government**

“[•] to support a mediated process of cessation of violence by all perpetrators, including the Assad regime and armed opposition groups,

“[•] to call for all outside parties to cease all forms of intervention in Syria,

“[•] to support a strong and necessary role for the United Nations, possibly including observers and peacekeeping forces, and

“[•] to refrain from military intervention in Syria.”

**7. Support full, public congressional debate of any potential U.S. [military] intervention, including cyberwar, weapons supply, training (as is already reported), and drone warfare, to examine carefully the possible humanitarian benefits, costs, and outcomes of such intervention, including its impacts on [religious communities and those imprisoned by the Assad regime] [the Syrian people], and to support review of the impacts of sanctions and other pressure on both Syrian society and the regime.**

### *Rationale*

Our Christian friends in Syria continue to endure great suffering—along with all the Syrian people—under the escalating violence between the Assad regime and armed opposition groups. The international community seems unable to agree on ways to bring the violence to a halt or to find a path of engagement that can lead to a peaceable resolution of the conflict. United Nations’ observers in Syria recently came under direct attack, resulting in the suspension of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria on June 16, 2012. This suspension is being reviewed on a daily basis.

As believers in Jesus Christ, who declare that our God is “able to find a way when there is no way,” we must go to God in prayer on behalf of all who are suffering and ask for wisdom as to how we might provide comfort and support. Our prayers include all victims of violence, their perpetrators, and members of the international community who are seeking ways to support a peaceable outcome to this disaster.

We must pray especially for our Christian partners, knowing that as in other places in the region, they will remain a minority at risk regardless of the outcome. Christians in Syria—who are an essential component of the fabric of Syrian culture and history—trace their Christian heritage back to the apostolic era and make up about 10 percent of the population of 22 million. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has partnered with Syrian churches for most of the last two centuries. Our hearts join in prayer for our sisters and brothers with whom we have been made one in the body of Christ.

Background material provided by our mission partners and others can help us begin to get a perspective on what has happened, and there are numerous paths to keeping our prayers informed and relevant through media coming from the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East.

Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and to the designated giving account DR000081 – Middle East/Syria will be used to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced families and others impacted by this crisis. Funds will also help our mission partners in the region as they respond, for instance, as they provide humanitarian assistance to displaced families and others impacted by this crisis.

Military intervention by the U.S. government or multilateral forces would likely result in more loss of life and further de-structuring of the Syrian social order, including further increases in the numbers of refugees and patterns of ethnic and religious cleansing so visible in Iraq. With stronger regional action (including Turkey’s response to Syria’s shooting down of a plane, potentially involving NATO allies of Turkey), and further defections from Syrian armed forces, the international community’s role of supporting peace with justice is increasingly engaging Russia and China and reversing previous U.S. patterns of “not talking” to enemies, there is still some hope of a managed transition in government and end to human rights violations. The example of Lebanon is also in the minds of many in the region, where external interference, assassinations, and invasions have reinforced religious and ethnic divisions (including the presence of refugees going back to the creation of Israel) and make for weak governance.

The strategic position of Syria and its links to Iran differentiate it from Libya and increase the geopolitical stakes for the United States and Israel, Europe and Turkey, and Russia and China, to group the major outside players. The initial democratic hopes of the “Arab Spring” (considered in Item 14-03) should remind Christians and all others of good will that moral and human rights concerns are valued by all human beings and that their suppression leads to greater suffering. Thus a wise international response to Syria should keep open the hope of reconciliation of all citizens there and minimize the score-settling and opportunism of outside interests.

Jeff Krehbiel, Presbytery of National Capital  
Frances Daniel, Presbytery of Providence

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#### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-12

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 15-12 be approved.

#### *Rationale*

It is true that violence and political impasse are escalating in Syria with potential spillover effect in the region. The numbers of displaced and refugees seem to increase.

It is also true that information and status reports seem to be limited.

Our partner church in Syria, The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, continues to reach out to refugees and displaced Syrian Presbyterians. This is in addition to large numbers of Iraqi refugees in Syria and Lebanon in the aftermath of the war and political unrest in Iraq.

Christians in general and Presbyterians in particular represent a minority in Syria. The resources of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon are limited, and we urge Presbyterians to support the church in Syria with prayers and financial resources including the support of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).

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#### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 15-12

*Comment on Item 15-12—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The GAMC has three comments with respect to this commissioners’ resolution:

1. Representatives of the Synod of Syria/Lebanon and the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch are present at this assembly. The committee may wish to hear directly from these individuals regarding the situation in Syria.
2. The U.S. has instituted economic sanctions against Syria that restrict the church’s ability to send financial support to Syria. The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering and other resources specifically designated for response to this crisis will be sent to partners in the region as permitted by law.



3. Recommendation 6 may be misread as currently worded, especially with respect to UN involvement and whether it is considered a form of intervention. The GAMC suggests that this may be resolved by formatting Recommendation 6 as follows:

“6. Urge the U.S. government

“• to support a mediated process of cessation of violence by all perpetrators, including the Assad regime and armed opposition groups,

“• to call for all outside parties to cease all forms of intervention in Syria, to support a strong and necessary role for the United Nations, possibly including observers and peace-keeping forces, and

“• to refrain from military intervention in Syria.”

## Item 15-Info

### *Middle East Monitoring Group Report.*

The Middle East Monitoring Group (MEMG) is seven people, appointed to serve a two year term by the current and immediate past Moderators Cynthia Bolbach and Bruce Reyes-Chow in consultation with GAMC staff. The mandate from General Assembly was to have the committee consist of at least one (but no more than two) members of the Middle East Study Committee (MESC). New appointees were chosen on their demonstrated experience with knowledge of the complex dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the larger concerns of the Middle East, and together comprise an authentic balance representing a fullness of the spectrum of the commitments of the PC(USA) toward the people and issues in the region.

This group was appointed in September of 2010: Roula Alkhouri, Laurie Anderson (chair), J. C. Austin, Bill Borrer, Laura Cheifetz, Jeffrey DeYoe, and Ron Shive.

Staff support: Gradye Parsons, Mark Koenig, and Amgad Beblawi.

After the first face-to-face meeting in Louisville in November of 2011, the group created a vision to guide them in living out the mandate of the General Assembly:

- To ensure that the work and spirit for the Middle East peacemaking that took root at the 219th General Assembly (2010) continues to bear fruit.
- To help the church hear and understand the needs, hopes, perspectives, and concerns of the multiple voices of the region.
- Lift up and respond to the particular voice of Palestinian Christians in their experience of suffering and faithfulness.
- Assist the General Assembly Mission Council as it fulfills the policy directions approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

The Middle East Monitoring Group had three main responsibilities, as outlined in the mandate (approved resolutions) of the 219th General Assembly (2010):

1. Assist the appropriate General Assembly Mission Council offices and the Middle East staff team in monitoring progress and guiding actions to ensure adequate implementation of policy directions approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), given the growth in complexity and interrelatedness of issues in the region.

2. The Monitoring Group is tasked with the creation of a study guide for the Kairos Palestine document (A Moment of Truth). The 219th General Assembly (2010) commended this document for study and endorsed its emphases on hope for liberation, nonviolence, love of enemy, and reconciliation.

3. Replace the deleted items of Breaking Down the Walls, with a series of eight narratives of comparable length, four arising from the range of authentically Palestinian perspectives (including both Christian and Muslim), and four arising from the range of authentically Israeli perspectives, along with an annotated bibliography for additional understanding about the breadth and depth of both authentically Palestinian and Israeli spectrum of perspectives but above all authentically pro-justice and pro-peace. These narratives and the bibliography will be collected and approved by the Monitoring Group on the Middle East.

In May 2011 the MEMG released the Kairos Palestine Study Guide; designed for ordinary Presbyterians who may have little experience with the plight of Palestinian Christians or the dynamics of the larger Israeli-Palestinian struggle. The MEMG tried to emphasize the often-neglected voice of Palestinian Christians as mandated by the resolution. The guide is comprised of three sessions structured around the documents own governing themes of faith, hope, and love. The study guide integrates the General Assembly's endorsed emphases of hope for liberation, nonviolence, love of enemy, and reconciliation.

Since the summer of 2011 the MEMG has been focused on working towards replacing the deleted narratives to *Breaking Down the Walls* with the eight narratives as mandated by the 219th General Assembly (2010). In addition, the MEMG has worked to assemble an annotated bibliography to accompany these narratives. While acknowledging the challenges, the MEMG is confident that the eight narratives submitted are a faithful fulfillment of the directives given by the 219th General Assembly (2010). The expected release date of these works is March 2012.

As a committee without a financial line item, we held numerous conference calls. After the initial meeting in Louisville we realized the need for face-to-face meetings. The MEMG would like to thank Stony Point and Rick Ufford-Chase for generously making it possible for us to have three face-to-face meetings in New York. It was in the face-to-face meetings and in the retreat setting we found the essentials to creating relationships in the group.

During our two-year appointment together we made some discoveries and as individuals we felt our representative viewpoints were heard and validated; the differences around the table reflected the diversity of views on the issue. We found ways of working together, not always agreeing, yet in the end, we could see the individual transformation that had taken hold; by definition this was not necessarily a transformation that changed one's mind or opinion, but a transformation as a way to work together in the midst of disagreement and commitment to justice and peace. The spirit of this model is a group committed to seeking, hearing, and responding; recognizing that addressing the conflict in the Middle East cannot be a question of winners and losers. We operated under the premise that if someone loses, everyone loses. We sought authentic balance in the study and teaching about the complexities of the Middle East while understanding such an endeavor requires all of us to remain partners in the Spirit.

We would like to thank the assembly for the risk taken in a new endeavor in assembling a monitoring group.

#### PREFACE TO NARRATIVES

The 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through its approval of the Middle East Study Committee report, created the Middle East Monitoring Group (MEMG) and gave it the following mandate: (1) To create a study guide for the Kairos Palestine document entitled "A Moment of Truth," and (2) To replace Part 3 of the original Middle East Study Committee report with eight narratives arising from authentically Palestinian (Muslim and Christian) and Israeli perspectives that are pro-justice and pro-peace, along with an annotated bibliography for additional understanding about the breadth and depth of both Palestinian and Israeli perspectives, but above all authentically pro-justice and pro-peace (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1026).

Shortly following the meeting of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the MEMG was appointed by the Moderators of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) and began its work in November 2010. The Kairos Palestine document study guide was completed first and posted to the PC(USA) website in mid 2011. The group then turned to the gathering of narratives for the purpose of arriving at the mandated eight (four Palestinian, four Israeli). The first discussion that took place in this regard had to do with the definition of the following terms contained in the mandate: (1) "authentic"; (2) "narrative"; (3) "pro-justice"; and (4) "pro-peace." As the committee began to receive and consider narratives, the concern about these definitions became more acute as the Middle East Monitoring Group recognized that the terms were more complex and/or vague than what would be indicated at first glance. In addition to these concerns, the group also discussed seeking balance according to the gender and age of contributors.

The following initial steps were taken for the purpose of collecting narratives, a process that was subject to the denominational resources that were available to the group: (1) an open call for these narratives was made through PC(USA) media outlets; (2) MEMG members utilized their own networks for gathering names of potential contributors; and (3) MEMG members issued personal invitations to those suggested to us.

There was greater difficulty than anticipated when it came to the collection of narratives. The open call itself did not yield any responses. Following that, responses to MEMG members were mixed and initially called into question whether or not the MEMG would be able to fulfill the General Assembly's mandate. Eventually, an appropriate number of narratives to achieve the necessary balance was reached after extending the deadline multiple times.

While acknowledging those challenges, the MEMG is confident that the eight narratives submitted here are a faithful fulfillment of the directive given to us by the 219th General Assembly (2010). They are a set of diverse yet authentic perspectives within the spectrum of the Palestinian and Israeli narratives of the conflict that together represent a significant breadth of thought, both among each other and within their respective narrative streams. The MEMG wants to stress that neither we as a group nor as individuals are *endorsing* all these narratives in terms of our own agreement with their perspectives or positions; similarly, none of these authors have seen the others' work, and their inclusion should not be taken in any way to imply agreement or approval of one another's work. Rather, it is precisely because of disagreement between narratives that the General Assembly wisely directed the collection of multiple examples, in order to show the diversity of opinion among the primary stakeholders in the conflict.

However, we feel that there are still key stakeholders mission and that a strict reading of our mandate does not include the voices of American Jews, Christians, and Muslims who would identify with various positions across the spectrum of the conflict. Without including such voices, we feel that the General Assembly's mandate is fulfilled but its intentions are not yet complete.

Furthermore, the General Assembly mandate required that selected narratives embody a "pro-justice, pro-peace" perspective. While we agree that the denomination is best served by a breadth of narratives falling under this perspective, we wonder whether there might be a place for hearing narratives that have a notable constituency within the conflict yet would be difficult to justify in terms of their adherence to a strict definition of "pro-justice, pro-peace."

"Modeling the solution rather than modeling the conflict," continues to ring true in the life of the Middle East Monitoring Group that is part of the fruit of the work and the spirit of the 219th General Assembly (2010). The spirit of this model is a group committed to seeking, hearing, and responding; recognizing that addressing the conflict in the Middle East cannot be a question of winners and losers. If someone loses, everyone loses. It was the trust in the Holy Spirit as much as the trust in each other that sustained our ability to build relationships among each other. Central to achieving collaboration and having conversations is the spirit of creating and sustaining relationship with each other. This process began with an intentional act of the General Assembly to bring us together, including the manner in which we were appointed by the Moderator. In coming together, our monitoring group became bold enough to realize we were more faithful and effective in seeking peace and justice together, rather than separately. Even though there are still very passionate opinions and viewpoints held by individuals, we are willing to take the risk, and trust each other. Frankly, it takes intentional work of the spirit to maintain a process of discernment and consensus building to ensure this authentic fairness. We still have disagreements on some items, on methods to be used, and voices to be heard. But by God's grace we have discovered that together we are more faithful and more effective, than when we seek as individuals.

We tried to achieve a desire for broader understanding in the quest for peace and justice. We wanted to remain in the pursuit for authentic balance in the study and teaching about the complexities of the Middle East and at the same time realized it will require us all to remain partners in the Spirit.

At the end of our last face-to-face meeting, the style of meeting that we found essential to creating relationships, we made some discoveries; as individuals we felt our representative viewpoints were heard and validated, the differences around the table reflected the diversity of views on the issue, we found ways of working together but not always agreeing, and, in the end, we could see the individual transformation that had taken hold. By definition this was not necessarily a transformation that changed one's mind or opinion, but a transformation as a way to model the solution rather than modeling the conflict.

## NARRATIVES

### 1. *A Palestinian Narrative, August 2011—Dr. Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, Jerusalem*

One way to read the current Palestinian-Israeli impasse is to look at it through a conceptual triangle. On the base of the triangle are the two political tribes of Fateh and Hamas. The PLO, with its head, Mahmoud Abbas, is at the top of the triangle. At the heart are the people, embodied in civil society. A number of major external players are crucial in influencing and, to a fair extent, shaping the decision of these component; they are the U.S., E.U., Islamic and Arab countries, as well as Israel, the occupying power.

President Abbas is leading the Palestinians to the international arena through a bid to the UN General Assembly in September requesting recognition of a Palestinian state on the borders of 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a solution to the refugee question. Abbas managed to water down the geopolitical separation between West Bank/Gaza and Hamas/Fateh by reaching a reconciliation document in Cairo on the fourth of May 2011. He also succeeded in obtaining a PLO Executive Committee decision as well as PLO Central Council endorsement for the UN September initiative. In addition, Abbas managed to keep this decision in the lap of the Arab Summit Committee, to support it at the UN. However, some members of the Fateh movement, in spite of the official decision they reached, are reflecting different views. Voices have been heard, suggesting that Abbas is climbing a tree and doesn't know how to come down, i.e. the UN September decision cannot be translated into reality on the ground by practicing sovereignty and challenging Israeli military occupation as well as a half million settlers in the West Bank. Other voices have been heard saying that we don't have a tree in the first place, with cynical remarks that the settlers chopped down most of the trees in the West Bank, poisoned the water, closed the roads, and burned the crops while the Palestinians have no power to stop them. In addition, people are living in the culture of a prison with fear and no tools to counter these aggressions. A third voice is heard to say that it is a contradiction to keep the two baskets together, the first, to go to the UN, and the second at the same time, saying we want to go to negotiating table. But, at the end of the day, there is an understanding in Fateh that this UN bid is the beginning of a process to internationalize the conflict and to challenge the Israelis from a different position, if and when negotiations can be resumed.

As for Hamas, their leadership in Damascus has issued various statements saying that the UN bid is President Abbas's full responsibility; he did not share his decision with Hamas and they will leave its consequences upon his shoulders. At the same time, some Hamas members in the West Bank are reflecting cynicism, saying, "Of course we will celebrate statehood

by bidding farewell to the Israeli occupation army on their withdrawal day, as well as to settlers leaving the West Bank, and we will hoist up the Palestinian flag in every city and town, village and refugee camp.”

As for the civil society, we come to notice that most leading NGOs and research institutes are conducting a series of public and closed meetings debating the UN bid in September, and issuing reports endorsing, encouraging, or trying to inject a few scenarios or alternatives in case of obstacles. Meanwhile, the youth of Palestine have been empowered with the contagious Jasmine Fever of Tunis and the Arab Spring in every Egyptian city and town, mainly Tahreer Square in Cairo. However they, as most of the youth in the Arab World, are without leadership and confused as to the priorities of the democratization process, i.e. civil state and not religious, a new constitution, new elections, and ending the corrupted Arab political system as well as keeping a distance with the West and the influence of their donors.

A small window was opened in the West Bank during the election of the Chamber of Commerce last May. We witnessed the interest of the many independents from the business community running for election and demanding to share decision-making and shaping their own future. Although the elections brought back major Fateh and Hamas representatives, there is a strong component of independents sharing the chambers. This might be an example of future elections for the PLC and the president, which has been a demand of the people: *as-shaab yureed intikhabat*: “the people demand elections.” Another window was opened the first week of August by resuming the reconciliation talks between Fateh and Hamas in Cairo where an agreement was reached to start implementing major items in the reconciliation agenda, as long as there was no decision on naming the prime minister. President Abbas emphasized again that the new government is not a unity government, nor a factional government, but independent professionals and technocrats for a transitional mission, i.e. the reconstruction of Gaza, implementing the reconciliation agenda, and conducting elections within a year. In spite of all the above, the status quo of geopolitical partition/separation between West Bank/Gaza, Fateh/Hamas is very much there and uncertainty lies ahead.

As for Israel, the official strategy has been laid down in the consecutive Herzliya Conferences where the top Israeli military and strategic officials have for the last three years promoted the policy of Israelization of three main areas: the Galilee, Jerusalem, and the Negev, a policy of moving Israeli Jewish Citizens to these areas and expelling Palestinians by various methods through Israeli political and administrative laws.

In addition, Netanyahu’s favorite political slogan has been the demand of recognizing Israel as a “Jewish state.” As for negotiations, Netanyahu was very clear with his “seven no’s” statement and speeches during his Washington visit last May, and by challenging the Palestinian leadership to resume negotiations with no conditions on freezing settlements or halting the Israelization of Jerusalem. Although the Arab Spring contagious fever reached Israel on the socioeconomic level, shaking the right wing government, Netanyahu and Barak are redirecting attention through military incursions on Gaza, expecting from their provocations a counter-response from Palestinians in Gaza, in particular Hamas. This strategy is in order to contain the Israeli awakening about where Netanyahu is hijacking the future of the two-state solution: towards an apartheid system and a culture of fear and war, blood and destruction. These politics will empower a school of thought that says this is an endless conflict, a question of land, identity, history, culture, obsession, exclusivity, and religion: a zero-sum game. This is taking us towards the end of a two-state solution, and a process towards an apartheid system governing two people in one state.

In Israel today, there is a majority of two million Russians, two million religious, and one million Israelis with EU passports (dual citizens who are chasing Europe and would rather be part of Europe), and one and a half million Arabs who are demanding equal citizenship and the recognition of their culture, heritage, and belonging to the land of Palestine. The Russians (who are primarily businessmen with their own newspapers, ignoring the Palestinian question) and the religious (who are exclusive, believing “God gave us the land, it is only ours, anybody else should leave”) are four million who are hijacking the future of Israel. There are not currently enough sufficiently credible vocal opponents ranged against them to challenge them. The one million looking towards Europe are only looking for a better life, Western-style. Meanwhile the Labor Party and the Peace Now movement are with no influence whatsoever, and the Kadema party is desperate to return to power. The three political groups are happy to use the socioeconomic awakening in the streets of Tel Aviv and other major cities to challenge Netanyahu for early elections.

The second school of thought is saying that, since the whole Middle East is moving from pan-Arabism through the political left and recently political Islam, and now towards the human dignity and the pride of identity and the right of sharing the political system on an equal basis, Israel is very much invited to reconsider the idea of Zionism, at the core of which has been the separation between Jews (i.e., Jewish immigrants) and the indigenous population. This required the transfer of the latter and has *de facto* led to a movement concentrating on colonization and land acquisition, not last in a bid to meet some expectations of the Jewish question that has transferred from Europe to the Middle East. This worked for a while, like pan-Arabism, like communism, like political Islam, but it is time for it to end as the political culture we are entering is now about citizenship and a civil state system with an end to the colonization process. People must be identified as equal human beings with a recognized culture, heritage, and language. However, their lifetime aspiration is a shared future ending occupation and colonization.

Voices are heard in the Israeli civil society saying that the Israeli government has been misleading the people towards fear of the Arabs who are now in their second Arab awakening, toppling their dictatorships and looking for democracy and rule of law, with no mention of Israel as an obstacle or a challenge. At the same time, the Israeli government has been misleading the people into fearing the Palestinians who are unarmed, divided, and contained in two big prisons (West Bank and

Gaza), and controlled by military forces as well as half a million settlers. The voices are saying, it is time to free ourselves from this false fear and get out of the ghetto, demand a better life, advance democracy, and open borders with our Arab neighbors by recognizing Palestinian rights for self-determination and statehood.

In the U.S., it is well-known by now that President Obama will not come out with an “historic” initiative during his reelection campaign, nor support the Palestinian bid at the UN—if not veto it. On the other hand, some of the twenty-seven EU member states will have the confidence to support the Palestinians in September and continue their financial backing. Turkey, along with the newly-elected general secretary of the Arab League, Nabil Al-Arabi, are in full support of Palestine’s statehood bid and consider the September episode as a “test” in a process to internationalize the conflict and call for international protection for the Palestinians.

*One thing is sure: Palestinians after the September mission will not be the same before. The Palestinian leadership and the people will have to translate the state recognition into real issues on the ground. The most important challenge, however, will be to hinder Israel from disturbing the new Palestine enjoying “sovereignty.” Then, international protection is the key to follow words (recognition with deeds or Palestinians will continue bleeding and suffering.*

## 2. *A Palestinian Narrative—Living in the Shadow of Conflict, the Reverend Alex Awad*

I lived all of my life under the shadows of the Arab-Israeli conflict and throughout my life I have struggled to reconcile my faith in Christ with a persisting conflict. When I was born in Jerusalem in 1946, Great Britain ruled Palestine under what was called the British Mandate. At that time, Jerusalem was restless and the British were looking for a way out. A year after my birth, the United Nations drew a map to partition Palestine in order to tackle the competing claims from Jewish and Palestinian factions. The partition angered the Palestinians and created the conditions for the eruption of the first Arab-Israeli war. Although I was only two years old at the outbreak of that war, I still did not escape its horrible consequences. My father, who was a civilian, was shot and killed in crossfire between the Hagana militia fighters and the Jordanian army. A few days after my father’s death, my family received orders to evict our home. In fear for our lives and under rounds of sporadic shooting, we fled at night with just the clothes on our backs from our neighborhood of Musrara in the western side of Jerusalem and ran to the Old City. We never again were able to return to live in our home. My mother had the challenge to make sure that her seven children survived in an East Jerusalem that became home to nearly 30,000 Palestinian refugees. Through the grace of God and the hard work of a dedicated and determined Christian mother we all survived. My mother’s motto in life was, “Never look back, but always look forward. Never ask ‘Why God?’ but always ask ‘How God?’ Never harbor feelings of bitterness or hate in your heart, but always forgive.” Her attitude helped me and my siblings as we struggled to survive in war-torn East Jerusalem.

As I grew up I wanted to follow mother’s advice and forget the conflict. I sought refuge in faith and religion in order to find meaning for life. But the conflict and its negative effects on my life, on my family, and on my people did not disappear but rather it got more complicated as I grew up.

In 1966, I left Jerusalem (at that time it was ruled by Jordan) to pursue theological education in Switzerland. The following year, as a result of the conquest of the West Bank in the 1967 War, I became *a man without a country*. Our home in Bethlehem was occupied by the Israeli forces. When I applied for a reentry visa to the West Bank, I was refused. At the same time, the Swiss government did not want me. This became the fate of thousands of Palestinian students and workers who lived in foreign countries during the war.

Through an act of God’s grace, in 1968, I was granted a scholarship by a biblical and liberal arts college in Cleveland, Tennessee. Although I appreciated the opportunities I was given and valued the education in what is sometimes referred to as the Bible Belt in the United States, I found myself at the heart of Christian Zionism. Most students and faculty at my college believed that the victories of Israel in both the 1948 and 1967 wars were due to divine intervention on behalf of Israel. Many of my teachers and fellow students did not make a distinction between ancient Israel and the modern State of Israel. Arabs, Muslims, and Palestinians were considered by many as the enemies, not only of Israel, but of God. I was astonished, in the U.S., to see how both the secular media and the religious media were extremely anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian. Meanwhile, my family in Bethlehem were struggling to adjust to living under a brutal military occupation. One of my brothers was arrested in the aftermath of the 1967 war and several of my siblings determined to flee the country rather than live under Israeli military control. Upon finishing my bachelor degree in the U.S., once again I requested reentry from the Israeli authorities and once again I was refused.

In 1979, the only brother that was left in Bethlehem sent me a letter asking if I and my wife, Brenda, would come and help him start a Bible college in Bethlehem. We accepted the challenge, left our teaching positions and the church that we were serving, and returned to Bethlehem on a tourist visa. We helped my brother to start Bethlehem Bible College. On one occasion, when our visas on our U.S. passports expired, the Israelis threatened to deport us from the country or worse to imprison me if we stayed without a permit. In spite of the fact that I was born in Jerusalem, as a Palestinian, I have no protection by the Israeli Law of Return. Palestinian refugees live with the agony of seeing thousands of Jews welcomed to their land of birth while they are banned from reentering it. Consequently, we left Palestine and our ministries and were not allowed to return until a year after the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1994. Our return was not due the benevolence of the Israeli

government but rather as a result of a campaign on our behalf that was initiated by the Methodist Church and several human rights and social justice organizations.

Since 1994, we have been serving the church in Bethlehem and in Jerusalem under the sponsorship of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. In our ministries we have not only been witnesses of the daily injustices against the Palestinian people, but we stand in solidarity with people who daily face land confiscation, house demolitions, imprisonment, closures, and expulsions.

We continue to pray and hope for the day when Israelis and Palestinians will discover that they can live in peace in Israel/Palestine and that they can create a model of reconciliation that will inspire all nations that are going through conflicts around the world.

### 3. *An Israeli Narrative—The Doctrine of Peace, Avrum Burg*

My grandfather was the Rabbi of Hebron until the summer of 1929. Then, on one horrific Saturday, a local Arab mob mercilessly slaughtered the Jews of Hebron and the relationship between Jews and Palestinians changed forever, not only in Hebron, but throughout the region between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Dozens of people, including one half of my family, were murdered on that deadly Shabbat. The second half of my family, my beloved mother amongst them, was saved from the onslaught by their Arab landlord. This brave and human gentile risked his own life to save not just my mother and her sisters, but about saving humanity, no less.

Many times throughout my life I imagined myself in this situation that occurred so many years before my birth. This significant event has a great impact on the historic community and it remained embedded in the collective memory that shaped the twisted relationship between Israelis and Palestinians to date. Much was written about this tragedy, about its barbaric nature, about the deaths of the innocent who gradually acquired a mythological status. Others looked into the major role played by British negligence in allowing such a bloodbath to occur. Little attention, however, has been attributed to the astounding heroism of Abu Shakar and other Palestinians like him who, amidst the terror, planted seeds of peace and dialogue. Today, when everything seems so uninspiring and at a deadlock, we must go back to such historical moments; in order to retell the story—yet differently—from the beginning.

Abu Shakar could have had many reasons to play the hero on that dreadful day. Maybe this is how his parents raised him. It is possible that his values of humanism and justice, although deep and existential, were abundant in him. There was also a deep personal relationship between him and my grandfather, of blessed memory, as he was their landlord for many years. In my family the story is remembered slightly differently. It is said that at an old age, two sons were born to a man. The eldest son—Shakar—became sick one day and the doctors were hopeless. In Hebron during the 1920s, there was no advanced medicine and penicillin had not yet been discovered. On his deathbed, when the entire community feared for the eldest son's life, my grandfather sat by the sick boy's bed and prayed. God listened to him. God did not differentiate between the religion and faith of my praying grandfather and that of the young, sick Muslim boy. To God—then—all of mankind was equal. God sent his medicine from heaven and the next morning, a miracle happened. The boy came back to his health. His parents never forgot my grandfather's spiritual gesture.

This story was about my grandfather, a humanist and a Jew, and Abu Shakar, a humanist and a Muslim, and God who they both share.

For me and half of my family, peace begins with prayer; prayer to the Creator of the world, to the One responsible for all of creation. There is no defined prayer intended exclusively for others who *do not* share my religion and my faith. This is a prayer to God of Adam, the first human and his counterpart, Eve. It is a prayer for the world that preceded the schisms between different faiths and nationalities. We do not belong to a world where our God wins and all the other peoples' gods are defeated and their memories' obliterated. Oh no. We believe, respect, and contain. We are fearful for every person who is sick, especially when the sick person is the entire world, our entire society. We pray for the well-being and for peace to all who were created because we are all, together, partners in the act of creation.

When we proclaim "peace" we mean that peace is, first and foremost, a religious narrative and only then can it be a political goal and policy matter. Especially now when the long conflict between us and our Palestinian neighbours seems to be spiralling out of control, passing from the national dimension to dangerous and absolute religious expanses, we must ask again: what is the role of religion in the conflict and in the conflict's deterioration and what are the chances of being assisted by other values of faith to end the bloodshed.

In order to suggest a new key to the locked Middle East, I must describe—if only in short—the paradigm that brought us to this new low point. In the beginning there was much ignorance and denial. Early Zionists related to Israel with the following phrase, "a people without a homeland is coming to a land without a people." They believed they were coming to an empty unsettled land. When they arrived, some of them ignored the existence of those that were already living on the land, while others denied the just historical arguments of the Palestinians. Nearly everyone saw a desolate land. Maybe this was because the landscape was emptier than the cities, villages, and metropolises from which they emigrated. Or perhaps it was

because they considered the locals to be inferior just as all of white Europeans used to ignore the presence of the natives in their colonized empires. And they never bothered to examine the depths of the local narrative that began its journey towards modern nationalism at the same time as Zionism.

This strategy of ignoring and denying reality was not exclusively a problem of that time. It has been characterizing the patronizing-ignoring attitude of the Israeli institution until today. Time and again this pattern is repeated. During her tenure as Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, who should have known by then that the picture was larger than the simplistic image accepted by the mass public, said: “when I made Aliya to Israel, there was no such thing as the ‘Palestinian people.’” This message was not even hidden in her words. When Israeli heads of state say, “we have no partner,” they essentially see the other side as void of any human existence, because there are plenty of partners there. Maybe they are not easy partners, maybe they have demands and claims, but they certainly exist. The height of this model occurred during the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza that relied heavily on the psychological feeling that there was no one to talk with on the other side. We were free to enter and leave at will, since, the house next door was already vacant.

While I have no intention of analyzing herein the models on the Arab-Palestinian side, I cannot ignore the sense that their models are in line with ours. Just as Israelis tend to ignore Palestinian existence, the Arab-Palestinian narrative also ignores Jewish and Israeli claims and calls for “pushing us into the sea”—a phrase that is understood as: the Israeli presence here is temporary and will soon cease to exist. Therefore, according to this model, there is no reason to relate to Jewish claims as an actual and binding reality.

Human models are, at their core, dynamic. Very few human situations stagnate. By ignoring the existence of Palestinians in Israel, we fail to acknowledge them and their rights as individuals and as a collective. But as the act of ignoring continues, the obsession grows, focusing on the Arab presence in our lives as a coercive and ceaseless traumatic disturbance. It is apparent that the ongoing confrontation with the Palestinians crystallized the Israeli national identity. While it is hard to define who we are in a positive way, by standing next to them we know better who we are not—we are not Arabs!

As time passed, this model of ignoring the Palestinians developed and cleared the way for the next model of the conflict—national identification. The new Israeli nationalism is a renewed version of Jewish identity. Its definition is based on a combination of ethnic origins, religious faith, and geographic location with sovereignty and a common language. Only some of these elements characterize the historic Jewish nation.

As this new Jewish-Israeli nationalism emerges, a new kind of nationalism develops: the new Palestinian nationalism. Some say it originally emerged from nothing, while others say it grew naturally from previously existing roots. However, there is one thing that cannot be disputed: today there is a Palestinian people with a compelling collective consciousness, narrative, and loyalty that is engaged in an enveloping nationalistic confrontation with its Israeli neighbor.

The Palestinians’ honest and legitimate desire for their own state derives much of its energy from Israeli national homeland models that originated in the national policy dialog of old Europe. However, movements all over the world have worn out the terms “state” and “homeland” since the time when these concepts dominated European thought. Israeli secular nationalism, among others, was worn out by the reemergence of the religious element within our national identity. The same Zionism that rebelled against the “Jewish mother” has now become the main carrier of resurrecting the same powers against which it rebelled. The Jewish state that was founded as a secular and socialist state has become a religious and capitalist state. On the other side, the emergence of religion as part of the Palestinians’ values is very well-known and does not need to be repeated. This intertwining of nationalism that is largely comprised of extremist and fundamentalist patriotism and religion feeds the unending Israeli-Palestinian confrontation that no longer seems to have a solution. It is possible to overcome community-based conflicts and it is possible to find compromises to national conflicts. However, it is nearly impossible to build bridges over faith-based chasms driven by religion and extremism. Even if this was possible, overcoming everything described above is overwhelming and full of despair.

Now, the fourth model: after ignoring each other, nationalism and religion, it is time to introduce ideology into the equation. The largest missing element in today’s peace dialog is ideology. Without ideology, any peace dialog lacks hope and faith. Peace, in any language, is one of the most ideologically saturated words. However, in its realistic and political contexts, it has become superficial and empty. In Israel we immediately associate peace with security, border arrangements, and land deals. Regional peace has become equal to “no war” and is void of the values of justice, loving thy neighbor, and transforming your enemy into your friend.

In this context it is hard to ignore the decisive element that is brought to the table by the negative influence of religion in current political processes. Religions play such an important role here both in terms of defining issues in absolute terms and fanaticism. Jewish Messianic fanatics who are supported and funded by Christian Messianic fanatics are fighting the growing fundamentalist Muslim movement in the region. This situation of absolutes has turned our complicated Israeli-Palestinian conflict into a global iconic conflict. Nearly every conflict around the world somehow involves our conflict. Al-Qaida against the West covers the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and emigrants in Europe direct their anger towards us. White supremacists all over the world—those who wish all of Europe and America to be exclusively white and Christian—suddenly see Jews as an alibi in their Islamophobic arguments, which are directed at them. Our greatest challenge opposing these religious fundamen-

talists is to change the iconic conflict into no less of an iconic solution. For this reason we must replace the religious element that is exacerbating the conflict with pacifying and settling religious elements. Therefore, we need entirely new partners and a partnership unlike what we have known until now.

The borders and delimitation lines can no longer pass in one dimension between religions and faiths. Not every Jew is entirely my partner. The same as not every Christian and Muslim are entirely and forever my enemy. There is an unwritten coalition that crosses camps. There are Jews, Christians, and Muslims that uphold—each one in his or her own way—faith that is based on humanity and on liberties, peace, and the understanding that we are all God’s children. And in spite of ourselves, there is another coalition that is not human-centric that strives, with all its might, to achieve a decisive, violent war. God against Elohim against Allah. These believers do not believe in the power of dialog and accepting differences between the different theologies. They do not believe in their respective god’s power to exist alongside other gods. These are people who see the world as black and white and from here they march towards the third and final world war. They look to Armageddon, to blowing up the Dome of the Rock or to relentless global Jihad that recognizes no borders.

Today, these fanatics are making the religious content in global and local conflicts. As a result, we witness so much bloodshed and so many tears. The time has come for a religion of love, of respect between synagogue, church and mosque and of holding hands, together. Not in order to fight, but rather to scatter again and again the DNA of peace. This is how Shakar’s father from Hebron and my mother from Jerusalem were raised. This is how my children are brought up and this is how we believe the entire world should behave—believing in peace and not war.

#### 4. *A Palestinian Narrative—The Lost City of Oranges, Nahida Halaby Gordon*

I was born in Jerusalem to a Presbyterian family in 1939, the year that marked the end of the Great Palestinian Uprising (1936–1939) and the beginning of the Second World War. These two events served as bookends to the year of my birth and defined my life in ways I could not appreciate until much later.

At the age of two, our family moved from Jerusalem to Jaffa, known to me in Arabic as “Yafa.” Yafa’s history as well as most of Palestine has been one of occupation by invaders and empires. The most recent invaders were the British and the Irgun Zva’i Leumi and Hagana forces of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine). Yafa, before its surrender on May 13, 1948, was sometimes called the Bride of Palestine. It was a major cultural center with twelve newspapers, and many business and commercial interests. Yafa’s seaport was believed to be one of the oldest continually used seaports in the world. Yafa was also famous for its oranges and was at times called the City of Oranges.

Some of my most vivid memories are connected with our home, which I visit whenever I am in Palestine. The latest visit was in October 2010. It is emotionally distressing to think of my lost home in Yafa. The distress arises not from the loss of bricks and mortar as some people think, but the loss of my Palestinian life and a sense of belonging in my own community. To Palestinians, connectedness within family, community, and land is vital and extends over generations.

We lived in the land of the Bible and so much of our surroundings made it seem alive as though the events told there happened only yesterday. Yafa is the city where Simon the tanner (Acts 9) lived. His home is thought to be close to the shore and a short walking distance from our house. Peter was staying with Simon when he had a vision that he interpreted as God telling him to carry the message of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. It is a message of inclusiveness of people of differing ethnicities. In Acts 9:36–40, we read the story of Tabitha who was brought back from death by Peter. My school, the Tabitha School for Girls, was named after Tabitha of Acts and was established in 1863 by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It was a short two blocks from our home, and my memories of school, as everything else in my life in Yafa, was a mixture of the happy and sad.

In November 1947, not too long after the beginning of the school year, the United Nations General Assembly, with strong lobbying by the world Zionists and the support of the United States’ Truman Administration, chose to recommend partition of Palestine against the wish of the majority of its people. This was an egregious violation of my human rights and the human rights of all Palestinians who were the majority population. In addition to being against international law, the partition plan privileged the Jewish minority population at the expense of the Christian and Muslim majority population. Yafa was to be part of the Palestinian state surrounded completely by the new Israeli state thus making Yafa a target of the New Israeli State. As the battle for Yafa began, it had its effects on every part of our lives.

A few of my childhood memories will draw a picture of the atmosphere then—an atmosphere filled with the tension among the adults in our lives and among the visitors to our home. Our house was adjacent to the old city and near the waterfront a few hundred yards from the lighthouse. Its sweeping light would shine through the door transoms from the veranda and I could watch it at night as I was falling asleep. It was a constant and a comfort. It made me feel safe from the chaos outside. In the spring of 1948, we fell asleep at night to the sound of bombs aimed at Yafa. In my childish imagination, the bombs sounded like large pipes being thrown around by giants. The memory is strong and vivid to this day. It was frightening and going to sleep was difficult. The lighthouse became a friend as I watched its hypnotic recurring sweep of light through the transom of my bedroom door and this friend lulled me to sleep every night. To this day, a lighthouse elicits a feeling of warmth and safety.



Snatches of sound and sights from this period persist vividly in my mind to this day. As a historical background to one of my most frightening memories is a description I read in Adam LeBor's *City of Oranges*<sup>1</sup>. "On January 4, 1948, a truck, piled high with oranges, was parked in an alley off Clock Tower Square, alongside the New Seray, which housed Yafa's municipal offices, welfare workers, and a kitchen for needy children." My father's office was in the Clock Tower Square. "Soon after the truck driver and his companion left, a thunderous explosion shook the city. Broken glass and shattered masonry blew out across Clock Tower Square. The New Seray collapsed in a pile of rubble. Windows shattered for yards around, and a thick choking cloud of dust billowed out. After a moment of silence, the screams and moans began. Twenty-six were killed, and hundreds injured. Most were civilians, including many children who had been eating at the charity kitchen."<sup>2</sup>

That day Mother was nervous. It was cold outside with a persistent rain with thunder mixed in with the sound of explosions. She was worried because Father was late arriving home. We heard a car up the street. She asked me to run out to the veranda to see if it was Father. He had come into the side gate and garaged his car. When I arrived at the veranda and looked over the parapet, I saw him walking below me. He had his over coat on with the collar turned up high. He had what looked like a dirty handkerchief around his forehead and his hair was smoky white. I ran in to tell Mother that it was indeed Father and that he was dirty and had pebbles in his hair. My next memory is looking into the bathroom. Father was standing over the washstand and Mother was trying to clean him up. His necktie and shirt were soaked in blood and he had grit and dirt all over his face and hair. The handkerchief was one lent to him by a fellow victim and was also soaked in blood. My father, the anchor of our life, had just survived a Zionist terror bombing. Father was wounded, but he had remained behind to help move some of the wounded to the hospital. That evening as we sat by the fireplace, I told my father that I was cold. His reply to me was "you are not cold—you are frightened!"

During this time, the students in my class were thinning out. It came to a point when I remember that class consisted of three students and no teacher. We played school and took turns playing the role of teacher. Our favorite pastime was drawing the flag of Palestine. Soon after that, the bombing in our neighborhood increased. The Zionist paramilitary, probably the Hagana, used to come in an armored car and pepper the street with bullet fire. One day, as my sister recalled, there was a fight outside our house between the Israelis and the defenders of Yafa. Father was not at home and Mother was terrified. She locked up all the windows and doors and we hunkered down. My brothers collected empty bullet shells and the spent bullets that landed on the veranda from the previous night's fighting. As Ilan Pappé relates in his book, ethnic cleansing "operations were also Yigael Yadin's brainchild. They began on 13 February 1948 and focused on several areas. In Jaffa, houses were randomly selected and then dynamited with people still in them."<sup>3</sup> Yigael Yadin was the acting chief of staff of the Israeli armed forces.

No wonder we were never allowed out on the street! As a child I have no memories of the streets of Yafa. I thought that school was far away from home because my older sister and I were driven there each school day in the morning and home at the end of the school day. It was only when I visited our old neighborhood as an adult, that I was astounded to discover that school was a short two blocks away from home. The house had two large verandas overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. One adjacent to my parents' bedroom and the second much larger veranda was our playground from which we could see and interact with the children living in the Old City. Interacting with other children was always a matter of setting a play date, to use the modern language of my grandchildren. Mothers and their children would come to visit. Mothers would visit with each other and we children would play together. We were never allowed out on the street and never went anywhere unescorted.

An event in April of 1948 lives very clearly in my memory. On the night of April 9, 1948, the Irgun Zva'i Leumi (Menachem Begin's terrorist group), surrounded the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin, located on the outskirts of Jerusalem and attacked the village of 700 people, killing and wounding men, women, and children. I remember clearly the terror I felt when hearing about the loudspeaker broadcasts from vans of the newly arrived European immigrants going about telling the inhabitants that if they do not want the same thing to happen to them as what happened in Deir Yassin that they should flee. I agonized as a child about what I would do if they were to come to my house to kill my family as they did in Deir Yassin.

One day, I heard a noise out on the street. I ran to the balcony outside my brothers' bedroom which faced the street. I saw a coffin cover carried vertically by a man who was walking down the street towards me. The cover had a cross down its entire length. Following the coffin cover was the coffin itself being carried by six pall bearers. The noise I heard was the shuffle of their feet. As the coffin arrived just below me, I saw its occupant—a very young smooth faced man. He was incredibly beautiful and peaceful. He was dressed in charcoal gray pants with pin stripes and a black jacket. He looked as though he was dressed for his wedding which was never to be. Then I noticed a woman walking behind—she was my mother's friend—a frequent visitor to our house. She was dressed in black and had a veil down across her face. She was weeping inconsolably, and was supported on each side by two other women whom I did not recognize. The funeral cortege continued to move below me and then went into the churchyard that was further down the street towards the waterfront. Later I found out that he was her younger brother who was killed by the Zionist forces.

Days later during the night, the bombs fell across the street and hit the church where the funeral of the brother of Mother's friend was held. A few feet farther northeast and they would have hit our house! By now, April 1948, my father, having had enough of violence, decided to take our family to safety away from Yafa. It was our custom to leave every summer to the mountains of Lebanon or to Ramallah to escape the heat of the seacoast. So my father decided that we would

leave early for our summer stay and return at the end of the summer in time for school. Alas, we were not allowed to exercise our right to return!

On April 22, we hurriedly packed and drove to the Liddeh airport, which now is the location of the Ben Gorion Airport. On the way, I remember seeing houses burning. My father and mother worried about whether the Jewish soldiers would let us leave. Again we did not realize that they would be more than glad to have us leave. We boarded a small twin engine plane that my father had chartered. We flew to Beirut and arrived in the evening. I remember several men bringing steps to the airplane door and helping us out with the few suitcases we had. All was left behind—our pets, a dog and cat, all family pictures, all mementos of a life—all gone! As soon as we were safely settled in Lebanon, my Father returned to Yafa and remained for a few weeks, but then shortly after May 15, rejoined us in Lebanon.

And what would we have experienced had we stayed in Yafa? “By April 25, 1948, using the tons of shells that the Irgun had taken from the British munitions train, the battle for Jaffa began in the early hours of Sunday, 25 April. Irgun gunners directed a steady rain of mortar fire onto the city. In theory the gunners were not supposed to target hospitals, religious sites, or consulates. In practice the shells fell indiscriminately across Clock Tower Square, smashing into the markets, and south into the heart of Ajami (where our house is located), killing and wounding large numbers of civilians. Panic and hysteria swept through the city.”<sup>4</sup>

Going through my father’s papers after his death, I discovered a three-page document issued by the Hagana. The document is dated May 13, 1948, just two days before Israel declared itself a state and the U.S. shamelessly recognized it within hours. This document is discussed in some detail by Rosemary Esber.<sup>5</sup> In this document, signed by the Hagana and four leaders of the Yafa community, the Hagana admonishes the citizens of Yafa to obey all statements in the agreement and the Hagana pledged to the Palestinians of Yafa that “IT IS UNDERSTOOD that the Hagana always does respect and will respect the Geneva Convention and all International Laws and Uses of war.” This is just another deception presented to the Palestinian people and to the international community that continue to the present day, first by the Hagana and then the Israeli government once it came into existence.

The fourth article of the instructions proclaims: “(a) All males in the area defined in the Agreement will concentrate in the area between Feisal Street, Al Muktar Street, Al Hulwa Street and the Sea until everybody has identified himself under arrangements, the particulars of which will be notified later, and (b) During this, any male found outside this area will be severely punished, unless in a possession of a special permit.” I had two teenaged brothers at this time. We knew what this meant—that they will probably at best be transported elsewhere leaving my mother, sister, and me alone and defenseless. In the eighth article, it assured residents of Yafa that if they left, they can return. Article nine claimed: “All public offices, Municipal and Government, must be kept intact and all documents and registers therein must be kept safely in good condition so that any claim of residents may be checked.” Articles 8 and 9 together reassured residents that leaving would be alright since a return was assured. In fact, shortly after Yafa fell, the Hagana destroyed documents in municipal and government offices as well as schools. They entered Tabitha School, where I and my sister were students and destroyed school registers. The registrar of the Tabitha School, who is a Palestinian, managed secretly to save a few registers. When visiting her in Yafa in 2006, she showed me the register where I could see my name. Here is another deception from the Hagana and the new Israeli government. They never intended to let us return!

One frequently hears that Palestinians wanted to drive the Israelis out to sea. When in fact in Yafa and Haifa, it was the Israelis who put many of its Palestinian inhabitants into small boats and pushed them out to sea where many drowned. Furthermore, as these frantic Palestinians went to the boats they were shot at by Israeli snipers<sup>6</sup>. I often wonder had we stayed in Yafa after May 15, would we have been forced onto one of these boats! Another claim by the Israeli government is that the Arab leaders told the Palestinians to flee. Reality was quite the contrary. We were terrorized and fled for our lives.

On occasion I think about one of my childhood friends from Palestine. Her mother, I was told, was Jewish and her father was Christian. She would come with her mother and mothers and daughters visited. My musings on this is that here we were in Palestine, probably in 1944–46 and Mother had a Jewish friend and I had a Jewish/Christian friend both of Palestinian origin.

I have visited our house several times since April 22, 1948. Our property consisted of my father’s place of business below and our home above. We think the property was formerly a consulate building for a South American country. My father bought it and remodeled it to suit our family. The first time I went back to Yafa to visit our home, it was made into a restaurant and the lower floor of the property was made into a small shopping mall. They had removed the small verandas outside the doors of the two bedrooms facing the street. One was my brothers’ bedroom and the second was a guest bedroom. They also had covered the veranda next to my parents bedroom and made it part of the restaurant. Wanting to see the backend of the property, my sister, husband, and I walked through an alley east of the house and then climbed a set of stairs leading to a second story apartment in the Old City complex. When we reached the top of the steps, we were able to take photographs of the restaurant, which was vacant and abandoned at that time. We also encountered the occupant of the apartment whose steps we climbed. She was a young woman, sitting on her doorstep and smoking a cigarette. When asked whether she felt guilty about living in someone else’s home she replied “No. I have had a hard life and deserve this apartment. I was born on a kibbutz and life was hard there.” So here we have a glimpse into why some Israelis seem to have no compunction about living in

stolen property. They feel entitled because of their past suffering. They do not seem to understand that it was not we Palestinians who caused their suffering. They may not be the original thieves but they are benefiting from their government's theft.

My second visit was in 2003 at which time the property was undergoing a major renovation. The façade was the same and this time they had replaced the two small verandas adjacent to the street facing bedrooms. When my driver told one of the workmen that I used to live in the house, their reaction was "she better leave if she knows what is good for her." At a later visit in 2006, the house was further transformed with apartments below and some above. Our large playground veranda now contained apartments with views of the Mediterranean Sea. Surprisingly, the door leading to the steps to our house was still there. However, the two steps leading to the door were removed. These two steps contained a little treasure. My father said that when he remodeled the property, he built in a chamber within the steps into which he placed several bottles of wine. He planned to remove the bottles and serve the guests at my older brother's wedding. That wedding did not take place in Yafa but in the Diaspora. Someone else had the pleasure of drinking that wine!

On October 20, 2010, I had the opportunity to visit Yafa once more and of course I included a side-trip to view our old house. My travelling companions were my husband, my older brother, the pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Wooster, and two friends from church. The entire trip was a memorable experience and may be the last time that I will ever visit Yafa. I had two encounters with Israelis that afternoon. They were as totally different as two encounters can be. The first one was a man of about forty who was coming out of a small shop on the first floor of the property and facing west. His shop is called the "The Israeli Experience," and as he was walking to his motorcycle, I asked him why he does not also talk about the "Palestinian Experience"? He became irritated and started talking rapidly telling me that he knew nothing of these things. I told him softly that I had the deed to the property. The volume of his talk increased markedly and he started yelling at me, telling me that I am attacking him with unsubstantiated claims

My second encounter was very different. Thanks to my brother who pressed every one of the buzzers of the fifteen apartments carved out of our family home, we were invited into one of them by its Israeli occupant, a woman. She generously welcomed us to her living room and gave us water to drink. I will preface my remarks by saying that she was a brave and thoughtful person. She allowed us into her home even though she knew who we were. We sat and reminisced about the house as though it was a common acquaintance, which it was! We told her about her apartment—that it used to be part of the veranda next to our parents' bedroom. I asked her if the lighthouse still operates, and she said "No." I told her how I used to go to sleep watching its light move across the walls of the hallway leading out to the veranda. She listened with respect, acknowledging my sorrow and loss. She told us that she rents the apartment and that she thought that it was owned by the Catholic Church, which had a large property on the high point of the old city overlooking our house. She now had in front of her the previous dispossessed owners.

We then began talking about present day politics in Israel. She told us that even though she owns a house in Jerusalem, she prefers to live in Yafa. She was concerned about the rising fascism in Israel. I asked her if she thought Lieberman could or would become prime minister. She shrugged her shoulders and said that she hoped that he would not. She was progressive in her thinking and I found much with which to agree. In a different place and time, I think we could have been friends. With gentle questioning, she told us about her life and her parents' life. They came from Pinsk in Eastern Russia to Palestine in the 1920s. The family wanted to escape discrimination and the pogroms. She ended her recounting of her family's experiences by saying that she just wants to live a normal life. This is yet another tragedy—how can she live a normal life when she is living in stolen property and a stolen country. I felt her suffering and was deeply touched. We both struggled with our emotions. I hugged her when we left and she returned the hug. We shared a bond of suffering inflicted by a senseless and unfeeling world.

I began this account by asking myself why it is so distressing to visit my home in Yafa. I think the answer may be in seeing the present day reality, which is a death to warm and wonderful childhood memories. It may be less painful to forget the present and just hold onto old memories. This is particularly so when I see what has been done to my grandmother's house in Jerusalem. I always envied those Palestinians who were able to remain. During this last visit to Yafa, I met with three of our friends from childhood days. During dinner, one of them asked me: "Nahida, who do you think is better off—you who left Yafa or me who stayed?" Her question was asked with a combination of bitterness and sadness. I then realized that even though she is still living in her childhood home, she also lost her community. I and all Palestinians are scattered throughout the world—she was just as cut off from our Palestinian community as I was!

To continue my family story, we emigrated from Lebanon to the U.S. in 1951. I arrived here barely a teenager. It was here that I and my sister received our high school and university educations and my brothers their university educations. I am now a grandmother happily married to my husband of fifty years. We are immensely proud of and grateful for our three children. I am also a professor of statistics in the Schools of Medicine and Nursing of a prestigious American university. My husband's ancestors were immigrants from Scotland, England, and Germany who came to America, some decades before this country was founded, to escape political persecution.

I am active in my local Presbyterian church and in the PC(USA) at the national level on behalf of Palestinians, especially the Palestinian Christians who remain in Palestine. But, I sometimes wonder whether my church here in the U.S.A. has room in it for Palestinians. When Presbyterians continue to affirm Israel's "right to exist" even though they qualify it by saying

“within secure borders,” I feel hurt, rejection, and sadness. To me, these Presbyterians are saying that Israel had and has a right to dispossess me, my family, and other Palestinians, and to continue to kill, terrorize, and repress to the present day. To me the church, as well as much of Western Christianity, is complicit in not only the theft of my home, but also the loss of a life that should have been lived as a Palestinian among other Palestinians and family. The Bible, the basis of my faith, has been used to dispossess me of the land where I was born and of the people to which I belonged. But I am among the fortunate of the dispossessed for I had the privilege of having a father with the means to protect his family and I have lived a productive life, albeit in a land not of my birth. But what of the Palestinians who were not so fortunate, who lost their homes, land, villages, and communities, and who were killed or dispossessed as the immigrants from Europe drove them from their land? What of those Palestinians who fled to live elsewhere, many in refugees camps in Palestine or adjacent countries? What of the dispossessed Palestinians who live in Gaza, many of whom came from Yafa and its surrounding villages and who now live in the world’s largest open-air prison; who are demonized as terrorists; and who only wish to return to their land and homes? Now near the end of my life, I know that some losses can never be compensated—either for me or all other Palestinians.

The year 1939, my birth year, marks a period of history of profound tragedy for human kind with the outbreak of World War II. Persecution, pogroms, and discrimination experienced by Jews for many centuries in Europe and in addition the killings during World War II brought some of them to Palestine in search of a safe homeland. The leaders of these Europeans proceeded to compound their tragedy by inflicting upon Palestinians a modern form of programs, persecution, discrimination, and killings. But this has not always been the history of the Land of Palestine. For centuries Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived together peacefully in Palestine. This Palestinian and many others only wish for the two peoples to live together in this land that both call their own. It should be one land where we all enjoy equality, an equality of political, legal, economic, cultural, religious, and educational rights. I echo the wish of the Israeli woman who is currently living in one of the apartments of my former home. I wish that we both can live a normal life united as human beings in the common suffering of our humanity.

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This morning, the report on the radio brought a smile of hope to my face—some 200 Palestinians were joining a bike ride in the area of Sodom. These Palestinians are from the territories; Ramallah, Jenin, etc. The organizer reflected, if we are not getting anywhere in the “high places” of diplomacy, then perhaps on the ground, shoulder to shoulder let’s start “peddling towards peace.” I had just come back from that area, the expanse of raw beauty of the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley. There it seems that there is room for everyone. There exciting innovations in re-harnessing the earth’s energies offer a possibility of living together on this fragile planet without fighting over square miles. The sun’s energy is endless, wind too; and thoughtful recycling of everything may give our grandchildren and great grandchildren a chance.

It is Friday morning, when I have some time to listen to the radio, and then go to the open air market, where Israelis of every stripe gather to shop and sightsee. It is a festival of sights, smells, and tastes. Israeli Arabs work alongside Israeli Jews. One of my favorite stalls employs an Arab. Recently, some rightwing extremists threatened to “out” any shops with Arab employees. This was squelched pretty fast by the shop owners, not necessarily known for leftwing positions. I want to ask my stall guy what he thinks, but I do not have to; they are working side-by-side. Hard to imagine the years when so many fled the market. The “shuk” was a scary place, where too many terrorist attacks hit hard. The Intifada seems far away ... but so does the “two-state solution.”

On my wall there are two remarkable photographs that define my biography. One hangs at home, and one in my office. At home, is a picture of a family sitting around a table, it is both Old world and New world. It is my father’s family; my father is seven years old. His mother is immigrating to Canada, with five children and an aging father. They are saying goodbye to his mother. She is a tiny, aged woman surrounded by her three sons, my great-grandfather, dressed in traditional Chasidic garb that originated in the 17th century and his two brothers, who are seated with their wives dressed as the “visiting Americans.” They are clean-shaven, in modern dress. What a picture! It encapsulates Polish Jewry in 1930. My father and his family will be saved, the two American uncles are already on their way to modernization, and the other couple in the corner, my grandmother’s sister, husband, and daughter will perish in the Holocaust.

The other photo is in my office. It is a photograph of my father, now a leader of American Judaism. He is attending the convention of his Rabbinic organization of which he is the chief executive. They have invited the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. to speak. This is a photo of Dr. King, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (the great Jewish theologian of the late 20th century), and my father. King was assassinated two weeks after this picture was taken. These two images have followed me everywhere, in every home and every office. In my office, I yearn for a religious leadership working side-by-side for justice; like King and Heschel. At home, I look at my family table; they are sitting at a Passover Seder, reciting hymns and prayers for redemption from slavery. They believed, despite their poverty, their lives so precarious and full of change, that we have to have hope and celebrate hope!

In 1976, I arrive in Israel. I have been here before, but now I will live here for a year or two perhaps, no firm plans. I am an American Jewish feminist liberal Jew. This does not flow with ease with the Zionist narrative. The Zionist narrative envisioned a new kind of Jew and Judaism living as a sovereign people on their land, able to protect themselves and sustain themselves without fear or dependence on others. The Zionist ethos and the first generations were secular Zionists with a Socialist bent. There was little room for a Judaism that tries to bridge tradition and modernity, it was either/or. You were either a Hebrew speaking, Bible quoting, secular Israeli who eschewed religious worship but re-envisioned the traditional Jewish holidays with a civic and cultural meaning ... OR you were Orthodox, hopefully modern enough to serve your country and pray in the synagogue that reflected your ethnic background. This was the deal made at the founding of the Jewish state. All matters religious regarding personal status would be handled by an official Rabbinate that would see to your needs at birth, marriage, divorce, and death.

No one could foresee the incredible rise and growth of the Ultra-Orthodox, whom do not define themselves as Zionist. No one could foresee the turn of the majority of Modern Orthodox veering right in wholehearted support of the Settler Movement in the West Bank and Gaza. No one could predict a growing secular population alienated from Jewish sources although they speak fluent Modern Hebrew.

Yet, I could never have imagined that I would become the first woman rabbi in Israel. Nor the fact that over these thirty-five years, there is an emerging Reform Movement. We are committed to equality and inclusiveness.

All these phenomena and more occur over decades, while the Palestinian story is emerging. Whether we Israelis like it or not, there are two competing claims on this piece of land. And after all my years here, and all the time spent marching for peace, seeking justice, praying for a just solution, it boils down to this. Does the Occupation begin in 1948 or in 1967? If the Occupation begins in 1948, well, we are looking at a "one-state" "resolution." If it is a one-state solution then the demographic will determine which state will prevail. At the moment the Ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox settlers are reproducing, as are the Palestinians. So a one-state solution would mean a stand-off between extremists. A two-state solution will keep Israel a Jewish Democratic state and make room for Palestine.

The narrative of suffering doesn't work anymore. It is a competition, or worse, two tone-deaf monologues. In order for reconciliation to begin, we must listen to the suffering of the *other*. We must listen to the stories of the other. It is remarkable that it was the daughter of Pharaoh who heard the cries of baby Moses, and she risked her station and position to save him. Even more remarkable, that some passages later, Moses is grown up and running from Egypt and he encounters God. God speaks to Moses from a burning bush and proclaims "I have heard the suffering of the children of Israel!" God is following the daughter of Pharaoh, God is imitating her! Can we risk our station and status or can we give up our state of suffering and reach out to the other side?

The Occupation must end. We must find a way to negotiate coexistence. We must find a way for healing and perhaps forgiveness. Lately, this seems more distant. While terror has subsided; extremism has not.

So, I remain an anomaly. I remain a religious progressive, Jewish feminist, a socialist Zionist. There are not many of us. But we are a voice and a movement. To this I remain passionately committed; to teach and raise the next generations of progressive Jews ready to make peace with our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

#### 6. *A Palestinian Narrative—Liberating Palestinians and Israelis, Mazin Qumsiyeh, PhD*

My late grandfather was a spiritual kind man who got along with everyone but he was not a religious man. He explained to his grandchildren (thirty-two in all) how he also had great respect for all people who lived here. He would describe life before the state of Israel was created on the destruction of Palestinian civil society. He would mention how his family (Palestinian-Arab Christians) lived in peace and harmony with another minority (Palestinian-Arab Jews) and both lived in complete harmony with the Palestinian-Arab Muslim majority. Life was bountiful and good until World War I when Ottoman conscription of men (of all religions), destruction of the environment, and moving the food towards war efforts all created a humanitarian catastrophe. My grandfather lost his siblings and his parents and was left penniless and homeless orphan. But there were always kind helping hands along the way and they came from various backgrounds. My grandfather did well with hard work despite British occupation, upheaval, and economic dislocation in the 1930s, the ethnic cleansing of 1948, and the numerous deadly wars that took some of his friends and transformed our country.

My grandfather would tell me that this multiethnic, multireligious, multicultural society had its flows before 1948 (tribalism, male domination, weak educational system). But he insisted it was the best place on earth and had more things than people gave credit for. It was a land of milk and honey and also of great religious shrines, great scenery, great and bountiful agricultural fields (olives, figs, citrus, grapes, wheat, barley, vegetables of all kinds). It had great cuisine, music orchestras, libraries, publishers, tourist industries. Our own area of Bethlehem was a Mecca for tourists from around the world and people did well selling souvenirs made from olive wood and mother pearl in addition to the bountiful agricultural products.

My grandfather was born in 1908 and died in 1997 so he saw the transformation of his country in ways that made him die satisfied with his own accomplishments despite incredible odds but sad for the state of this “holy Land.” Looking out the balcony of his house the last time I saw him, he lamented the beginning of a new colonial settlement (called Har Homa on Jebel Abu Ghneim) that was being built and that would change the landscape.

My village of Beit Sahour (the Shepherds’ field where Shepherds were told of the birth of Jesus just up the hill in Bethlehem) joined the protests against the Balfour Declaration and the British occupation starting in 1919. Two thousand years ago, our ancestors did not just get the message of peace on earth, good will to man, but they thought it was their duty to pass it on. We still feel the same obligation and this is part of why I write and work for human rights and justice, which are the pre-requisite for peace.

My grandmother, Emilia, comes from Nazareth and it became part of the newly founded state of Israel in 1948. Five hundred thirty-one Palestinian villages and towns were depopulated (the largest ethnic cleansing post-World War II). Half the refugees were actually created before the state of Israel was formally declared on 15 May 1948. It is thus a myth that this had to do with war between the nascent state and “Arab countries.” There was also a secret agreement between the Royal Family that was ruling Trans-Jordan (appointed by the British) and the Zionist leaders before 1948 to allow splitting Palestine between them and thwart Palestinian self-determination (see Avi Schlaim’s books on the subject).

Later I would find out that some relatives, even before I was born, had confrontations with the ruling Jordanian royal family. Two of my uncles on my paternal side were jailed by the Jordanian government for advocating Palestinian nationalism. My mother delivered my older brother in 1956 during the riots in Bethlehem against Jordanian rule.

I was ten-years-old in 1967 and that year provides some of my most terrifying memories. I remember panicked people passing through our village and heading toward the Jordan River. I remember ducking under beds when the sirens sounded. I remember Israeli tanks rolling down the hills toward our village, my father hiding us in a cave while an Israeli tank passed, until neighbors motioned us that the coast was clear. I remember Israeli jets streaking overhead. I remember sleeping with cloths and shoes on in case we had to run. I remember heated discussions among the adults about the wisdom of leaving; those who had left their homes in 1948, during the conflict when Israel became a state, were never allowed back. But in just six days, Israel took the remaining 22 percent of Palestine—the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip from Egypt (plus the Sinai and the Golan).

For a few days after the guns fell silent, no one knew what to expect. The Israeli authorities took their time before giving us any instructions. They were busy securing a long new border to keep out the more than 300,000 Palestinians who’d fled (some becoming refugees a second time). A few managed to get back, but many, like my cousins Samir and Makram, we would not see for more than twenty years. We waited while food and supplies trickled in, followed by some semblance of order imposed by village elders. Schools were closed, and my cousins and I spent even more time at my grandparents’ house.

Two weeks after the war ended and on a day I will never forget, my grandfather received an extraordinary visitor: a Jewish friend separated from him for nineteen years. In the years between 1948 and 1967, no one could travel in either direction between the parts of Palestine that became Israel and the parts that came under Jordanian and Egyptian rule. I recall watching, not really understanding, as the two old men cried on each other’s shoulders. Later that evening my grandfather tried to explain why people could not visit each other across borders. Sido (as we affectionately call a grandfather) talked about how, against the wishes of its native people, including his Jewish friend, Palestine was divided.

The years of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank were not kind to our people. While we exchanged Jordanian for Israeli rule, there were stark differences. Immediately after 1967, Israel started to confiscate Palestinian land in the areas acquired and to build Jewish-only colonies/settlements there. Palestinians were mostly employed in agriculture, and as their best land was being taken, many were forced to find other jobs. Thousands were forced to work in building the Jewish settlements and the roads that now cover 42 percent of the Palestinian occupied territories.

Our own Bethlehem district is a case in point. Tens of thousands of refugees had flooded here 1948–1950. Some later would be forced out again (in 1967 and beyond). The district has a population of more than 180,000 and of those more than 45,000 are refugees or displaced people. Israel built more than twenty-one colonial Jewish settlements and sixteen outposts since their military occupation of Bethlehem in 1967. The Israeli colonial settlement activity meant that nearly 90,000 Jews moved into our district and we were reduced to a ghetto (Bantustan) representing 13 percent of its size before 1967. Further, most of the water sources and other natural resources have been taken over by Israel. And increasingly, a wall is being built

around the remaining 13 percent (<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30731&Cr=palestin&Cr1>), a wall that the International Court of Justice deemed illegally built deep inside Palestinian lands.

I am proud of the history of nonviolent resistance carried out despite brutal violence from the occupiers. While international law says we have a right to armed resistance to occupation, a tiny minority of our people picked up arms. By contrast Israel is a militarized society where everyone is supposed to serve in the army. As a result, ten times more Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli occupiers than the other way around. But a less reported issue is that most of us resist occupation and colonization by nonviolent methods (see my article “Where Is the Palestinian Gandhi,” *The Link*, Volume 43, Issue 3, July–August 2010 <http://www.ameu.org/page.asp?iid=291&aid=621&pg=1>). In my latest book, I showed examples of hundreds of forms of nonviolent resistance from the thousands of forms and millions of cases that we engaged in over the past 130 years.

We still struggle to describe the Orwellian reality we live in. In this land, a new colonial settler from Russia or Poland or America can roam free, get all sorts of financial gifts (from U.S. and other taxpayers), and settle on land stolen from people whose ancestors farmed it and cared for it for 4,000 years. The natives, considered children of a lesser God, are removed from their lands, live in nearby countries in refugee camps, or live in shrinking concentration camps in their own homeland. They cannot return to their homes and lands simply because they are Christians or Muslims. Those of us who remain here are living in increasingly shrinking concentration areas—people warehouses are what a friend calls them. We are not even allowed to travel freely between these warehouses. I am not even allowed to visit friends and colleagues in East Jerusalem (merely five miles away).

The Zionist program is unwavering in its original goals, goals that are shared by all major factions in Israeli politics (Likud, Labor, Shas and other religious parties). Its consensual program includes: the rejection of complete withdrawal from all areas illegally occupied in 1967; the rejection of refugees’ right to return to their homes and lands; the rejection of concepts of full sovereignty or self-determination for Palestinians; and a refusal to change Israel’s basic laws that discriminate against non-Jews. While all of these policies are contrary to basic human rights and international law, Western countries have been reluctant so far for various reasons to pressure Israel like they did with Apartheid South Africa.

Because of the Israel lobby, billions of U.S. tax money is spent on a country that has the largest number of violations of UN resolutions and provisions of international and humanitarian laws. Because of this lobby, eighty-one of our U.S. Congress decided to spend the August recess not dealing with their constituents’ concerns but instead took a trip paid for by this same lobby to Israel (for many of them it was their first trip abroad). Indeed, how else to explain a superpower being stripped of its dignity, its wealth, and its reputation around the world by a domestic lobby working for a foreign country to push for endless wars “on terror” when they are the ones perpetrating the worst terror on earth?

I am optimistic. Many have shed the illusions of “us here, them there.” The racist laws in this apartheid state are simply not sustainable on long-term basis. Peace cannot be built upon injustice; restorative justice is a prerequisite for peace. I got arrested regularly with Israeli human rights activists who join us in nonviolent resistance against occupation and colonization.

The efforts of some people to defend apartheid and separation can only be described at best as symptoms of cognitive dissonance and at worse as symptoms of racism. In their Orwellian world, occupation becomes “security,” a relentless war of colonization and occupation becomes “advancing democracy,” and a “peace process” that goes on for twenty years while more land is gobbled. The apartheid and land-theft wall becomes a “security fence.” Being anti- or post-Zionist is morphed into being anti-Jewish or being a “self-hating Jew.”

In July 2005, more than 170 Palestinian civil society organizations issued a historic document. It articulated Israel’s persistent violations of international and humanitarian laws and conventions and called upon “international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era.”

The call stated that “these non-violent punitive measures should be maintained until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people’s inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law by: ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall; recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and respecting, protecting, and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.”

We propose that global civil society take this call seriously and build a coalition open to all people for a global movement against Israeli apartheid. This would bring peace with justice to all people regardless of their religion or ethnicity. We believe this is good for the Israeli society in the long-term. We believe occupation and repression not only harms its intended victims but distorts and harms the occupiers. By challenging the system of repression we help reclaim our collective humanity.

My grandfather and his Jewish friend died years ago and their bodies long became part of the soil and air that surrounds us all in this land. Their molecules were incorporated in new life that has since arisen here. Children who are born here or in

refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and elsewhere are not born “Jewish” or “Muslim” or “Christian” or “Israeli” or “Palestinian.” They are born human babies. It is up to us to get them to see this common humanity and teach them to share this (still beautiful) land without walls, without ghettos, without racist laws. Working to achieve it together, we made thousands of friends over the years. The journey itself has been a rewarding experience. The Promised Land is not some distant area to be received by a subset of human being in the past or in the future. This is the promised land of peace with justice in the present and it is for all human beings who believe. We ask ALL to come be part of it. Ahlan wa sahlan.

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7. *An Israeli Narrative—Zionism: Past, Present and Hopes for the Future, David Rosen*

Names often acquire different meanings and associations that are very different from the intention of their originators. The term “Zionist” is seen in much if not most of the Arab world—and indeed in the wider Muslim world—as reflecting some kind of expansionist Jewish territorialism that is hostile to Arab and Muslim interests.

However for most of us who would describe ourselves as Zionist—and for the founders of the Zionist movement more than a century ago—nothing could be further from the truth.

The name Zion was originally an ancient Jewish synonym for Jerusalem. It appears more than a hundred and fifty times in the Hebrew Bible (the TaNaKh ) especially in the book of Psalms. Perhaps the most famous of these references is in Psalm 137 that gives expression to the distress of the Jewish exiles expelled from the land in the 6th century BCE by the Babylonians.

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. ... For there, our captors required of us to sing a song ... [saying] sing us a song of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its ability. If I do not remember you, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I do not place Jerusalem above my main joy.”

The bond between the Jewish people and the land of their origins was also maintained in the second exile that followed Roman occupation (and the destruction of the Temple in the years 70 C.E.)

In addition to turning to Jerusalem in prayer three times a day and praying for the return to the land and the city in these prayers and in grace after every meal, the whole Jewish calendar and its seasonal religious celebrations was orientated to the land of Zion. (Thus Jews who live in Australia for example, celebrate the Passover Spring festival in their autumn season.) Indeed the names Zion and Jerusalem were used as synonyms for the land as a whole.

While some Jews continued to live in the land and others returned to it over the ages out of religious ties, for most Jews it was simply the land of their dreams, of a future hope.

With the Enlightenment in Europe that ushered in a spirit of universal freedom (often rejecting the traditional attachments of religion) and with the gradual collapse of empires, the nineteenth century saw more and more nations seeking to take their destinies into their own hands. It was against this backdrop that a Jewish nationalist movement also emerged, seeking to give political form to the abovementioned age old bond between the people and the land; and because the name Zion served to personify the land as a whole, the movement took the name Zionism.

However this movement was predominantly secular, reflecting the zeitgeist of the enlightenment and nascent nationalisms. For most Zionists, the attachment of the Jewish people to the land of Palestine was of essential cultural and historic national importance; but religious ideas or practice were irrelevant for them. In fact it was a secular socialist world view that emerged as the dominant strand within the Zionist movement. Nevertheless, in addition to including other secular nationalists, the movement also included those who described themselves as Religious Zionists.

For many of these, Zionism was a Divinely inspired movement, not only fulfilling the promise in the Torah and the Prophets guaranteeing the people’s return to the land, but actually ushering in the Messianic era. Other Religious Zionists were more modest in their view and saw Zionism simply as the means to enable them to live a full and independent Jewish religious life in the land.

All strands of Zionism however, saw the movement as having an ethical purpose, not only in terms of the well-being of the Jewish people, but also in relation to others. They envisioned a Jewish state (in the sense that it would be a state of the Jewish people) that would at the same time guarantee franchise, dignity, and equality before the law for all its citizens, Jews and non-Jews alike (and this vision is expressed in Israel’s Declaration of Independence).

Accordingly the Zionist movement as a whole sought early on to achieve a *modus vivendi* both with the local Arab communities and with the Arab world. In 1919 the preeminent Arab leader, the Emir Faisal, co-signed a document with the president of the World Zionist Organization, Dr. Chaim Weizman (later to become the first president of the State of Israel),



welcoming the Zionist enterprise and expressing the hope that Jews and Arabs would work together to bring about a flourishing of the region for the benefit of all. The unfolding political developments meant that that dream was lost and conflict ensued with both Arab nationalism and nascent Palestinian nationalism.

This conflict has caused much bloodshed, suffering, displacement, and enmity. The consequences for Palestinian Arabs have been tragic—a source of much distress to us who are proud to be called Jews and Zionists, for the vision of Torah and the vision of Zionism is one in which not only Jews, but all people live in peace and dignity.

And the conflict has been painful and costly for Israeli society.

Generally, I believe that Israel can be proud of the fact that despite the conflict, it has guaranteed equality of franchise and equality before the law for all its citizens. However it would be disingenuous to deny that the conflict does also impinge on the freedoms and opportunities of Israeli Arabs citizens—a matter of ongoing political and legal debate in Israel's robust democracy.

Similarly, Israeli settlement policy, while motivated by a historic attachment as well as political, security, and in certain cases religious agendas, affects both Palestinian and Israeli society. This matter is not only one of fierce debate on the national level in Israel, but also within Religious Zionism itself.

That is why many Israelis like myself believe that a peaceful resolution of the conflict and the establishment of a democratic, non-militarized Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel is essential not only for Israel's security, and for the right of Palestinian national self-determination, but also for the health of Judaism, and of the principled enterprise of Zionism.

The primary debate in Israel is not whether a negotiated two-state solution is desirable but whether it is feasible. Recent and past experiences do not instill Israelis with much confidence in that regard; Palestinian efforts to circumvent talks and internationalize the conflict have only heightened Israeli skepticism. Tragically, the absence of a resolution to the conflict and the ongoing violence will continue to impinge deleteriously on the lives of both Israelis and Palestinians.

There is arguably no parallel in human history to the success of Zionism, in restoring the Jewish people to independent life in its ancestral homeland; just as there is no parallel to the degree of fidelity that an exiled people maintained in relation to its land for two millennia. However the future success of Zionism depends substantially on finding a way out of the present political stalemate, so that the land that contains two peoples, and which different faiths call holy, may be a place of flourishing for us all.

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#### 8. *An Israeli Narrative—At Home in Israel, S. Ilan Troen*

My name is Selwyn Ilan Troen. My mother named me Selwyn, an Anglicized version of the name of her mother who was murdered in a pogrom during World War I. Ilan is the Hebrew name I took for myself, a name that means tree, recalling the more than 250 million trees planted in Israel by the Jewish National Fund to reforest the land and halt desertification. Thirty-five years ago I built my home in Omer, a garden community outside Beer-Sheva in the northern Negev desert. Our six children as well as their children all live in Israel and are rooted in this land.

When we built our home, aside from a couple of tents inhabited by a Bedouin family, there were no houses or tents between our home and the old "Green Line," the armistice border that separated Israel and Jordan, about five miles to the north. We erected a chain link fence to keep our little ones in, and to prevent the Bedouins' goats from devouring what slowly became a garden, the first trees and green shrubs planted in the vast brown and ochre desert that surrounded us. In those early years, there were no sidewalks or streetlights and no other settlements beyond. We had an unhampered view of the Judean Hills, and at night a clear view of the uncountable bright stars and the Milky Way, much as Abraham and his earlier descendants must have seen them.

Today this area is dotted with Jewish settlements and planned Bedouin towns as well as Bedouin squatter encampments built without government approval. Today the Negev landscape reflects the diverse populations that inhabit it. In addition to Jewish cities and development towns it includes the green fields of Jewish kibbutzim and moshavim (cooperative farms), suburban garden settlements, Bedouin cities and towns like Rahat, Tel Sheva, and Laquiya, and numerous unrecognized/illegal villages and encampments, all with mosques and towering minarets for calling Muslims to prayer.

This filling in of landscapes with separate communities is consistent with the history of the country at-large over the last two centuries. In 1800 there were only 250,000 inhabitants in all of Palestine, the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean and between The Lebanon and the Sinai desert. By 1900 the population had grown twofold to 500,000. Today, following a century of extraordinary growth, the population is around 10 million, twenty times greater than just 100 years earlier. In the 20th century Israel/Palestine became one of the most dynamic regions on the face of the globe. This area that

until so recently was an underdeveloped backwater of the defunct Ottoman Empire now supports a population larger by a factor of at least three than was found at any time in the ancient period.

Jews played the key role in this growth and vitality. It is not mere coincidence that Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the university I joined in 1975, is a world leader in arid zone research. It is not a metaphor to assert that Jews have made the desert bloom, enabling all the inhabitants of the region, Jews and non-Jews, to live better and healthier lives. The university draws students from Palestine, Jordan, and Egypt, as well as China and Africa, where rampant desertification is devastating the environment and threatening to decimate the population with drought and famine. The commitment to this field of research and teaching manifests the biblical injunction and Zionist intent to be a light unto the nations.

Founded by the state with the generous assistance of Diaspora Jewry, the university serves a diverse population of students, including immigrants and the children of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and North Africa, Israeli Arabs and Palestinians, and both male and female Bedouin students who are actively recruited and supported in their studies. Currently, chairs of such departments as Social Work and Computer Science are Arabs who received part of their education at the university. The university-affiliated hospital, the Soroka Medical Center, the only hospital in the area, similarly serves the medical needs of close to 750,000 of this very diverse Negev population. A majority of the 13,000 babies born each year at Soroka are Bedouins. It isn't by chance that the first Bedouin woman to join the faculty of an Israeli medical school trained at the Ben-Gurion University Medical School and now teaches there. These are examples of a national Jewish and Zionist commitment that I take personal pride in. They do not pretend that Israel has created a perfect social fabric. They do demonstrate that education to further the pursuit of social justice is an ongoing moral and ethical commitment in what has been a very complex and often hard context.

In my private life, I also have deep personal satisfaction that diverse paths are available in education. Two of our grandchildren attend a Keshet school where religious and secular Jews learn together in a context that highlights shared values. Four are enrolled in the more liberal end of Orthodox Jewish education. Several attend a bilingual Jewish/Arab school where classes are taught jointly by two teachers, Jewish/Hebrew and Muslim or Christian/Arabic. The parents and staff are committed to learning about each other's cultures, concerns, and fears, and spend long and intense hours, within their own group and with "the others," negotiating what their children will learn about the more difficult parts of this shared past in a curriculum that includes the Naqba along with Israel Independence Day and Passover together with Ramadan and Easter. Our oldest granddaughter, a third-year student in Social Work at Sapir College, where rockets fired from Gaza killed a student just a few years ago, is currently recruiting Palestinian and Jewish youth for an extracurricular project she's undertaken.

Lest it appear I am painting a deliberately rosy picture, let me emphasize that I am painfully aware that the pluralistic and tolerant intimacy and amity I am describing are too rare in Israel/Palestine. Israel struggles with an immense number of ethical and moral questions that arise from the conflicting demands of a very diverse population that includes recent Jewish immigrants, Palestinian Arabs, Druze, Bedouin, Christian, and Circassian minorities, as well as increasingly significant numbers of African refugees who cross our borders legally and illegally.

But none of our failures justifies or supports the all too frequent portrait drawn to demonize Israel and the Zionist endeavor. It is this point that I feel compelled to address head on. It is my perspective on rectifying what I see as a misinformed and often malicious campaign to delegitimize the Jewish state that I want to share.

We live in a conflicted land where distance is geographical and social. We do have mixed Jewish/Arab cities and towns like Haifa and mixed Muslim/Christian Arab ones like Nazareth. Nevertheless, most Israelis tend to be separated from one another even within the same city or village by such internal bonds as family, clan, place of origin, religious custom, and cultural tradition. This is the norm in our part of the world, reflected in, and by no means an imposition of the Zionist state. It is an ongoing and publically addressed challenge to Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state to maintain a basis for unity and harmony that simultaneously allows for political and ideological diversity and safeguards social justice for individuals and groups in this contentious and multifaceted polity.

Vociferous critics, whether they are residents or observers, often fail to provide useful insight because they do not grasp and grapple with the very complexity of the context. They seem satisfied to condemn Israel with infuriating smugness without acknowledging and confronting the reality of the "other."

To rephrase a truism that reflects this "other" reality as I see it: Jews are the majority in Israel but in important respects, they view themselves as a minority. Arabs in Israel are a minority but in significant ways, they act as if they are the majority.

Israeli Jews are uneasy and lack security, their military and economic power notwithstanding. For one thing, no other state in our tumultuous world, however iniquitous, is denied repeatedly in vehement public attacks its right to exist. The repeated assaults in the UN and other international forums cause continual distress. It is no secret that we are surrounded by Arab and Iranian Muslim states. It is less well-known and not often publically acknowledged that many of these reject the reality or possibility of Jewish independence and sovereignty, at best accepting the traditional view that Jews must remain in their proscribed place as "dhimmis"—a second-class community. Yet simultaneously, the Palestinian Arab minority that constitutes only 20 percent of the population of Israel proper makes extraordinary demands. In their recent Future Vision docu-

ment (2006) and elsewhere, a significant part of the Palestinian intellectual leadership protest the legitimacy of Israel and its Jewish identity and claim forms of autonomy that are granted nowhere else, not even in democratic Europe.

Neutering Israel into a “state of all its citizens,” has long been recognized as unfeasible. The British acknowledged this in concluding Palestine must be partitioned into Jewish and Arab states in the Peel Commission Report of 1937, later the basis for the UN partition plan of 1947 and for a host of international position papers through the present. Why should we still have to defend the idea that Jews are entitled to sovereignty and independence?

The League of Nations granted Britain a Mandate over Palestine to enable Jews to “reconstitute” themselves [the term used in the document] as a modern people with responsibility for a polity of their homeland. This is how Zionists understood themselves: we have “re-turned,” “re-claimed,” and “re-built” ourselves and the land.

The “re” is crucial: it emphasizes the notion of “again.” International and legal institutions acknowledged that we Jews are a historic people with deep and longstanding ties to the land. The current discourse brands us as colonial-settlers, interlopers with no prior claim and no rights to the land. It asserts that the land belongs to others. I resent the charge and reject the claim that we are a colonial-settler society. The four generations of my family currently living in Israel are all deeply rooted there. The fact that some family members trace their roots back 500 years in the Land of Israel, that some of our children were born here and others were not, does not entitle them to “belong more” than recent arrivals. All our individual and collective identities are real and inseparable from this land.

We live in Hebrew. Zionism revitalized this language spoken and written in the land in the past, kept alive over two thousand years, and recovered for modern use. Hebrew is the language of sacred texts and their commentaries composed by long-deceased Jews. It is also the authentic and living language in which a vigorous national life is conducted with advanced science, great literature, slang, and popular songs. It is the language in which I converse, write, and dream.

This same process of recovery is expressed in naming the land. European colonizers established New England, New Amsterdam, and New Orleans. In Israel there is no *New* Berlin, Vienna, Warsaw, Lodz, or Odessa. Even our street names resonate with biblical associations and with those who dreamed of the return and worked for it.

Contemporary critics might enhance the discourse if, like those engaged in the Peel Report and in earlier UN discussions over Palestine, they did not presume to judge who was right and who was wrong. Both sides in this conflict are committed to their beliefs and love the land. Giving thoughtful, attentive, and sympathetic reception to the narratives of each side without assigning virtue or truth to either, might make it possible to reach a pragmatic compromise.

I personally deplore the steady growth of Israeli occupation that threatens the desired outcome, a final and lasting peace based on partition of the land into two states for two peoples. But I do not see the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in a vacuum.

Israeli settlers were rightly compelled by government decision to leave flourishing settlements they had built in the Gaza strip, but this unilateral withdrawal did not result in peaceful coexistence. The development town of Sderot and other Israeli cities, towns and agricultural settlements within range of rockets and missiles have been and continue to be subject to repeated missile attacks. On too many occasions, and as recently as November 2011, a siren warned my family that we had forty-five seconds to get adults and children into our home bomb shelter. These attacks are generally ignored in the media since they are local, not massive. But I assure you they take a toll. As I pointed out above, we feel uneasy. Missiles were rained on the Galilee in the aftermath of withdrawal from Lebanon. Missiles fell on Haifa. We do not see an end to this; we are promised, in fact, that the attacks will continue.

In this same vein, I do not like the separation barriers between Israel and the West Bank in the central part of the country but these are not “apartheid” walls. They provide some security, a barrier to terrorists, and have been effective. Like many observers, I too see hope in the “Arab spring.” But I am acutely aware there are many “Arab streets” and no one knows which will prevail.

So for me, this is a core issue: I want and need you to recognize the legitimacy of my existence and purpose in the Promised Land. It is disturbing to have my belonging rejected and my country viewed as a pariah-state. The threats are physical but also made through wrongly critical and often sanctimonious discourse. I believe they are often founded on distorted history, couched in misapplied theoretical, legal, and moral principles, and at times offered in theological undertones.

Muslims freely imagine the night ride of Mohammed on the winged horse el-Burak to the *masjid al-aqsa* on Jerusalem’s holy mountain; Christians walk in the footsteps of Jesus and offer devotions at Gethsemane or at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Why is the authenticity and validity of the connection of Jews to the land open to question?

For the first time in history fundamentalist Muslims have claimed all of Palestine as a Waqf in which Jews are proscribed and under threat. Even secular and moderate Palestinians have denied the connection of Jews to Jerusalem and have yet to affirm the legitimacy of the Jewish presence even if they accept the need for pragmatic compromise. While some Christian fundamentalists support Israel, anticipating the role Israel may play in an awesome Christian drama, other Christians have refused or been reluctant to offer Israel a place in history. With more than a whiff of Supersessionism, some still reject the

reality of an active Jewish presence in the modern world. The Vatican opposed the creation of a Jewish state and recognized it only in 1993, or after the Oslo Accords. Liberation theologians supplant the Hebrews with the Palestinians in an appropriation of the Exodus story.

My impression is that the voice of Israel is rarely heard within Christian churches. Two years ago I was apparently among the first Israeli Jews ever invited to address a committee of the Synod of the United Churches of Christ on the issue of BDS. One may inquire how often church movements engage in dialogue with moderate Israelis as they consider yet another resolution criticizing Israel and call on opposition to the Jewish state through one means or another.

My own work is in the field of Israel Studies. I try to sensitize my students to the complexity of the issues. I offer neither templates nor advocacy. Rather I attempt to bring multiple perspectives. My students can only learn if they address contradictory and competing narratives. This is no mere relativism. Human actions must be subject to scrutiny and moral judgment. Yet simplistic moralizing distorts truth and inhibits appreciation for the complexities of the conflict.

Another way of expressing this is that, while in geometry parallel lines do not meet, apparently parallel narratives in human affairs are often intricately interwoven. Examining them together is unlikely to produce a unitary and agreed replacement. Rather, genuine attention to the other may engender mutual respect and understanding.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introduction: The following is an annotated bibliography compiled by the Middle East Monitoring Group as mandated by the 219th General Assembly (2010) to serve as a resource for individuals and congregations. The intent was not to compile a list that conformed to current PC(USA) positions, but rather provide some of the more important works from a breadth of perspectives for those who wish to engage in further study of this complicated and multifaceted issue.

### 1. *Historical Perspective*

Armstrong, Karen. *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths*. New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.

Venerated by three faiths, torn by conflict, conquered, and rebuilt again and again, Jerusalem a sacred city that has endured terrible tragedy. Armstrong traces the history of how Jews, Christians, and Muslims have all laid claim to Jerusalem as their holy place, and how three radically different concepts of holiness have shaped and scarred the city for thousands of years.

Asali, K. J., ed. *Jerusalem in History*. New York, N.Y.: Olive Branch Press, 2000.

Scholars from seven countries explore the historical treatment of Jerusalem and its multi-religious tradition. The book ranges from the fourth century B.C.E. to the present, covering Jewish, Muslim, and, to a lesser extent, Christian heritage. The essays present a balanced picture, helping to correct often distorted images of the city presented over the last forty years.

Avineri, Schlomo. *The Making of Modern Zionism: intellectual origins of the Jewish state*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

A leading Israeli political philosopher for decades, Avineri traces the rise of the Zionist idea from its origins in the 19th century to the present day. He argues that Zionism was not primarily a religious response to persecution, a common view, but rather a complex and diverse conglomeration of ideas, motives, and hopes. Considered a modern classic on the subject.

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1989 & 2009.

This is a definitive study of the events, secret diplomacy, and politics during WWI by the European powers in the Middle Eastern theatre. Particular attention is paid to the various often-contradictory policies and promises made by the British to both Arab and Jewish factions and the post war carving up of the Ottoman Empire.

Khalidi, Walid, ed. *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948*. Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996.

The culmination of nearly six years of research by more than thirty participants, this authoritative reference work describes in detail the more than 400 Palestinian villages that were destroyed or depopulated during the 1948 war. The body of the text is devoted to describing the villages before 1948, summarizing their history from a wide variety of Arab and Western sources and a description of the current status of the sites, including post-1948 Israeli settlements established on confiscated village lands.

Laquer, Walter and Barry Rubin, eds. *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict*. New York, N.Y.: Penguin Group, 2001.

This work covers the spectrum of the Israel-Arab conflict from the earliest days, through the wars and peacemaking efforts, up to the Israel-PLO and Israel-Jordan peace accords. It includes speeches, letters, articles, and reports dealing with all the major interests in the area from relevant political parties and world leaders.

Mattar, Philip, ed. *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

This is a collection of more than fifty scholarly and historical perspectives to help shed light on the historical and contemporary issues affecting the Palestinian people. Topics covered include politics, culture, society, history, economics, and geography.

Montefiore, Simon Sebag. *Jerusalem-The Biography*. New York: Alfred A Knoff, 2011.

Noted British historian and international bestseller Simon Sebag Montefiore's comprehensive and balanced study traces the history of the city from its prehistoric inhabitants to its emergence as the religious center for the three major monotheistic religions. Particular attention is paid to the dichotomy between the "earthly" and the "heavenly" cities from the perspectives of pilgrims, conquerors, and its diverse citizens throughout the ages.

Morris, Benny. *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881–2001*. New York: Vintage Books, 2001

Morris provides an inclusive history of the conflict, detailing relations between Israel and the Arabs since the beginning of the modern Zionist movement in the late-19th century. Relying on a vast array of Hebrew, Arabic, and English sources, he digs beneath politics and diplomacy to get at the broader social and cultural history of Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews.

Oren, Michael. *Faith Power, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007

A fascinating study that traces the history of America's fascination and involvement in the Middle East, that looks at the interplay between religion, millennialism, politics and U.S. foreign policy. Oren is an historian and the current Israeli Ambassador to the United States.

Pappe, Ilan. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. London: Oneworld, 2007

This book revisits the formative period of the State of Israel. Pappé argues that the claim about the Palestinian population leaving of its own accord during the War of Independence is myth and offers archival evidence to demonstrate that a central plank in Israel's founding ideology was the forcible removal of the indigenous population. This book makes a plea to acknowledge the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948 as the root cause of the ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict.

Qumsiyeh, Mazin B. *Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment*. London: Pluto Press, 2011.

Dr. Qumsiyeh synthesizes data from hundreds of original sources to provide the most comprehensive study of nonviolent civil resistance in Palestine. The book contains hundreds of stories of the heroic and highly innovative methods of resistance employed by the Palestinians over more than 100 years, analyzing the successes, failures, missed opportunities, and challenges facing ordinary Palestinians. This is the only book to critically and comparatively study the uprisings of 1920–21, 1929, 1936–39, 1970s, 1987–1991, and 2000–2006.

Simha Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians: 1917–1947*. London: Croom Helm, 1979

Simha Flapan (1911–1987) was an [Israeli](#) historian and politician. He served as the national secretary of the [left Zionist Mapam](#) party, and the director of its [Arab](#) Affairs department from 1959 to the mid 1970s; he also edited *New Outlook* magazine—a non-party monthly that promoted Arab-Jewish rapprochement.

## 2. Theological

Ateek, Naim. *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008

In this book Ateek outlines a vision that is threefold: the unity of all Palestinian Christians, dialogue between Christian and Muslim Palestinians, and peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Ateek, who is an Episcopalian priest and an Arab citizen of Israel, presents a critical voice to this discussion through his passion for justice and his biblical and theological perspective.

Burge, Gary. *Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to "Holy Land" Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.

This book describes first-century Jewish and Christian beliefs about the land of Israel and surveys New Testament passages that directly address the question of land and faith. It also looks at present-day tensions surrounding "territorial religion" in the modern Middle East, helping contemporary Christians develop a Christian theology of the land. Gary M. Burge is professor of New Testament at Wheaton College in Illinois.

Hoffman, Lawrence A. ed. *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986.

A collection of essays from a group of scholars that touches on various themes of Jewish theology regarding the Land of Israel. Of particular importance is the essay, "The Biblical Concept of the Land of Israel: cornerstone of the covenant between God and Israel," by Harry Orlinsky, which provides a broad examination of this crucial theme.

Korn, Eugene. *The Jewish Connection to Israel, the Promised Land: A Brief Introduction for Christians*. Woodstock, Vt.: Jewish Lights, 2008.

A historical review of Jewish theological commitments to the Land, this thorough book is written by a rabbi prominent in the field of Jewish-Christian relations. Korn moves from a deep examination of Scripture to the meaning of covenant and Jewish understandings of the modern State of Israel.

Lux, Richard C. *The Jewish People, the Holy Land, and the State of Israel*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2010.

A scholarly Roman Catholic reappraisal of Jewish theologies of land and the state of Israel as analogous to Christian sacramental thought. He traces both the supercessionist tendencies of many Christian theologies prior to World War II and reviews different Christian theologies regarding the Jews through a covenantal lens, examines Christian attachment to the Holy Land, and wrestles with the theological significance of the modern State of Israel.

March, Eugene W. *God's Land on Loan-Israel, Palestine, and the World*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007.

This book presents a biblical theology of land that interweaves the contemporary Israeli and Palestinian conflict over territory with theological reflection on the biblical claim that God owns all land and that humans are never more than momentary caretakers. The book is structured around a dual focus on the past of the Bible and the contemporary history of war in the Middle East. It provides a clear summary of the evolution of treaties, wars, and negotiations between the two parties in the past sixty years. It also has many helpful many maps that bring the geopolitical developments into clear light.

Merali, Arzu and Javad Sharbaf, eds. *Towards a New Liberation Theology: Reflections on Palestine*. Islamic Human Rights Commission, 2009.

This book through different articles explores the potential that religion has in resolving conflicts that have been irresolvable through secular initiatives. The contents of this volume reflect contributors' responses to the conference title and range from polemical, jurisprudential, sociological, through to esoteric. Based on experiences in the Holy Land and beyond, including Lebanon, Ireland, Central and South America, and South Africa, this book articulates the religious challenge to oppression and injustice in the context of the Palestinian struggle for justice.

Wilken, Robert. *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1992.

As the title indicates, this book focuses on the Christian relationship to historic Israel/Palestine and the theological understanding of it. He traces the origins and development of the Christian concept of "Holy Land," paying particular attention to the key period of the fourth through the seventh century, and considers how Jews have reacted to those developments.

### 3. *Biographical/Memoir*

Baltzer, Anna. *Witness in Palestine: A Jewish American Woman in the Occupied Territories*. Paradigm Publishers, 2007

Anna Baltzer is a Jewish American Columbia graduate, former Fulbright scholar, granddaughter of Holocaust refugees, and an activist for Palestinian human rights. *Witness in Palestine* follows Baltzer's eight months of working with the International Women's Peace Service in the West Bank, documenting human rights abuses and supporting Palestinian-led nonviolent resistance.

Ben-Ami, Shlomo. *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: the Israeli-Arab tragedy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Ben-Ami is a former foreign minister of Israel and played a major role in the 2000 Camp David peace talks as well as many other negotiations. As such, he is able to give a firsthand account of many of the most important events and figures in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict of the last few decades, and provides his own take on the major historical issues from Israel's independence (such as the 1967 war and its impact) to the present day.

Braverman, Mark. *Fatal Embrace*. Austin, Tex.: Synergy Books, 2010

Trained in clinical psychology and crisis management, Mark Braverman devoted his professional career to working with groups and individuals undergoing traumatic stress. Tracing his own journey as a Jew struggling with the difficult realities of modern Israel, he shows how the Jewish quest for safety and empowerment and the Christian endeavor to atone for centuries of anti-Semitism have united to suppress the conversations needed to bring peace.

Chacham, Ronit. *Breaking Ranks: Refusing to Serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. New York: Other Press, 2003.

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Elias Chacour is the archbishop of [Akko](#), [Haifa](#), [Nazareth](#), and All [Galilee](#) of the [Melkite Greek Catholic Church](#). Noted for his efforts to promote reconciliation between [Arabs](#) and [Israelis](#), he is the author of two books about the experience of [Palestinian people](#) living in present-day [Israel](#).

Gordis, Daniel. *If a place can make you cry*. New York: Crown, 2002

In 1998, Gordis and his family went to Israel on what he thought was a one-year sabbatical from his congregation in Los Angeles. Once in Israel, though, they decided they needed to move there permanently. This book is a unique set of reflections based on emails and articles that Rabbi Gordis sent to friends in the United States over time, describing how and why his family made their home in Israel, what life was like as the Second Intifada broke out, and how his own understandings of both Israel and the dynamics of the conflict evolved during this time.

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A Palestinian medical doctor and founder of the Daughters of Life Foundation, Abuelaish describes his pain and grief at the loss of three daughters in the January 2009 incursion into Gaza when they were killed by an Israeli tank shell. It is a redemptive story describing how this horrific tragedy strengthened his resolve to act for the whole of humanity.

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A spiritual memoir of grief, faith, and healing by an American-born Israeli whose thirteen-year-old son was murdered in 2001 near their home in the West Bank. Hauntingly beautiful and unflinchingly honest, Mandell invites the reader into her journey of loss and hope.

Peled, Miko. *The General's Son*. Charlottesville, Va.: Just World Books, June, 2012

In this memoir Miko Peled chronicles his journey as the son and grandson of renowned Israeli leaders and pioneers who, in his own life, has become committed to building a single democratic state in Israel/Palestine in which Palestinians and Israelis will all enjoy full equality. Miko was born in Jerusalem in 1961 into a well-known Zionist family. His grandfather, Dr. Avraham Katsnelson was a Zionist leader and signer on the Israeli Declaration of Independence. His father, Matti Peled was a young officer in the war of 1948 and a general in the war of 1967 when Israel took control of the West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights, and the Sinai.

Peres, Shimon. *Ben-Gurion: A Political Life*. New York: Schocken, 2011.

Written by a Nobel Peace Prize winner, the current president of Israel, and a protégé of ben-Gurion himself, this book examines the dominant figure of the Zionist movement in British Mandate Palestine who became the first prime minister of the independent State of Israel and exerted massive influence over the creation and development of the state.

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Jean Zaru is a longtime activist and Quaker leader from Ramallah. In this book, she shares her convictions about Christian nonviolence in the context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Zaru presents an alternative vision for peace and justice through a theology of nonviolence.

#### 4. Contemporary Issues

Abunimah, Ali. *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.

Citing decades of impasse in negotiating an equitable two state solution, Ali Abunimah contends that Israeli’s and Palestinians are so intertwined geographically and economically that separation cannot lead to the security Israelis need or the rights Palestinians must have. Modeling his approach on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Belfast Agreement, he attempts to envision a single federated state that protects both Jewish and Palestinian interests.

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Omar Barghouti is an independent Palestinian commentator and human rights activist. He holds a graduate degree from Columbia University and another from Tel Aviv University. Barghouti’s book argues for a rights-based Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign for the purposes of ending Israel’s occupation of Palestine.

Ben-Ami, Jeremy. *A New Voice for Israel: Fighting for the Survival of the Jewish Nation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Ben-Ami is the founding director of J Street, the new “pro-Israel, pro-peace” Jewish advocacy organization. While his family helped found Tel Aviv, Ben-Ami believes that the traditional Jewish defense of Israel is problematic and that a new conversation needs to take place that combines an affirmation of Israel’s future with letting go of some of the myths used to support that affirmation in the past. A crucial resource for understanding some of the dynamics of the debate among mainstream American Jews over the best way to support Israel.

Benvenisti, Meron. *Intimate Enemies: Jews and Arabs in a Shared Land*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1995.

Benvenisti, former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, raises the possibility of a confederation of Israel/Palestine, the only solution that he feels will bring lasting peace. He argues that the seven million people in the territory between Jordan and the Mediterranean are mutually dependent regarding all spheres of human activity. Each side must accept the realities that two national entities live within one geopolitical entity and that their conflict will not be resolved by population transfers or land partition

Burg, Avraham. *The Holocaust Is Over; We Must Rise From its Ashes*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Burg argues that the Jewish nation has been traumatized by its memories of Hitler and the Holocaust and has lost the ability to trust itself, its neighbors, or the world around it. He contends that this is one of the causes for the growing nationalism and violence that are plaguing Israeli society and reverberating through Jewish communities worldwide. Burg uses his own family history—his parents were Holocaust survivors—to inform his innovative views on what the Jewish people need to do to move on and eventually live in peace with their Arab neighbors and feel comfortable in world at large. Avraham Burg is the former speaker of the Knesset in Israel (1999–2003). He has been active in politics as a leader in the Labor Party and the One Israel party.

Goodman, Hirsh. *The Anatomy of Israel's Survival*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2011.

Written by an Israeli journalist and security analyst, Goodman reviews the real and perceived threats to Israel's existence beyond its borders, but also argues that these threats have enabled Israel to ignore its pressing threats from within, particularly the problem of Israel's ability to maintain its democratic character and Jewish identity while continuing to maintain control over the Palestinian Territories captured in 1967. Goodman argues that these internal issues are the most dangerous current threats to Israel, even the rise of Iran.

Frankel, Jonathan and Ezra Mendelsohn, eds. *The Protestant-Jewish Conundrum. Studies in Contemporary Jewry*. Vol. XXIV. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

This volume offers a wide range of articles from both Jewish and Christian scholars exploring an assortment of issues that have risen in the modern period between Judaism and different Protestant groups. Included are articles on WCC relation with Judaism; Cooperation between Christian and Jewish millennial groups; Presbyterian-Jewish relations; American evangelicals and the state of Israel.

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Gorenberg provides a provocative critically acclaimed analysis of the contemporary state of Israel in the aftermath of the Six Day War. He traces how the rise of influence from the religious right and the consequences of the occupation have created the current crisis that threatens the very principles of the Israeli democracy.

Horovitz, David. *Still Life with Bombers: Israel in the Age of Terrorism*. New York: Knopf, 2004.

Horovitz takes the reader into the daily experience of violence experienced during the Second Intifada by both sides, both in actual attacks and in the constant tension of expecting the next one. An invaluable insight into the grim effectiveness and impact of violence on prospects for peace and the ability to believe that the other side would be willing to live in peace.

Small, Joseph D. and Gil Rosenthal, eds. *Let Us Reason Together: Christians and Jews in Conversation*. Louisville: Witherspoon Press, 2010.

Co-written by the former director of the Office of Theology, Worship, and Education in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the executive director of the National Council of Synagogues, this book is the fruits of a sustained conversation in 2005 between the two groups on various issues and differences between Judaism and Christianity.

Smith, Jane I. *Muslims, Christians, and the Challenge of Interfaith Dialogue*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

The author brings many years of scholarship and experience in the area of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim dialogue. The great portion of the book is taken up with three general topics: models of Christian-Muslim dialogue in the United States, what can go wrong in the exercise of dialogue, and Christian and Muslim perspectives on religious pluralism. Smith reviews the history and legacy of engagement between Christians and Muslims.

Raheb, Mitri. ed. *The Invention of History: A Century of Interplay between Theology and Politics in Palestine*. Jerusalem: Diyar Publisher, 2011

This book is a collection of addresses from "The Invention of History" conference held in Bethlehem, Palestine, in 2009. It analyzes major theological trends and shifts of the twentieth century in several contexts and focuses on the interplay between theology and politics regarding Israel and Palestine. The Reverend Dr. Mitri Raheb is the pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem and is the president of the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Edward Said. *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After*. New York: Vintage Books, 2001.

The late Edward W. Said was University Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. In fifty essays (most of which were originally published in the *Cairo Ahram Weekly* and London's *al-Hayat*), Palestinian writer and Columbia University literary scholar Said offers a bleak view of the Middle East peace process since Oslo. Deeply concerned with the Palestinian people, Said argues that peace can exist only if equality and respect exist.

Unger, Peter C. "The Inevitable Two-State Solution," *World Policy Journal*. Summer 2002.

The author, a member of the *New York Times* editorial board and adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, argues that by the middle of the 21st century, there will be an uneasy peace established between Israelis and Palestinians, manifested through the creation of an independent state of Palestine alongside Israel. Unger sketches the possibilities and problems inherent in other potential solutions, acknowledges the challenges to achieving a two-state solution, and then makes a case for why a two-state solution will eventually be accepted by both sides as the only acceptable resolution to the conflict.

Wagner, Donald E. *Dying in the Land of Promise*. London: Melisende, 2001

The history of Palestinian Christianity is tragic and inspiring, calling for a response to a community that is endangered in the "land of promise," given the present rates of emigration, economic blight, and an all too delayed resolution to the political conflict in the Holy Land today. With a just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Wagner envisions Palestinian Christians playing a pivotal role in building bridges of reconciliation. With the help of Western Christians, these Palestinians might well see a different future whenever peace follows justice.



5. *Filmography & Literature*

Susan AlbuHawa: *Mornings in Jenin*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2010

The daughter of Palestinian refugees of the [1967 War](#), Susan AlbuHawa grew up in Kuwait, Jordan, occupied East Jerusalem, and the United States. In this novel, she tells the story of the Abulhejas who are forcibly removed to the Jenin refugee camp. This is the Palestinian story told through four generations of a single family.

Sandy Tolan: *The Lemon Tree*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006

Tolan is a teacher and radio documentary producer. The *Washington Post* selected this book among its top nonfiction titles for 2006. He has reported from more than thirty countries, especially in the Middle East, Latin America, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe. This novel is the story of Dalia, an Israeli college student, and Bashir, a Palestinian, who began a rare friendship, forged in the aftermath of war and tested over the next thirty-five years in ways that neither could imagine on that summer day in 1967. Based on extensive research, Tolan brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict down to its most human level, suggesting that even amid the bleakest political realities there exist stories of hope and reconciliation.

*Paradise Now*. 2005 Augustus Film, produced by: Warner Brothers

Golden Globe award winning film (also an Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film) that tells the story of Said and Khaled, two young Palestinians who plan a suicide mission into Tel Aviv. It ultimately tells of two different outcomes, laying bare both the humanity and horror of acts that are impossible to understand, arising from a context in which there are no easy answers.

*2048*—a film by Yaron Kaftori (Israel 2010)

A young cinematographer discovers that his grandfather, who was a documentary filmmaker, made a film about Israel's 60th Independence Day. However Israel no longer exists and its former citizens are scattered all over the globe, living as modern day refugees. After watching his grandfather's tapes and in an effort to understand what went wrong, the young man travels the world interviewing former Israelis who, each from his own perspective, tells the story of what happened during the last forty years.

*Beaufort* (2007) by Joseph Cedar

Set as the last Israeli soldiers are withdrawing from Lebanon in 2000, it explores the feelings, fears, and moral dilemmas posed by the eighteen-year war and occupation in Southern Lebanon. Based on [Ron Leshem's](#) novel, [If There's a Heaven](#), and nominated for an Academy Award.

*Dolphin Boy* (2011) by Dani Menkin and Yonatan Nir.

Provides a basis for questions about societies within Israel, trauma, psychology.

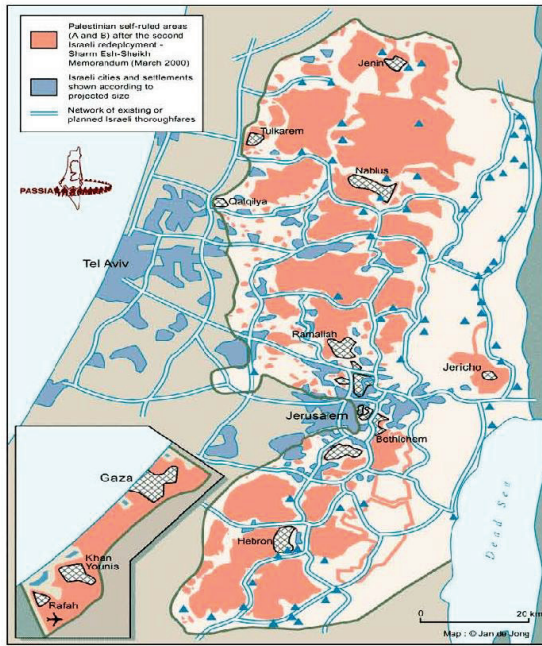
*Precious Life* (2010) by Shlomi Eldar

With the help of a prominent Israeli journalist, *Precious Life* chronicles the struggle of an Israeli pediatrician and a Palestinian mother to get treatment for her baby, who suffers from an incurable genetic disease.

*Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam* (2005) by Auteur Productions.

This production thoughtfully examines the religious beliefs and practices shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims to illustrate how many individuals in the Abrahamic faith communities are dealing with historical conflicts yet remain dedicated to facilitating understanding and respect. *Three Faiths, One God* captures a broad range of voices and ideas of ordinary people and respected scholars in the inter-faith field. The program contrasts the religious practices of the three faiths, including the rituals of fasting and marriage.

## Reference Maps

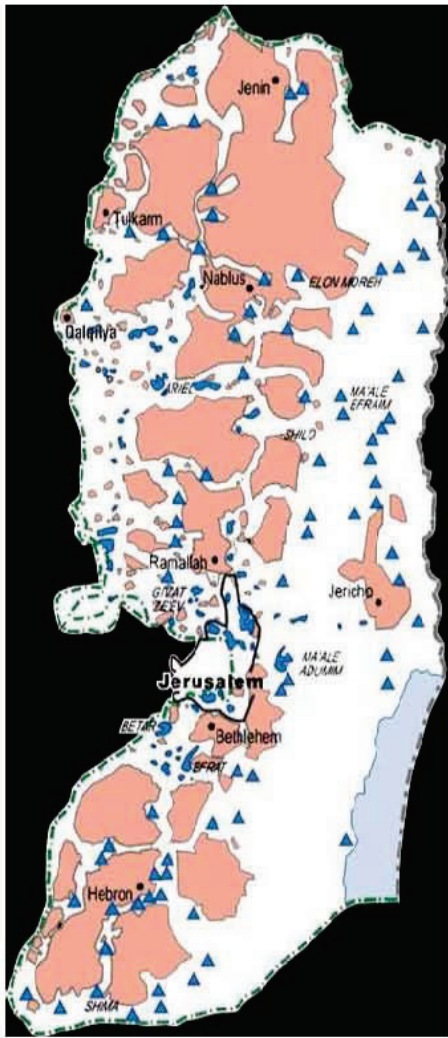


Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

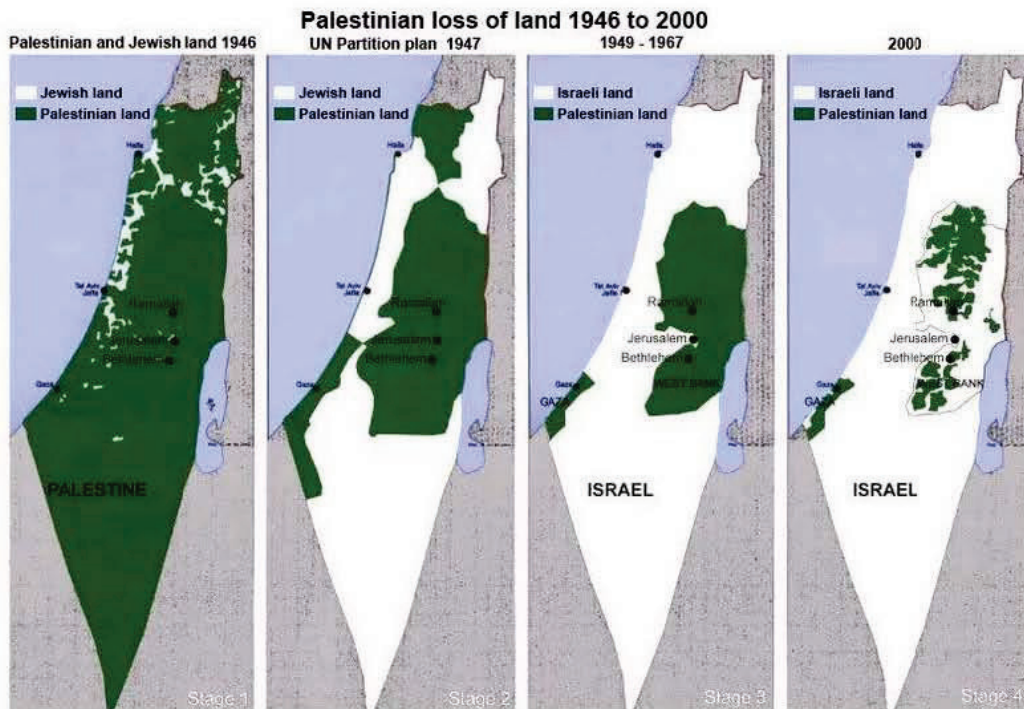
**Map 1: Bypass roads** linking settlement colonies in the West Bank with Israel allow unrestricted settler movement but allow limited or no access to Palestinians. Triangles are major Israeli settlement colonies.



**Map 2: The Separation Wall** (blue line). None of the Palestinian West Bank is part of Israel under international law. However, the separation wall is not on the West Bank's border, but meanders deeply into Palestinian territory and puts large swaths of the West Bank on the "Israel side" of the Wall.



**Map 3: Encircled enclaves** (reserves or ghettos) confine Palestinians into 64 isolated and totally surrounded canton-like reserves in the West Bank. The triangles are major Israeli settlement colonies.



**Map 4: Palestinian Loss of Land 1946-2010**  
The green area shows land under Palestinian control



GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

COMPASSION, PEACE AND JUSTICE

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**VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY**

April 19, 2011

Mr. Douglas R. Oberhelman  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Caterpillar, Inc.  
100 NE Adams Street  
Peoria, IL 61629-1430

Dear Mr. Oberhelman:

Greetings to you. My name is Brian Ellison, I'm a pastor of a Presbyterian church in the Kansas City area. I've served for twelve years here and during that time have also served on a variety of committees at the national level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). I am serving currently as chair of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), and I am a director of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

As you are probably aware, at the direction of our General Assembly, our committee has been working for the past seven years with several companies in whom we invest, including Caterpillar, Inc., to address a number of concerns about the ways those companies are profiting from certain pursuits in Israel and Palestine that we believe have contributed, directly or indirectly, to suffering in that troubled region. The conversations between CAT and our committee have not always been productive. Indeed, our representatives and predecessors—yours and mine—have made very little progress in finding common ground or achieving even modest agreement on ways the company's otherwise positive commitments to human rights could be lived out in this part of the world. The negative outcomes of past attempts at conversation (or, sometimes, the absence of conversation) have adversely affected both the company and the church, including the thousands of Presbyterians in the Peoria area whose families and congregations include Caterpillar employees at every level of the company.

I would like for us to try to change that, and I'm asking you for the opportunity to meet. I'd like to meet with you personally or with representatives at a high enough level of the company who have the ability to speak with authority on matters of company policy and, potentially, help bring about real change. Our committee is willing to have this conversation with a new openness to the company's efforts when they are undertaken sincerely and forthrightly.

This is not to diminish the depth or seriousness of our concerns. As you may know, last summer's General Assembly (our church's highest governing body) committed to continued dialogue with Caterpillar (rather than the divestment that some regional bodies within the church were calling for), but also denounced the company's "continued profit-making from non-peaceful uses of a number of its products." The Assembly called upon the company "to carefully

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Letter to Mr. Douglas R. Oberhelman  
April 19, 2011  
Page Two

review its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take affirmative steps to end its complicity in the violation of human rights." The Assembly's statement also lifted up Caterpillar's many examples of positive leadership in the community, state and nation, noting its donation of resources and equipment and its deserved recognition in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. The statement continued, "But these positive acts do not excuse the severity of the particular injustice that is being done to the Palestinian people through the use, in part, of certain Caterpillar products and from which Caterpillar profits directly or indirectly."

This contrast between, on the one hand, Caterpillar's stated commitments and historic record, and on the other, its present involvement in the region, is what we hope to discuss. And we hope to do so in a positive and productive way. Can we speak soon? Please feel free to contact me by telephone at 816-741-1641 or by email ([PTSBrian@aol.com](mailto:PTSBrian@aol.com)). I will make myself available (along with other staff and elected representatives from the PCUSA) to travel to Peoria, to Chicago (as in the past) or some other location as needed.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to be in dialogue, and I look forward to moving forward in this conversation.

Blessings,



The Rev. Brian D. Ellison  
Chair, Mission Responsibility Through Investment  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Cc: The Rev. Grady Parsons,  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Rev. Bill Somplatsky-Jarman,  
Staff, Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Rev. Sue Krummel,  
Executive Presbyter, Great Rivers Presbytery



## Item 16-01

[The assembly approved Item 16-01. See p. 48.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) confirm the following named individuals to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Board of Directors:

### Proposed Nominees:

#### Class of 2016

1.	Stephen Bacon	WMC	65+	Greater Atlanta	SA	AL	REN
2.	Catesby Woodford	WME	56–65	Transylvania	LW	AL	REN
3.	Conrad Rocha	HME	46–55	Santa Fe	SW	ALP	REN
4.	Louise Westfall	WFC	46–55	Denver	ROC	FND	REN
5.	Rebecca New	WFC	56–65	Southern Kansas	MAM	S	NEW

(Effective at the conclusion of the General Assembly)

6.	In Yang	AMC	46–55	Hanmi	SCH	AL	NEW
7.	Connie Tubb	WFE	56–65	Grace	SUN	GAMC	NEW

Key to report: AMC=Asian Male Teaching Elder; AL=At Large; HME=Hispanic/Latino Male Ruling Elder; ALP=At Large PILP Corporation Nominee; WFC=White Female Teaching Elder; FND=Foundation Representative; WMC=White Male Teaching Elder; S=Synod Representative; WFE=White Male Teaching Elder; GAMC=General Assembly Mission Council Representative; WME=White Male Ruling Elder.

### *Rationale*

#### *Statistical Information*

Total membership of PILP is 15 members—8 nominated by the GANC (6 at-large, 1 synod representative, 1 presbytery representative); 2 GAMC members (nominated by GAMC); 2 Foundation nominees (nominated by Foundation); and 3 PILP nominated at-large.

Class of 2014: 3 female ruling elders, 1 female teaching elder, 2 male ruling elders; 2 male church members, 1 African American, 1 other, 6 Caucasian.

Class of 2016: 2 female teaching elders; 1 female ruling elder; 2 male teaching elder; 2 male ruling elders, 1 Asian American, 1 Hispanic/Latino, 5 Caucasian.

The Deliverance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., assigns to the General Assembly Mission Council the responsibility for elections to the Board of Directors of the PC(USA) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

## Item 16-02

[The assembly approved Item 16-02 with amendment. See pp. 48–49.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012), in gratitude and response to God for the movement of the Holy Spirit in this time and place, do the following:

1. Declare a churchwide commitment to ignite a movement that results in the creation of 1,001 new worshipping communities in the next ten years.

2. Encourage [each] [the] General Assembly [agency] [Mission Council and other General Assembly agencies] to join in fulfilling this movement.

3. Encourage each session and mid council to

a. pray for the fulfillment of God's purpose within this movement and

**b. discern and pursue ways to participate in this movement.**

**[4. Develop workable strategies and collaborate with congregations and mid councils on growing new congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA).]**

**[5. Require the General Assembly Mission Council to bring recommendations regarding this movement to the 221st General Assembly (2014) and to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) as to its progress.]**

*Rationale*

1,001 New Worshipping Communities

This movement will help our denomination make the shift from an inward focused, membership-maintenance model of church to a more outward, creative, and disciple-making model of church. The question must change from “How do we do church better?” to “How we can be church in a new way?” In order to reconnect with our missional DNA already present in our churches, we must make the “Proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind” a priority for each member of our congregations. This proclamation in word and deed must start with disciples who have a vibrant faith that go out to share their faith with friends, neighbors, and our communities. In order for us to live into this missional ecclesiology, we must have the vision of our current churches planting new worshipping communities. As our mid councils and churches work toward this vision of 1,001 new worshipping communities, the main thrust must come from the local church.

Our denomination has often focused upon the negative aspects that tear us apart rather than creating a vision that unites us in Christ. A vision of 1,001 inspires us to recapture a ministry methodology that once was part of the church planting fabric of the Presbyterian church. We need a vision beyond ourselves that deeply resonates with what God is already doing in the larger church by creating communities of faith that are outside of our standard models of church planting. This goal is not about institutional survival but brings us back to the core of what the church is called to be and do.

Why should we do this? First, this movement will improve the health of our congregations recover their missional DNA. Second, this will allow our church to be more responsive to Christ’s call to make disciples. Third, we will see an improvement of our communities because we are taking the hands and feet of Jesus into our communities. Fourth, we will see lives transformed by the grace of God. Last, we will become a vibrant denomination again.

## Item 16-03

[The assembly approved Item 16-03. See pp. 48, 49.]

**The General Assembly Mission Council, on behalf of the African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force, recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

**1. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to hold a national consultation of representatives from the GAMC, African American leaders with experience in evangelism and church growth, the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), and mid councils to be held in 2013, in order to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA).**

**2. Direct the GAMC, specifically Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW and the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry areas, to train and deploy five regional coaches to collaborate with mid councils and congregations to implement the African American Church Growth Strategy.**

**[Financial Implications: (2013) \$41,750, (2014) \$12,525—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

*Rationale:*

These recommendations are a final response to the following referral: *2008 Referral: Item 12-01. Report, “Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations.” Recommendation 2. Encourage the General Assembly Council, Specifically the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women Ministry Areas, to Appoint a Task Force to Monitor the Progress of African American Church Growth and Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)-From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 12, 1235–37).*

The African American Church Growth Strategy is a strategy of the whole church. Thus all participants (GAMC, African American leaders serving congregations. National Black Presbyterian Caucus [NBPC], and mid councils) must commit to work together in growing African American congregations and communities of faith.

Local African American leaders who have demonstrated skill and passion for growing churches should be recruited to work closely with African American congregations, mid councils, and Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW and the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry areas in the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), in order to collaborate on approaches for evangelism and church growth.



Growing African American Congregations: Striving to Build Upon a Legacy  
African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force Report

African Americans have been strong witnesses in the Presbyterian church for more than 200 years. This is testimony to their faith, commitment, and strength in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds. African Americans have given voice and shape to the denominational structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As African American Presbyterians strive to build upon a legacy in this present age, the African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force encourages the PC(USA) to serve as an active participant and to engage fully in the African American Church Growth Strategy, as we continue to celebrate the faith journeys of African Americans in the PC(USA).

#### A. *Background*

The 207th General Assembly (1995) asked the Hispanic/Latino-a and Native American Congregational Support Offices (formally Hispanic and Native American Congregational Enhancement Offices) to develop strategies to help the church grow in these areas. The 208th General Assembly (1996) called for the PC(USA) to increase its racial ethnic membership to 10 percent by the year 2005, and to 20 percent by the year 2010. The 210th General Assembly (1998) approved the “Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy.” The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a recommendation directing Racial Ethnic Ministries to assist the NBPC to develop a strategy for church growth for African American congregations. Later, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the Strategy for Church Growth for African American Congregations and directed Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW to appoint a task force to monitor the progress of African American church growth. Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW appointed the African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force, and NBPC, in consultation with the African American Congregational Support Office, appointed an African American Church Growth Strategy Implementation Team.

In 2008 and 2009, NBPC held its biannual meetings in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and at Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, respectively. The focus of the biannual meetings was the African American Church Growth Strategy. Workshops and conversations were focused in five areas: (1) New Church Development/Church Transformation, (2) Leadership Development, (3) Youth and Young Adults, (4) Clergywomen, and (5) Evangelism.

#### B. *Observations*

Implementation of the African American Church Growth Strategy has the possibility of producing positive results in contributing to the overall Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy. Such an understanding requires pioneering and visionary leadership, nurturing congregations, and supportive and consistent staff support from mid councils and the General Assembly. Presbyteries and sessions, who understand that healthy churches grow spiritually, programmatically, and numerically are the best allies in accomplishing the African American Church Growth Strategy.

The African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force reviewed and evaluated the African American Church Growth Strategy. This review included comments and conversations with the African American Church Growth Strategy Implementation Team, presbytery executives, African American staff persons serving the PC(USA), and NBPC members. We also reviewed statistical information from the Office of Research Services in the GAMC, and we offer the following observations:

1. The action of the 210th General Assembly’ (1998), setting for itself goals for racial ethnic membership growth, was visionary, however, it needed more mid council support and funding in order to create and implement the Racial Ethnic and Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy.
2. A significant delay of ten years occurred in creating the African American Church Growth Strategy, from 1998–2008.
3. The African American Church Growth Strategy needed a clear structure of accountability.
4. The African American Church Growth Strategy was not clear on ways congregations and presbyteries could implement the strategy.
5. The African American Church Growth Strategy was not designed for the participation of the whole denomination.
6. The African American Church Growth Strategy needed more support from NBPC.
7. A more clearly defined vision statement would have contributed to a clearer plan.

African Americans are the largest racial ethnic group in the PC(USA) with 468 worshipping communities (463 congregations, 3 new church developments, and 2 Bible study fellowships) (Source: Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW Statistics). African Americans have been members of the Presbyterian church for hundreds of years. The Reverend John Gloucester formed the first African American congregation in 1807 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Of the 10,560 congregations in the PC(USA), 463 are predominantly African American churches. Or in other words, approximately 4.5 percent of congregations in the PC(USA) are African American congregations. (According to Research Services, congregations reporting. Research Services considers an African American congregation to be one with African American membership of 80 percent or more. Note: These numbers do not include African American members of predominantly European American congregations, multicultural communities of faith, or African American new church developments or Bible study fellowships). Of the 463 African American congregations in the PC(USA), 49 percent (or 218 African American congregations) currently have vacancies in the solo pastor or head of staff position.

As of December 31, 2010, the total membership of the PC(USA) was 2,016,091. There were 70,256 African American members (Source: Research Services, congregations reporting). In other words, 3.5 percent of Presbyterian members are African American members.

What we know is this: the African American Church Growth Strategy is needed. It has not had the necessary time for implementation. Additionally, there are strong, vibrant, and growing African American congregations that can be studied and modeled for African American church growth.

### C. *Biblical and Theological Foundation*

In the *Racial Ethnic Church Growth* report presented to the 210th General Assembly (1998), the section entitled, “A Theological and Biblical Foundation,” reads,

Through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation to every race and tongue, to every person and every nation (Rev. 5:6, Acts 17:26, Eph. 2: 14-15, Gal.3:28). God has created diversity and celebrates it (1 Cor. 12:11). The capstone of universality is the fact that God identified so much with the world that God gave God’s only child that the world would not perish but be saved (John 3:16).

God works within the language and culture of those to whom salvation is offered. God uses one’s tribal, cultural, racial, or ancestral identity as legitimate gifts, means of revealing love and justice to the world. It is not necessary to surrender one’s cultural identity in order to be a Christian. All Christians, regardless of color, class, size, or gender are chosen people. They are saved, transformed into communities of praise, and sent forth to share the good news of God’s love with people of all nations. ....

The PC(USA) must increase its efforts to be a denomination that respects, values, celebrates, and empowers cultural diversity in mission, ministry, and governance; a denomination where differences are not seen as inequalities or evidences of inferiority; a denomination that is a covenant of kinship where all profess Christ as Lord and Savior; a denomination that sees evangelism as a reflection of personal and corporate faith, as well as a sacred witness for justice and peace; a denomination in which every one can exercise her of his gifts as moved by the Holy Spirit in faith, hope, and love” (*Racial Ethnic Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy Report*, 2006, pp.3-4; see also *Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p. 407).

God uses African American communities of faith with racially and culturally distinct ministries to help in reaching unchurched people. Evangelism and church growth to African American people is inherent in the mission of the PC(USA), thus the church continues to be challenged to live up to its vision of becoming God’s beloved community.

The African American Church has played a major role in the life and mission of Jesus Christ through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Called into being in the throes of American slavery, “The emergence of Black Presbyterian congregations was one prong of a battery of reactions to the prevailing social, economic, political and religious climate affecting the status and future prospects of blacks in the United States of America in the 19th and 20th centuries” (*Periscope: Black Presbyterianism—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: 175 Years of Ministry-1807–1982*, 1982, p. 2).

Historically, African American Presbyterian churches served as a sanctuary for those who were oppressed, provided opportunities and upward mobility for those who were consigned to the margins of life, and produced key leaders in movements for social change in America and abroad, including being instrumental in the abolition of slavery and the struggle for civil rights.

Led by the Confession of 1967, “The church is called to bring all people to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, marriage, family, church, and the exercise of political rights. Therefore, the church labors for the abolition of all racial discrimination and ministers to those injured by it” (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967 Inclusive Language Version, 2002, 9.44a).

This noble cause is one that has not been easy to accomplish, and the journey to wholeness is incomplete. Systemically, African-Americans struggle disproportionately with health care, education, unemployment, housing, and incarceration. It is in this context, historically, that African American congregations have risen to the challenge to serve Christ in our society and throughout the world. As we continue to strive towards breaking down racial barriers that separate us and keep us from becoming God’s beloved community, the call of African American Presbyterian congregations remains relevant.

### D. *Future Directions for African American Presbyterian Congregations and Communities of Faith*

The foundation has been laid by African American Presbyterian congregations and communities of faith, their faithful witness to God has made an indelible impression upon the landscape of the PC(USA), locally, nationally, and globally.

Called into being in the wilderness of oppression, African American congregations and communities of faith responded to the voice of God to be sanctuary for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice. African American communities have faithfully stood in the crucible of racial tension, advocating for reconciliation and equality within the household of God.

This is the legacy of African American Presbyterian congregations and communities of faith.

This report of the African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force is presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012) with the hope that implementation of the African American Church Growth Strategy will result in a new framework for discerning the will of God and building toward the next stage of missional journey in serving Christ in the world. Working collaboratively with the Office of African American Congregational Support in Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW, the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry areas, mid councils, and NBPC, we strive to realize the vision of

- 6 percent new African American disciples by the year 2020;
- an increase in African American women serving as heads of staff and teaching elders in healthy congregations;
- spiritual growth among African American youth and young adults;
- African American congregations and communities of faith effectively engaged in the communities in which they are located;
- increased Bible study and prayer ministries in African American communities of faith that lead people to discern their sense of call to ministry in the church and in communities beyond the church walls.

The implementation of the recommendations in the African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force Report will provide African American communities of faith, those that are chartered congregations and those that are emerging new ministries, to grow African American congregations and strive to build upon a legacy. Working together with all in the church to fully implement the African American Church Growth Strategy will signal the beginning of an era in the PC(USA) where the good news of God's love is shared with people of all backgrounds and where we will begin living the vision of God's beloved community.

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 16-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 16-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

ACREC advises that the Item 16-03 be answered by the advice and counsel of ACREC to Item 05-12 (Mid Council Commission Report of the General Assembly), which was to approve an alternate resolution to read as follows:

“1. Instruct the Moderators of the 218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012) to appoint a Racial Ethnic Ministry Commission.

“2. Empower the appointed commission to develop strategies to address the questions raised in the reports noted above, and to be granted adequate budget for this work.

“3. Direct the commission, in consultation with representative groups, to develop strategies toward the path forward for the PC(USA)

“a. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow established and emerging racial ethnic congregations;

“b. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow multicultural congregations;

“c. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support new immigrant congregations;

“d. for the growth of understanding of the issues race, culture, and ethnicity raise within the Christian community, including development of churchwide strategies to raise consciousness of white privilege.

“4. Provide commission staffing from both the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council.

“5. Give representation on the commission to the following groups:

“a. racial ethnic caucuses

“b. new immigrant congregations and ministries

“c. racial ethnic congregations

“d. multicultural congregations

“e. Women of Color Joint Working Group

“f. mid council staff

“g. ACREC

“h. GACOR;

“and that all decisions would be made by consensus in order to ensure voice for all commission members.

“6. Direct the commission to consult with other groups as needed, both within and outside the PC(USA), to develop workable and sustainable strategies.

“7. Bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns hears echoes of voices from across the church in the report’s Recommendation 8, which calls for the formation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force. Specifically in reports to this General Assembly, calls have been made for

- a national consultation to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA) (Item 16-03, African American Church Growth Strategy Report, Recommendation 1);
- the development of a national strategy for Hispanic/Latino Church Growth, and infrastructure built to support this new strategy (Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report, Recommendation e.);
- a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA) (Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, Recommendations 1–6);
- recommendations to develop effective strategies for the development of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities; train seminary students in emerging cultural realities, and develop strategies within our seminaries to work toward curricular and faculty reform and change, that we might train racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders more effectively; develop multilingual resources and translation capacities to better witness within our increasingly diverse society; explore disparities in compensation between those of more and less represented groups in our church; develop resources to support the growth of new immigrant ministries and congregations, and increase the understanding among Presbyterians of white privilege that we might repent and be renewed and empowered for more faithful service (Item 16-07, Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, Recommendations 1.c., 3.a., d., e., 4., 5., 6.b., c., f., and 8, respectively).

These, in addition to the recommendation from the Mid Council Commission to develop a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force, make it clear that while Presbyterians have been thinking about racial ethnic and new immigrant ministries for over a century—and while many faithful ministries have been launched in many contexts that have borne much fruit—we know and are voicing in many arenas our awareness that there is still much work to do. Race, culture, and language still divide us, marring the image of Christ we share with a world in need and blunting our witness to the good news. The current excitement about developing “1001 New Worshipping Communities” will not be realized without the engagement and investment of racial ethnic Presbyterians. To date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not addressed issues of race and culture sufficiently to ensure either that the needed engagement would happen, or that the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians would be heard in the conversation.

Therefore, to faithfully steward the resources entrusted to us by taking a proactive approach to a number of overlapping initiatives and recommendations, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to answer all the recommendations noted above with the approval of this recommendation.

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#### **GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 16-03**

*Comment on Item 16-03—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that Item 16-03 be approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and offers this comment:

When mid council participation is a goal, committees on representation may be helpful partners. Especially when concerned about the adequate support and nurture of constituencies traditionally underrepresented in leadership and decision-making, committees on representation or entities that fulfill these functions have a role in the council. The GACOR is willing

to assist the leaders of this task force in connecting to relevant mid council leaders for their purposes, and targeting digital training resources for leaders involved in the conversation.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

## Item 16-04

[The assembly approved Item 16-04. See pp. 48, 49.]

**The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) confirm the election of James L. Hudson to the office of president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., for a four-year term.**

### *Rationale*

The 1995 Deliverance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), as well as its by-laws, provide that its board of directors elect the president to a four-year term subject to concurrence by the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and confirmation by the General Assembly. Because the 1995 Deliverance provides that PILP reports to the General Assembly through the GAMC, this request for confirmation by the General Assembly is being forwarded through the GAMC.

On July 31, 2003; the board of directors elected James L. Hudson to a four-year term as president of the corporation, effective September 2, 2003. The 216th General Assembly (2004) confirmed his election.

The PILP board of directors elected James L. Hudson to a second term as president on October 27, 2007. This election was confirmed by the 218th General Assembly (2008). During 2011, the personnel/nominating committee of the board of directors undertook an extensive end-of-term review working with the Research Services Office of the General Assembly Mission Council. Upon review of the president's performance and comments from staff, officers, and directors, as well as colleagues from other General Assembly agencies, middle governing bodies, and churches, the personnel/nominating committee recommended that the president should be reelected to a new four-year term. The PILP board of directors elected James L. Hudson to a third term as president on October 22, 2011.

James L. Hudson is a resident of Prospect, Kentucky, and worships as part of the congregation at Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Chicago and has served congregations in River Forest, Illinois, and Springfield, Missouri. He served on the staff and as co-executive of the Synod of Lincoln Trails for twenty-two years.

Hudson earned a bachelor of arts degree from Grove City College in Pennsylvania, a masters of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a masters of business administration degree from Indiana University.

During his tenure as president and chief executive officer, Hudson has worked with the board of directors to grow the program to meet the financing needs of Presbyterian congregations and entities expanding and improving their facilities, while meeting all of the guidelines of the North American Securities Administrators Association.

## Item 16-05

[The assembly approved Item 16-05. See pp. 48, 49.]

*General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

**The General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., continue their growth and ministry by undertaking to**

1. **Continue their work of bringing racial and ethnic diversity to the staff and board.**
2. **Explore new lending patterns that take into account the development of new immigrant churches and new models of worshipping communities.**
3. **Develop a succession plan for retiring senior leadership.**
4. **Continue to review and simplify the application process and continue to encourage presbyteries to participate in the process as early as possible.**

5. **Review future resource requirements (staffing and systems) to meet changing program needs.**
6. **Continue to work on church-wide awareness utilizing social networking and other new technologies.**
7. **Continue to focus on the special needs of small churches.**
8. **Continue to offer consulting services and further develop and market consulting role to advise and guide churches and presbyteries on financial aspects of growth.**

[These recommendations are discussed in more detail later in this report, as they refer to church relatedness, policies and program effectiveness and collaboration.]

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (hereafter referred to as review committee), in accordance with the *Manual of the General Assembly: Organization for Mission*, which specifies the process for review and the composition of the Review Committee in Chapter IV.D.1, examined PILP's Agency Review-Self-Study, conducted on-site visits, interviewed PILP Board of Directors and senior staff, as well as exempt and nonexempt employees, and surveyed affected users and investors.

The review committee applauds the achievements of PILP in meeting the standards for review. However, in light of challenges and opportunities within today's environment and in the spirit of encouragement, the review committee offers the above recommendations for the agency to become even more successful.

#### A. *Introduction*

The review committee is pleased to present to the 220th General Assembly (2012) a written review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP). The purpose of the review process is "to evaluate the relationship of their individual [agency] ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 67, addition of Standing Rule E.10. Agency Review). The instructions to the review committee were that the committee must conduct the process according to predetermined standards and present a written report to the next General Assembly (*Manual of the General Assembly*, pp. 71–72).

#### B. *Review Committee*

In accordance to Standing Rule E.10., the following persons were elected by commissioners of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to serve as the review committee:

Ruling Elder Clemente Anzaldúa (Corpus Christi, Texas); Ruling Elder Barbara Campbell Davis, moderator (Rocky Mount, North Carolina); Teaching Elder Gregory Gibson (Dayton, Ohio); Ruling Elder Judy Lussie (Dublin, California); Teaching Elder Spencer Lawrence (Streator, Illinois); Ruling Elder Gregory McLean (Clinton, New York); Deacon Jack Miller (Darien, Connecticut); Ruling Elder Efrain Rivera-Vega (Cidra, Puerto Rico); Ruling Elder Chuck Sparks (Littleton, Colorado); Teaching Elder Cathy Ulrich (Fort Smith, Arkansas); and Teaching Elder Wayland Wong (Westminster, California).

#### C. *Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program Mission Statement*

*"In gratitude for God's abundance, The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program promotes the growth of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by bringing together the missions of church developers and the resources of Presbyterian Investors."*

#### D. *Brief History*

The 2003 review (presented to the 216th General Assembly in 2004) encountered an agency that had just emerged from its incubation period and was establishing its presence as an effective and caring partner with the PC(USA). Major achievements up to that point are noted below.

- The PILP had reached out to presbyteries and congregations to identify itself as an alternate source of funding for important capital projects. It had built a loan portfolio of \$34.6 million as of year-end 2002.
- The PILP had reached a number of critical financial and regulatory milestones. It had filed its Offering Circular in all fifty states plus Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico.
- Financially, PILP earned its first positive net income in 2001 and began a decade of profitable years. This allowed it to begin rebuilding its surplus and meet North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) guidelines for (i) positive net income for at least three of the past five fiscal years, and (ii) capital adequacy with a minimum capital ratio of 3 percent of total assets (increased to 5 percent in 2007).

- The board had also just recruited Jay Hudson to become president and CEO of PILP in 2003. He brought strong leadership and extensive lending experience from his prior role as head of one of the synod’s lending agencies, as well as invaluable relationships within our denomination.
- Operationally, PILP developed a clear set of underwriting standards and loan guidelines. Staff was well-trained in reviewing applications, providing help to borrowers, and following prudent credit policies.

Building on this successful start, PILP has matured into an important contributor to the welfare and mission of our denomination. It has diligently fulfilled the six duties contained in its deliverance. Its impact is all the more remarkable because of its small staff and low visibility. As the survey findings in the appendix show, awareness peaks when funding needs arise. However, twenty or more years may pass between capital campaigns within a congregation—making it important to provide continued contact even when immediate lending is not needed.

E. *Update of 2003 Recommendations*

The 2003 Review Committee made observations and recommendations addressed below with comments on:

- *Work with the GAMC to develop a comprehensive listing of all church loans and grants that are available to congregations and presbyteries.* The Coordinated Loan Program consolidated church and investor funds into the “One Source” program with one application, one approval, and a common set of loan documents. The PILP also assumed responsibility for servicing loans of the National Ministries Division (now Mission Development Resources Committee of the General Assembly Mission Council).
- *Shorten the time between loan commitments and disbursement by working with presbyteries on inspections and permitting earlier in the application process.* A “Preliminary Look” program provides a free feasibility study to help manage expectations and determine if a church can afford its vision. A “Loan Discussion Worksheet” provides a web-based mini-version. The review committee received feedback that highlighted the importance of continuing to get presbyteries involved as early as possible to avoid processing delays.
- *Build visibility of its loan and investment programs within the denomination by expanding advertising and enhancing its website.* Surveys confirm that PILP’s lending mission is highly regarded at all levels of our denomination. The PILP has been proactive in using the Annual Statistical Report to work with presbyteries in identifying local congregations that may initiate building programs over the next two years. Direct contact then determines if PILP can help. *Investor* awareness, however, has grown slowly despite multiple efforts to raise visibility. The Rebate program continues to offer an investment incentive to engage congregations at the local church level.
- *Expand its mission priority and be fully responsive to growth needs of its racial ethnic and immigrant congregations.* As the chart below indicates, progress was made in increasing the number and size of loans granted to minority churches. Rapid growth was especially evident in loans to Asian churches (predominantly Korean communities). Our discussions revealed initiatives to support new immigrant churches, like the Ramseyer Presbyterian Church, a Ghanaian church in Columbus, Ohio. The PILP management explained that these congregations often require special attention because they have different giving patterns and do not fit neatly into the traditional church borrowing model.

Predominant Ethnicity	Percent of PILP Loans (from Application Forms)	
	2003	2011
Asian	3.7%	11.0%
African American	6.4%	4.1%
Hispanic	0.8%	2.9%
Multicultural	13.6%	11.5%
White	70.4%	62.6%
Other (incl. Presbyteries)	<u>5.1%</u>	<u>7.9%</u>
Total Loans (\$millions)	\$39.8	\$78.5

- *Foster church relatedness by building communication and cooperation with other General Assembly agencies and with mid councils.* The PILP’s president meets regularly with leadership of the other five agencies to discuss needs and opportunities. There is especially close collaboration with the Foundation because its endowment funds are an important source of loan funding. In addition, since the mid 1990s, an informal table of agency heads and board chairs (often called the “Chairs and Executives”) have met twice a year to discuss common issues and plans for the future. The Special Review

Committee on the Service of the Whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in 2009, also served as a catalyst for further cooperation and joint efforts. The PILP is also a member of DILA (Denominational Investment and Loan Association) a group that includes representatives of thirty-seven church loan programs from various denominations.

- *Develop long-range strategic planning at the board level.* With maturity, the board has been able to focus more attention on longer-range planning. It worked closely with the president/CEO and his staff to develop an Annual Work Plan, and also looked out four to five years during its annual planning meeting in July. This allows it to identify key growth and organizational objectives and build an action plan to meet them. A five-year financial plan is also required by some state regulators.

#### F. *Other Achievements Since 2003*

Looking beyond the points identified by the 2003 Review Committee, important progress has been made in a number of other areas over the past seven years.

- Financially, there have been *no loan losses* despite a very negative economy since 2007. This may be attributed to sound underwriting standards, regular reviews to identify problems early, and a willingness to work closely with borrowers who run into financial difficulties. As a precaution, PILP's balance sheet includes provisions for loan losses that may occur beyond a presbytery's ability to meet its backup guarantees.

- PILP has received *clean audit opinions* each year from its auditors, Crowe Horwath LLP, with no material weaknesses. This meets crucial guidelines set by the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) and provides important reassurance for the state regulators.

- Increasing the size of the staff to fifteen is related to a 2003 goal to grow to \$100 million in total assets. An additional field representative has been added to support the vice president of marketing and to provide opportunities for contact with local congregations and presbyteries. This may be an appropriate time to reexamine field staff requirements over the next five to ten years.

- The PILP has gradually *broadened its investor base*. An important goal has been to reduce PILP's early reliance for funding from other GA agencies and grow investments from individuals from the sale of Term Notes. Gradual progress has been made as the percentage share of individuals and churches grew from 51 percent (\$19.9 million) in 2002 to 57 percent (\$51.7 million) in 2010. Mid councils saw their share grow from 17 percent to 22 percent.

- The PILP continues to be mindful of the needs of small and mid-sized churches. These congregations often have greater difficulty in securing loan financing. As the chart below shows, PILP is an important source of loans for churches with less than 600 members.

Church Size	Membership Definition	All Churches	Churches w. Loans
Small	250 or Less	79.8%	65.7%
Medium	251 to 600	14.5%	27.3%
Large	Over 600	5.7%	7.0%

- *Demand for church loans* reached a peak in 2009 but has declined over the past two years—primarily due to the adverse economic and employment market. Importantly, PILP's market share of total borrowing volume has risen in recent years from 20 percent to more than 30 percent, as banks have become reluctant to lend to churches. This confirms the important financial role filled by PILP in providing critical funding for growth and operating needs during difficult times. Historically, about 10 percent of PILP's loans had been used to refinance bank lending, but this has grown to 30 percent recently.

- *Future loan capacity* is adequate for current demand. The PILP's investment base of \$90.9 million at year-end 2010 is considered sufficient to meet expected needs, and sustained net income has maintained capital above NASAA's current capital threshold of 5 percent.

- The Customer Service Agreement between PILP and PC(USA), A Corp., was designed to allow PILP to *leverage other church resources—and avoid duplication* for Legal, Human Resources, Payroll, Purchasing, and IT services (accounting was also previously included). As a small agency with a low profile, PILP is heavily dependent on the service levels and priorities of other church groups.

- Finally, the review committee wanted to note the importance of an early initiative that was *not* implemented. In 2001, the General Assembly established a mortgage agency to allow PILP to syndicate (package and sell off) some of its loans. It was a good idea at the time and heavily used by many banks and lending organizations up to 2008 when the housing bubble burst. Subsequent experience showed it to be a risky strategy that badly hurt many institutions.



This brings readers up-to-date on PILP as an energetic, committed agency with a clear sense of its mission within the PC(USA). The review committee was impressed by the knowledge of its staff and their ability to effectively leverage a small organization to have a much larger, positive impact on our denomination. The review committee noted a number of important strengths that we view as crucial to its past and future success. Looking ahead, PILP's management and board will face important challenges and opportunities that will be discussed later in this report.

## G. *Standards of Review*

### 1. *Church Relatedness*

a. The PILP's board of directors continually seeks more racial and ethnic diversity. A Korean American staff member is located in the southern California area to work with all churches, particularly Korean language churches. The PILP was successful in hiring racial ethnic and women employees by utilizing the Racial Ethnic Recruitment Network. The PILP is aware of the cultural differences within the denomination and will face a future challenge of requirements to address those differences. [[Refer to Recommendation 1.](#)]

b. The PILP is to be commended for developing relationships with nontraditional ministries and lending opportunities, in particular, *third place communities* ("the third place" is a term used to refer to social surroundings separate from the two usual social environments of home and the workplace), immigrant churches, and potential loans to leasehold properties. [[Refer to Recommendation 2.](#)]

c. The excellent relationship between PILP and the denomination is bolstered by the leadership of PILP, particularly its president/CEO and vice-president of marketing. The PILP relates to the denomination through these specific individuals who provide strength to the program. This will provide a challenge as both of these individuals transition into retirement. The board needs to develop a succession plan. [[Refer to Recommendation 3.](#)]

d. The PILP provides churches and presbyteries a "preliminary look" at their situation as they contemplate a capital expenditure and encumbrance. The application process is followed by extensive consultation with the church and presbytery to help clarify its goals. This gives the congregation a realistic picture of the funds they would have to raise without impairing their ongoing ministries. However, employees have requested a less redundant application process. [Refer to [Recommendation 4](#) and [Recommendation 8.](#)]

#### Risks and Challenges:

- New church developments (NCDs) have a less centralized process as more NCDs are being planted by congregations rather than by presbyteries.
- Financial hardships within some presbyteries (co-signers or guarantors) are a cause for concern.
- Churches with loans leaving the denomination is another cause for concern.

Current demand for church loans is estimated at \$230 million. Often PILP works cooperatively with other institutions with PILP funding a percentage of a church's loan while banks and other institutions fund the rest. As congregations are making capital improvements, many church buildings have underutilized space while new immigrant communities are growing and in need of space for mission and ministry. The denominational goal of starting 1,001 new worshipping communities may be a source for new PILP loans. [[Refer to Recommendation 2.](#)]

There are some areas of the denomination where awareness of PILP and its resources is low. However, this awareness rises when the church is in need of a loan. [[Refer to Recommendation 6.](#)]

A strong PILP professional staff and the board of directors are uniquely positioned to leverage every opportunity that surfaces. The staff and board have set goals—to keep the agency on a course that is in line with the mission of the PC(USA), and have policies and procedures to assure that the staff has appropriate skills, licenses, and experience to perform its work. [[Refer to Recommendation 5.](#)]

### 2. *Collaboration*

a. Collaboration of PILP with the other five General Assembly agencies functions properly. Communication and computer services are centralized within the Presbyterian Center. Some employees suggested that having in-house mailing could increase production. Others that increased consultation before making computer changes could also increase staff effectiveness. [[Refer to Recommendation 5.](#)]

b. The PILP is to be commended for cooperating with the three existing synod loan programs: Alaska/Northwest, Pacific, and Mid-America. The PILP does not solicit investors from these synods. It has recently assumed responsibility of the investment and loan ministry of the Synod of Lincoln Trails, at the request of the synod.

c. As part of its marketing plan, PILP advertises regularly in *Presbyterians Today*, is present at many national PC(USA) events, and provides an investment newsletter to its investors. It uses print ads and “email blasts” to reach potential investors and has recently upgraded its website to make it more user friendly. [[Refer to Recommendation 6.](#)]

#### H. *Conclusion*

The review committee thanks all of those who took time to give input for this review, especially the agency staff, congregational and presbytery finance officers who returned surveys, Research Services, especially Jack Marcum, and the board of directors and entire staff of PILP who took time to patiently share with us. Finally the review committee thanks the General Assembly for trusting us with this responsibility.

The review committee applauds the achievements of PILP in meeting requirements in the areas of church relatedness, policies and program effectiveness, and collaboration. In light of risks and opportunities within today’s environment and in the spirit of encouragement, the review committee makes its recommendations to assure the continuing success of PILP.

## Item 16-06

[The assembly approved Item 16-06 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49.]

*Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth*

The General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the General Assembly Mission Council (specifically, the Office of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women and the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly (specifically, the Mid Council Commission in the Office of the Stated Clerk) to hold a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA). This consultation shall bring together representatives of these offices, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. [The consultation shall be held in coordination with the African American Church Growth Strategy consultation.] The consultation shall:

1. Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial ethnic and new immigrants into the church.
2. Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth.
3. Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregation levels.
4. ~~[Designate a monitoring group to assess progress toward these goals that shall report at each General Assembly.]~~ [Designate the GAMC to monitor and report on the progress toward these goals at each General Assembly.]
5. Include in its strategies a plan to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).<sup>1</sup>
6. Present a report on the national consultation at the 221st General Assembly (2014).

[7. Study the successes of other denominations.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$4,265, (2014) \$11,810 GAMC—Unrestricted; (2012) \$240, (2013) \$36,315, (2014) \$240 GAMC—Per Capita]

#### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian tradition, in accordance with Scriptural directives, has demonstrated a commitment to Christ’s call for the unity of believers (Jn. 17:20–23) and reconciliation of all people (2 Cor. 5:11–17). Since the historic reunion of 1983, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has affirmed that God intends for the church to be a diverse body. A General Assembly special task force (task force) has spent the past year studying the church’s progress in living out this commitment in relation to racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities. This report summarizes the task force’s findings and directs the church to expand its efforts in becoming a more diverse and inclusive church.

The denomination has not realized the vision for a diverse body because it lacks a cohesive, coordinated strategy; adequate financial and human resources for doing the work; and mechanisms for deploying resources where they are most needed. The previous goals for increasing diversity in the church have been viewed by many church leaders as “top down” proposals. They were developed with little if any input from those most affected by and able to respond to the challenge. Furthermore, the task force heard from many that institutionalized racism and the fear of change continue to be underlying factors in the church’s failure to grow in diversity.

## I. Background

### A. *The Assignment*

The 208th General Assembly (1996) of the PC(USA) established a goal to reach 20 percent racial ethnic membership in the denomination by 2010.<sup>2</sup> At that time, racial ethnic groups represented more than 20 percent of the total population of the United States. The racial ethnic membership of the PC(USA) was 4.7 percent.

In 2010, the racial ethnic population of the United States reached 27.6 percent<sup>3</sup> and 9.1 percent in the PC(USA).<sup>4</sup> The numbers of racial ethnic members, however, remained relatively stable between 1996 and 2010.<sup>5</sup> However, the increase in the percentage of racial ethnic members, we have learned, was due to the declining numbers of white, non-Hispanic members.

The 219th General Assembly (2010), acting on the recommendation of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), established the task force in order to ascertain why the PC(USA) did not meet the 20 percent goal. The charge of the task force<sup>6</sup> was to:

- Review the strategy of the church in this area from 1998, in consultation with staff in the Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth offices.
- Analyze and determine reasons for not reaching the 1998 goal.
- Identify mid council bodies that are responding to demographic change in effective ways and collect modes of new church development and transformation that can work in other contexts.
- Discern what resources—personnel, funding, multimedia, technology, social network, and other—are needed at the General Assembly level to assist and support efforts at the mid council level.
- In light of Jesus’ continuing call to us to repent of our racism and to make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19), revisit the goal set in 1998 and determine what the call to the church is now that we as the church might become a reflection of Jesus in the world.
- Bring a report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) with recommendations for action.

### B. *Members of the Task Force*

The task force consists of the following members, appointed by Elder Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010):

- Task force moderator, the Reverend Eddie L. Knox Jr. (Presbytery of Chicago), pastor of Pullman Presbyterian Church in Chicago, who has served the denomination as a presbytery, synod, and general assembly commissioner and leader.
- Deacon Mario Bolaños (Presbytery of Riverside), member of First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, California, and a member of the presbytery’s Hispanic mission task force.
- Deacon Sung Yeon Choi-Morrow (Presbytery of Chicago), member of Edgewater Presbyterian Church in Chicago, a graduate of McCormick Seminary, and a member of the presbytery’s Multicultural Church Ministry Team.
- Elder Sandra C.R. Freier (Presbytery of Central Florida), member of New Hope Presbyterian Church, Ocoee, Florida, member of the immigration task force of the Presbytery of Central Florida, and executive director of the New Hope Assistance Center, a center of assistance to the Brazilian immigrant population in Orlando. She has a degree in pastoral counseling from Asbury Theological Seminary.
- Elder Ann Kelson (Presbytery of Great Rivers), member of First Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Illinois, moderator of the presbytery, and liaison to immigrants.
- The Reverend Mary Newbern-Williams (Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy), designated pastor of the Cote Brillante Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, and former general presbyter of the Presbytery of John Calvin.
- Elder Julia Schaeffer (Presbytery of National Capital), member of Silver Spring Presbyterian Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, a predominantly African immigrant congregation.

- The Reverend Reginald Tuggle (Presbytery of Long Island), former pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Roosevelt, New York, and president of two, nonprofit organizations focusing on economic development and youth services.
- The Reverend Perry Wooten (Presbytery of New York City), pastor of a multicultural church in the Bronx, former moderator of the Presbytery of New York City, and a commissioner to the Synod of the Northeast.

The task force was supported in its work by the Reverend Sterling Morse, coordinator for Cross Cultural Ministries and Congregational Support in the Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area (RE & WM/PW) of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).

#### C. *Meetings*

The task force was authorized to meet for two years. The first meeting was held in January 2011, and the group has gathered for six in-person meetings and held one conference call. There has been a frequent exchange of e-mails as well.

#### D. *Defining the Terms*

For purposes of this report, a *racial ethnic congregation* is composed primarily of persons of an identifiable racial or ethnic background. A *new immigrant church* is comprised of persons who have recently arrived in the United States. In a *multicultural congregation*, no one racial ethnic group constitutes 80 percent or more of the congregation. *Chapel* is a term used for communities of faith by Native Americans on reservations.

Membership statistics for the PC(USA) include only those persons who are members of congregations or chapels. Other forms of corporate witness exist in our denomination, particularly among new immigrant groups in various stages of growth. The RE & WM/PW uses the following terminology to describe these forms of ministry. *Bible study groups* are small groups of persons who gather for Bible study and worship, to share their faith, and to engage one another in Christian community. Many gather without pastoral leadership and without organizational structure. As these groups grow and take on greater organizational structure and leadership, they are often referred to as *fellowships*. Some racial ethnic and new immigrant communities gather in *networks* to collaborate in mission and promote common ministries. Continued growth may lead to a *new church development (NCD)*, a worshipping community with an organizing pastor and the official recognition of a presbytery. New church developments seek to become self-supporting, chartered congregations.<sup>7</sup>

#### E. *Data Gathering*

The task force conducted face-to-face interviews with a number of church leaders throughout the denomination in order to finalize its recommendation. Online surveys and questionnaires were also forwarded to mid council executives. Members and experts of the GAMC and OGA, racial ethnic caucuses and councils, and pastors and members of churches with diverse congregations were also interviewed.

Appendix A lists the resources contacted by the task force. Appendix B contains the survey questions and a summary of responses received from the participants.

## II. Observations

Though the goals set in 1998 have not been met, it is important to note that more than 1,300 racial ethnic congregations exist in our denomination<sup>8</sup>, and anecdotal evidence in certain regions of the country point to a growing participation in established PC(USA) congregations by many new immigrants. The primary focus of the task force's exploration, however, has been on the movement of the Spirit among new immigrant worshipping communities that identify as Presbyterian or Reformed, many of which are not yet chartered congregations and are therefore not counted in official membership statistics.

These worshipping communities include 172 Presbyterian Bible study fellowships and 82 Presbyterian new church developments serving new immigrants and racial ethnic persons.<sup>9</sup> Fellow Presbyterians from other nations are engaged in vital ministries of worship, Bible study, and service. In particular, they provide much-needed support and encouragement to newcomers in this country. Growth in these ministries has taken place despite the many challenges facing immigrant communities of faith, among them funding, leadership, and immigration issues.

Typically, these groups get their start when a group of families from the same country of origin and with a common language gather for prayer and Bible study in a ministry leader's home. The leader is often a teaching elder or lay leader in the church in his or her home country. As the group grows in membership, it looks to be more formally connected to the PC(USA). Administrative and financial support may come from a variety of sources, depending on the situation or region. A local congregation may take interest in the group, or the presbytery may have a program to support immigrant ministries. In some cases, the group is referred to the GAMC New Immigrant Congregational Support Office. In partnership with the presbytery, this office may provide seed money for a limited time. If the group is able to demonstrate growth and financial stability, the presbytery may take full responsibility for it to become an NCD with support from the GAMC church growth and evangelism ministry area.<sup>10</sup>

Key to the success of a new immigrant ministry is a dedicated charismatic leader with evangelistic and administrative skills and a partnership with a presbytery that accepts this specialized ministry and seeks to recognize and accept its leadership. Many other factors contribute to success, but these two elements are essential for effective, established ministry.<sup>11</sup>

Untapped opportunities for church growth and evangelism among the growing immigrant population of this country call for a new openness to our brothers and sisters in Christ and a coordinated strategy that engages all levels of the church.

### III. Biblical and Theological Foundations

As mentioned in the introduction, in John 17:23 Jesus prayed for complete unity of believers. God wants the church to seek wholeness. To do so, God's people must be reconciled with God and one another (2 Cor. 5:11-17). In reconciliation, the church glorifies God.

The PC(USA) has made a strong commitment to reconciliation as evident in its confessions. It longs to be a community that is in complete unity. The Brief Statement of Faith states:

In sovereign love God created the world good  
and makes everyone equally in God's image  
male and female, of every race and people,  
to live as one community.<sup>12</sup>

In the Confession of 1967, the church professes the importance of being reconciled to God and one another.

In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Jesus Christ is God with humankind. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the foundation of all confessional statements about God, humanity and the world. Therefore the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another.<sup>13</sup>

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity renews the church's commitment to diversity in community. It seeks "a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity."<sup>14</sup>

These statements evidence the PC(USA)'s ongoing commitment to reconciliation and unity. As the church lives out these commitments, the fruit it will bear is racial ethnic and new immigrant church growth.

### Appendix A

#### Persons Contacted by Task Force Members

Linda Valentine, Executive Director, General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC)

Roger Dermody, Deputy Executive Director for Mission, GAMC

Dave Crittenden, director, Stewardship, GAMC

Eric Hoey, director, Evangelism and Church Growth, GAMC

Rhashell Hunter, director, Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW, GAMC

Raafat Girgis, Multicultural Congregational Support, GAMC

Sun Bai Kim, Korean Congregational Support, GAMC

Mei-Hui Lai, Asian Congregational Support, GAMC

Lonnie Oliver, associate for African American Congregational Support, GAMC

Hector Rodriguez, associate for Hispanic/Latino/Latina Congregational Support, GAMC

Martha Sadongei, Native American Congregational Support, GAMC

Angel Suarez-Valera, associate for Immigrant Group Ministries, GAMC

Julia Thorne, Office of Immigration Issues, Office of the General Assembly (OGA)

Valerie Small, Manager, General Assembly Nominations, Ecumenical and Agency Relations, OGA

177 mid council (presbytery and synod) executives by mail, e-mail, phone, or in-person

Paige McRight, presbytery executive, Presbytery of Central Florida

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Bryan Stamper, pastor, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Central Florida

Wesley Porto, pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Central Florida

Arthur Santos, associate pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Central Florida

Carmelo Mercado, pastor, El Redentor Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Central Florida

Antonio (Tony) Aja, coordinator for Hispanic/Latino Ministries, Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky

The Reverend Gregory Bentley, recent past president of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus

Arlene Gordon, president of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus

Carol Howard Merritt, moderator and the Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century

Geddes Hanson, Charlotte W. Newcombe Professor of Congregational Ministry, Princeton Theological Seminary

Mark Tammen, Executive Presbyter of Long Island

In addition, Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010), convened a conference call with the following persons:

Tod Bolsinger, moderator, General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies

Eddie Knox, moderator, Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth

Carol McDonald, moderator, Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies

Carol Howard Merritt, moderator, Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century

Sterling Morse, coordinator, Cross Cultural Ministries, Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women

### Appendix B

#### Survey and Summary of Responses of Mid Council Executives

An open-ended survey was distributed to the mid councils—173 presbyteries and 16 synods. The task force received 97 responses (51.3 percent).

#### **Question 1. Why has the PCUSA not met the 1998 goals?**

- Top-down goals do not work. Grassroots involvement and commitment are needed, as well as resources for the grassroots to reach the goals. (This response was provided by at least half of the respondents.),
- Some presbyteries are over 90% white, and the goals were unrealistic for their demographics.
- The goals were unrealistic, with no real strategic plan for accomplishing them.
- The denomination lacks focus. There are too many other goals and not enough prioritizing.
- The denomination lacks the resources for the work.
- The work is mainly left up to Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women to accomplish and is not a shared effort of the entire General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).
- Churches remain in "survival mode," afraid of change or of taking risks for change.
- The current "church model" is not receptive to including more Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant (RE/NI) communities.
- New Church Development (NCD) strategies and Committees on Ministries have not done enough to support racial ethnic/new immigrant leaders/pastors and worshiping communities.

#### **Question 2. How is your governing body supporting racial ethnic and new immigrant church growth?**

- Most respondents mentioned supporting NCDs and fellowships financially or by providing space.
- Note that quite a number of people who mentioned new NCDs also indicated that they had failed and/or are financially subsidized by the presbytery.
- Some respondents mentioned putting time and resources into developing leadership for RE/NI, in particular Hispanic commissioned lay pastors.

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- Some mentioned multi-ethnic taskforces to engage the whole presbytery and strategic planning for better integration of these communities into the Presbytery.
- Some specifically said they are not doing anything.

### **Question 3. Please describe the specific ways by which your governing body is addressing this issue through staffing, committees and training opportunities and leadership development.**

- Some of presbyteries have a racial ethnic executive or associate executive who is responsible for NCDs.
- There is one synod executive who is a person of color.
- Presbyteries have formed committees to support this work – the Ethnic Concerns Committee, the Presbytery Administrative Commission, the Hispanic Mission Task Force.
- Some presbyteries have hired Hispanic evangelists and NCD organizing pastors for racial ethnic churches.
- Some are not doing anything.

### **Question 4. How is the church responding today to Jesus' call to repent of our racism, classism and other non-diversity practices?**

- 78 of the 97 respondents provided answers to this question, most indicating that the church is not doing a good job in this area, despite the church's rhetoric to the contrary.
  - o Specific mentions were made of under-funding programs/initiatives and focusing more on international mission than domestic/national mission.
- Some mentioned specific things they are doing, mostly training on anti-racism.
- Some were offended by the question.

### **Question 5. How is your governing body being resourced by your higher governing bodies to help you with your church growth endeavors?**

- Office of Evangelism and Church Growth of the GAMC
- OGA Office of Immigration
- NCD grants, synod grants, transformation grants, and re-development grants
- Conferences (the Big Tent and the Multicultural Conference were specifically named)
- GA staff
- Some specifically said they don't get any support from synod or GA.

### **Question 6. Please describe the resource you need to assist and support your efforts to develop or further your work in racial ethnic and new immigrant church growth.**

- Funding specifically for racial ethnic staff persons who can help racial ethnic NCDs
- Guidance and training on how to talk to/work with RE/NI communities
- Resources for work
- Regionally based staff from GA who work on this specifically
- Examples of churches, presbyteries, synods that are doing this well
- Some expressed concern that nFOG will make this work more difficult.

### **Question 7. What specific recommendations for action can you offer for developing racial ethnic and new immigrant churches in the PCUSA?**

- The denomination needs more RE/NI leadership at the top.
- The denomination needs to engage at the grassroots rather than force a top down approach.
- The denomination needs to consult with other denominations that are doing this well (RCA and ECC were named).
- The denomination needs to provide more funding.

## Endnotes

1. PC(USA), *The Book of Order: The Constitution of the PC(USA) 2011–2013*, 32. The text of G-2.0505a(1) reads as follows: “In the case of ministers for immigrant fellowships and congregations, a presbytery may, if it determines that its strategy for mission with that group requires it, recognize the ordination and receive as a member of presbytery a new immigrant minister who furnishes evidence of good standing in a denomination, even though at the time of enrollment that minister lacks the educational history required of candidates, and provide such educational opportunities as seem necessary and prudent for that minister’s successful ministry in the presbytery.”
2. *Minutes*, 1996, Part I, pp. 53, 378.
3. Jack Marcum, *Changing World, Challenged Church: Exploring the Multicultural Landscape*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, July 1, 2011, presentation slide 6.
4. Marcum, 2011, presentation slide 17.
5. Marcum, 2011, presentation slide 22.
6. Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, <https://pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3149&promoid=114>.
7. Rhashell Hunter, *Some of the Communities of Faith in the Presbyterian Church (USA)*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, October 2010.
8. Rhashell Hunter, *Growing Christ’s Church Deep and Wide*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, 2011, presentation slide 11.
9. Hunter, 2011, slide 11.
10. Angel Suarez-Valera, *New Immigrant Successful Models of Ministry—2011*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), New Immigrant Congregational Support Office, 2011.
11. Angel Suarez-Valera, 2011.
12. PC(USA), *The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.3, Lines 29–32, <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/101/brief-statement-faith/>, January 5, 2012.
13. PC(USA), *The Book of Confessions*, “The Confession of 1967: Inclusive Language Text,” <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/theologyandworship/pdfs/confess67.pdf>, 9.07.
14. PC(USA), *The Book of Order: The Constitution of the PC(USA) 2011–2013*, 6, F-1.0404. (Louisville KY: Office of General Assembly).

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 16-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 16-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 16-06 be answered by the advice and counsel of ACREC to Item 05-12 (Mid Council Commission Report of the General Assembly), which was to approve an alternate resolution to read as follows:

“1. Instruct the Moderators of the 218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012) to appoint a Racial Ethnic Ministry Commission.

“2. Empower the appointed commission to develop strategies to address the questions raised in the reports noted above, and to be granted adequate budget for this work.

“3. Direct the commission, in consultation with representative groups, to develop strategies toward the path forward for the PC(USA)

“a. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow established and emerging racial ethnic congregations;

“b. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow multicultural congregations;

“c. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support new immigrant congregations;

“d. for the growth of understanding of the issues race, culture, and ethnicity within the Christian community, including development of churchwide strategies to raise consciousness of white privilege.



“4. Provide commission staffing from both the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council.

“5. Give representation on the commission to the following groups:

- “a. racial ethnic caucuses
- “b. new immigrant congregations and ministries
- “c. racial ethnic congregations
- “d. multicultural congregations
- “e. Women of Color Joint Working Group
- “f. mid council staff
- “g. ACREC
- “h. GACOR;

“and that all decisions would be made by consensus in order to ensure voice for all commission members.

“6. Direct the commission to consult with other groups as needed, both within and outside the PC(USA), to develop workable and sustainable strategies.

“7. Bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns hears echoes of voices from across the church in the report’s Recommendation 8, which calls for the formation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force. Specifically in reports to this General Assembly, calls have been made for

- a national consultation to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA) (Item 16-03, African American Church Growth Strategy Report, Recommendation 1);
- the development of a national strategy for Hispanic/Latino Church Growth, and infrastructure built to support this new strategy (Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report, Recommendation e.);
- a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA) (Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, Recommendations 1–6);
- recommendations to develop effective strategies for the development of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshiping communities; train seminary students in emerging cultural realities, and develop strategies within our seminaries to work toward curricular and faculty reform and change, that we might train racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders more effectively; develop multilingual resources and translation capacities to better witness within our increasingly diverse society; explore disparities in compensation between those of more and less represented groups in our church; develop resources to support the growth of new immigrant ministries and congregations, and increase the understanding among Presbyterians of white privilege that we might repent and be renewed and empowered for more faithful service (Item 10-13, Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, Recommendations 1.c., 3.a., d., e., 4., 5., 6.b., c., f., and 8, respectively).

These, in addition to the recommendation from the Mid Council Commission to develop a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force, make it clear that while Presbyterians have been thinking about racial ethnic and new immigrant ministries for over a century—and while many faithful ministries have been launched in many contexts that have borne much fruit—we know and are voicing in many arenas our awareness that there is still much work to do. Race, culture, and language still divide us, marring the image of Christ we share with a world in need and blunting our witness to the good news. The current excitement about developing “1001 New Worshipping Communities” will not be realized without the engagement and investment of racial ethnic Presbyterians. To date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not addressed issues of race and culture sufficiently to ensure either that the needed engagement would happen, or that the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians would be heard in the conversation.

Therefore, to faithfully steward the resources entrusted to us by taking a proactive approach to a number of overlapping initiatives and recommendations, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to answer all the recommendations noted above with the approval of this recommendation.

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### GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 16-06

*Comment on Item 16-06—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that Item 16-06 be approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and offers this comment:

When assembly and mid council participation is a goal, committees on representation may be helpful partners, especially when the concern is the adequate support and nurture of constituencies traditionally underrepresented in leadership and decision-making. The GACOR is willing to assist the leaders of this task force in connecting to relevant mid council leaders for their purposes, and targeting digital training resources for leaders involved in the conversation.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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### GAMC/OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 16-06

*Comment on Item 16-06—From the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly.*

The General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly believe that GAMC should be the agency assigned to report on progress toward goals related to racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth at each General Assembly rather than incurring the expense of creating an additional monitoring group. The GAMC staff provide support for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA), and report regularly on this work to GAMC elected members.

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## Item 16-07

*Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century.*

The Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 1 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49–50.]

#### 1. *Regarding Discerning New Ministries*

a. Call upon mid councils to actively identify and assist congregations to discern future possibilities utilizing available programs including New Beginnings, Starting New Churches, and Engage.

b. Call upon mid councils to give wise and caring support to closing churches. Each presbytery should appoint a point person who would actively identify closing congregations and provide guidance in the process of selling assets and distributing the proceeds for new church development.

c. Call mid councils to utilize these newly acquired assets in holistic evangelism for the purpose of starting new churches (especially amongst new immigrant communities and communities of color) and encouraging underrepresented leadership (particularly women and people of color), utilizing programs provided by the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth of the General Assembly Council and others as needed [while strengthening existing churches.]

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 1.*

In this season of great transition, many of our established churches are struggling, while new ministries and faith communities lack the resources they need to grow. We will work to respond to struggling congregations with grace and compassion, helping them to close if so led, and use their resources/assets to plant new congregations.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 2 with amendment. See pp. 48, 50.]

#### 2. *Regarding Bi-Vocational* ~~[and Tent-Making Ministries]~~ [Ministries]

Charge the 220th General Assembly (2012) ~~[to appoint a task force to study and make recommendations]~~ ~~[to]~~ affirm ~~[ing]~~ ordained bi-vocational ministry as a critically viable form of ministry in the 21st century church. ~~[This task~~

~~foree~~ **[The General Assembly Mission Council]** shall be directed to make recommendations regarding vocational development and training; fundraising, support, and interpretation of bi-vocational ministry within church councils; increasing the utilization of the Church Leadership Connection to connect churches and teaching elders called to bi-vocational ministry; and addressing issues surrounding the compensation and provision for benefits to support this important form of ministry. ~~[This task foree would work with the Office of Vocation, the Committee on Theological Education, and other bodies to make recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).]~~”

*Rationale for Recommendation 2.*

Currently about 44 percent of PC(USA) congregations are without a full-time minister, and that number is likely to increase in the coming decades.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, many seminary trained leaders and teaching elders have been educated and equipped for ministry but not prepared for this new reality. Encouraging and equipping bi-vocational ministry within the PC(USA) will allow for greater creativity and flexibility for congregations, teaching elders, and ministry in the 21st century, while revitalizing the Reformed and Presbyterian witness in communities across the country.

**[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 3 with amendment. See pp. 48, 50.]**

**3. *Regarding Education and Support for Developing New Churches and Ministries in a New Day***

a. Call on PC(USA) seminaries to develop courses to better prepare students for emerging cultural realities. These would include training in new church development, non-traditional worshipping communities, and transformation of congregations. Courses should also address cross-cultural experiences, community organizing, and how to engage in ministries with underrepresented populations such as communities of color and people with disabilities.

b. Call on presbyteries to establish policies, consistent with the *Book of Order*, allowing for new categories of church (such as worshipping fellowships or missional communities) and develop richer understandings of membership. These designations would allow for more adaptive witness in diverse local contexts.

c. Call on presbyteries and the General Assembly Mission Council (through its Office of Vocation and Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) to consider alternative ways to resource the development of church plants, including the funding and sending of local missionaries, individual and multiple leader church plant teams, as well as the creation and increase of grant-making funds for the creation of new ministries.

d. Call on the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to work with PC(USA) seminaries to intentionally recruit and increase the numbers of racial ethnic and immigrant students in the seminaries.

e. Call on COTE to work with PC(USA) seminaries to develop plans to hire, mentor, support, and retain scholars from underrepresented communities, and to commit to prioritize finding candidates to replace retiring faculty with scholars from underrepresented communities.

**[f. Call upon PC(USA) seminaries to develop resources for congregations to use to analyze their particular local mission contexts.]**

*Rationale for Recommendation 3.*

Changing contexts require adaptive church leadership, but much of our education focuses on pastoring established congregations and older models of ministry. When pastors want to start a new community, they often have to take courses in non-Presbyterian seminaries in order to gain the tools they will need. In order to nurture innovation and creativity, it will be important to develop and offer opportunities for this education within Presbyterian seminaries.

**[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 4. See pp. 48, 50.]**

**4. *Regarding New Immigrant Communities***

Urge presbyteries to develop strategies to identify, engage, and welcome into membership Reformed and Presbyterian immigrant fellowships within their bounds, including investing financial resources to support these ministries.

*Rationale for Recommendation 4.*

Many immigrant communities already identify as Reformed Christians or Presbyterians, but find numerous institutional barriers keeping them from full inclusion and participation in the PC(USA). These communities often lack the financial resources needed to establish churches. Simply removing these barriers would greatly enrich our community and diversity.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 5 with amendment. See pp. 48, 50.]

**5. *Regarding Multi-Lingual Communications and Resource Development***

**Instruct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to work together to develop and implement specific and comprehensive plans to ~~[offer all denominational news, policy statements, web information, telephone direction, church statements, and other communications in Korean, Spanish, and other languages as needed. Both entities]~~ [provide basic accessibility of essential GAMC information to major non-English language groups, specifically Korean and Spanish, via links on the web page, telephone answer prompts, and other devices as technologies and resources evolve. The GAMC] will report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) as to their progress.**

***Rationale***

In spite of the multilingual presence in our church, only a few selected PC(USA) resources and statements are translated into languages other than English. Presently, callers to the Presbyterian Center who do not speak English are not able to communicate in their own languages. The PC(USA) web site is predominantly in the English language. Thus, many current and prospective church members cannot read or hear information in their own languages, preventing them from full participation in the connectional church. As we prepare for an increasingly diverse future, we can make the ministry of the PC(USA) accessible to those who do not speak English.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 6 with amendment. See pp. 48, 50.]

**6. *Regarding Supporting and Equipping Pastoral Leaders***

**a. Charge the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Office of Theology, Worship and Education, to articulate a Reformed understanding of just compensation based on our theology of God's providence and the grace in which we all live and serve.**

**b. Charge the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to study how to bring teaching elders receiving below-minimum compensation ~~[—a group that includes women and pastors of immigrant and underrepresented racial-ethnic congregations, ministries, and fellowships—]~~ up to or above the minimum compensation set by presbyteries.**

**c. Charge the Office of the General Assembly to add annual compensation to the Annual Statistical Report, including salary and benefits, of all exempt church workers [who participate in the Board of Pensions], identified by gender and race/ethnicity.**

**d. Urge presbyteries to set a maximum compensation level correlated with their minimum compensation level. Congregations, ministries, and institutions of the church wishing to offer compensation beyond the maximum would then be expected to match, dollar for dollar, the compensation beyond the maximum into a fund that could subsidize the salaries and/or benefits for teaching elders engaged in ministries that do not meet presbytery minimum terms of call.**

**e. Charge the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Office of Vocation, to study how to effectively address the pernicious situation set up by the ongoing and increasing debt crisis for many seminarians and recent seminary graduates combined with compensation offered to new pastors that is not adequate to service the debt load faced by many.**

**f. Charge the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to revisit study documents on compensation and justice, particularly the reports of 1983 and 2010, and to bring a report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), including a comprehensive review of lack of parity in compensation based on class, gender, ethnicity, and type of service in the church.**

***Rationale for Recommendation 6.***

Even as Presbyterians advocate for justice and equity, great inequalities in pay exist within ecclesial bodies and congregations. These inequalities particularly affect women and ministers from underrepresented racial ethnic communities. This not only inhibits the ministry of the church, but also distorts the witness of the church around issues of justice and stewardship of resources and gifts. The inequities can impede our capacity to grow the church deep and wide.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 7 with amendment. See pp. 48, 50–51.]

### 7. *Regarding Christian Vocation*

Charge the General Assembly Mission Council (through its Office of Theology, Worship and Education and its Office of Vocation) and the other five agencies of the PC(USA)—Board of Pensions, Foundation, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—to articulate a renewed call for the priesthood of all believers, [moving away from models of church that rely on an unhealthy dependence on professionalized ministry and ignore the call of believers for mission and ministry in daily life.] [affirming the gifts for ministry of all believers, freeing those called to ordered ministry to carry out their calls better.]

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$115,813, (2014) \$112,419 GAMC; (2013) \$65,995, (2014) \$58,709—Per Capita]

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 7.*

In many contexts, a top-down, corporate model of church that encourages over-dependence on professional church staff for the work of ministry has been dominant. This model is no longer financially sustainable for many congregations and diminishes the role of baptized believers to participate fully as members of the Body of Christ. We must recover the Reformed understanding of vocation that recognizes the call of the baptized to ministry in the Body of Christ.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 8 with amendment. See pp. 48, 51.]

### 8. *Regarding Understanding Privilege*

Urge presbyteries to examine the cultural contexts in which their congregations do ministry to enumerate compelling reasons for congregational leaders to broaden their understandings of community. We urge presbyteries to offer training to learn how ~~[white privilege and other discriminatory attitudes and practices]~~ [all discriminatory attitudes and practices] limit potential for building up the Body of Christ.

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 8.*

The General Assembly has declared that it is opposed to racism, yet many presbyteries and their congregations have resisted the call to learn how internalized privilege informs attitudes about people from underrepresented racial ethnic communities and how racism harms the Body of Christ. By recognizing the changed cultural and demographic contexts, we can grasp compelling reasons for changing these attitudes. We are called to minister in a broken world, and, equipped with openness to all God’s people, we will be prepared to discern together how to heal the brokenness.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 9 with amendment. See pp. 48, 51.]

### 9. *Regarding Ongoing Resources*

[That the General Assembly direct the chair of the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century to appoint a five-person subcommittee of that committee and limit in the next two years \$26,000 expenses, completing work and reporting to the 221st General Assembly (2014).] ~~[Equip a subcommittee of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century]~~ [The purpose of the subcommittee is] to develop practical resources for further communication with and use for mid councils, congregations, and individuals on forming faithful plans for our common future.”

#### *Rationale for Recommendation 9.*

The Special Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century’s mandate included a charge to bring a report, make recommendations, and if appropriate, prepare “practical resources for individual and congregational use.” At the conclusion of our study, we determined that practical resources are appropriate, but realize we need more time to develop them.

[The assembly approved Item 16-07, Recommendation 10 with amendment. See pp. 48, 51.]

### 10. *Regarding Living Out Our Faith Publicly*

a. Call on the PC(USA) to focus its ministry and resources on the society-at-large and to mobilize its agencies/entities, councils, congregations, and members/disciples to reach out holistically with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to participate in God’s just peace and sociopolitical transformation.

b. Call on PC(USA) to mobilize our agencies/entities, councils, congregations, and members/disciples to prayerfully discern afresh where and how God is calling the whole church to live out our faith.

c. **Call on [the preaching and educational ministry of the church] [pastors, sessions, and Christian educators] to equip Presbyterians to live out their Christian faith publicly through their various social roles and spheres of influence in practical demonstration of the love and teachings of Jesus, in concrete ways (as citizens, consumers, family, and individuals). Our budgets and programs must reflect our commitment to mission and focusing outwardly.**

**[d. Call on local pastors, sessions, and congregations to engage in hands-on ministry outside the walls of their buildings and in their neighborhoods.]**

**[e. Call on church members ages 15 to 35 to assume greater leadership in growing the church with special focus among their peers.]**

### *Rationale for Recommendation 10.*

The church exists in the world to serve society-at-large, not only its own membership/disciples; the world is the context and society is the mission field, not the pews, and not the choir lofts. The church is called to focus not inwardly on buildings, programs, staff, and institutions, but outwardly on the local communities, neighborhoods, and implications of government policies, and dishonest market practices, and to challenge unethical societal norms. The PC(USA) has come to represent the elite and the rich, and must not fail to reflect and demonstrate God's grace, love, and compassion. Society, not church institutions, is the context of the church, and the church must grow and develop resources to respond more effectively to the ongoing social injustice and emerging societal challenges. The church is sent out to the world to bring about true healing and reconciliation, to serve practically and selflessly, to love genuinely and sacrificially, and to minister to all including the marginalized and outcasts in our society. The church is called to proclaim justice and hope, and to speak truth to the powers to be. The church is called to share power, resources, and fellowship with the least among us, to feed the hungry, and to minister to the vulnerable.

The PC(USA) has been emphasizing both the social witness and evangelism, and we have yet to bring about the impact on the larger society to which God is calling the church to serve. Despite the decline in membership and resources, the PC(USA) is still positioned to make a larger impact on transforming the world and living out our calling more faithfully. The call for councils and congregations is to serve their local communities, and for individual Presbyterians the call is to live out their faith in their neighborhoods and environments. We need to evaluate better our mission and witness in order to refocus our resources, both human and material, to serve society more faithfully and love the neighbor more genuinely.

### *Overall Rationale*

#### INTRODUCTION

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 11-10. Direct the Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to Appoint a Committee of Eleven Persons to Study the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 878 of the electronic version, p. 338 of the printed version)*

The 201st General Assembly (1989) formed a special committee to study “The Nature of the Church and the Practice of Governance,” which reported to the 205th General Assembly (1993). That committee found, ten years after reunion, that the church suffered from a lack of identity and had no clear and comprehensive strategy for the future of the denomination. Particularly noted were diverse biblical and theological interpretations and life experiences leading to different understandings of where the mission priorities of the church should be. The committee’s study indicated that while the church held stated values for racial, ethnic, and theological diversity and inclusivity, the church had chosen to serve those values by requiring participation on committees and in governing bodies, neglecting a deeper commitment to learn the diverse cultural, racial, and theological values included in the body, to incorporate these diverse perspectives into our operative understanding of the church, and to plan for the future.

Today, the situation mirrors much of what the special committee found in 1993, except that in many ways the diversity of opinion has led to increased polarization and a more serious lack of communal identity. This has occurred in a time when demographic projections move us to look at where the PC(USA) is in our membership, evangelism, and stewardship strategies in a changing world.

Now, in a new century, with efforts to integrate increasing diversity into the church and its leadership, the time for a new study has come. The General Assembly created this special committee during the 219th General Assembly (2010) with a mandate to “help to increase understanding of the church from a Reformed and Presbyterian perspective and assist current and new members in forming faithful plans for our common future” (*Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 879 of the electronic version*).

We began our work by creating a list of resources, articles, and books to read about the church, its context, conditions, dreams, and visions. The committee established goals<sup>2</sup> and created questions<sup>3</sup> to use as a survey tool in seeking feedback from people across the church. We met with staff from the OGA and the GAMC, people working in new and creative ministries, church members, leaders, and groups across the country who shared observations about the present and future of the

denomination. Committee members spoke to attendees of the Big Tent gathering in June 2011 and offered an opportunity for shared conversation about the nature of the church and visions for its future.

The committee surrounded the process of discernment by worship and prayers for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit. The committee members thank all of those who prayed for us as we worked, and are grateful for this opportunity to serve the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The report is in the form of a worship service and includes Scripture, prayer, litanies, and a hymn. We hope these will help the church catch a vision of ministry to the people of God well into the 21st century.

### *Prologue*

Nearly 2,000 years ago, a group of people from Galilee gathered together in a room in Jerusalem. This diverse group included men and women, wealthy and poor. Language and origin united them, along with one other crucial thing: the living God had touched each life, and now, in the midst of uncertainty and turmoil, they anticipated what God would do. As they waited, they prayed, and as they prayed, they waited, there, in a room.

With the sound of a violent wind, the Holy Spirit broke into the room and poured out upon this group of people. Individuals who followed the person of Jesus became the Body of Christ.

The story could have ended there, but it didn't.

Outside of the room, in the streets of Jerusalem, an even greater diversity of people—from many lands and of many tongues—had come together for the day of Pentecost. They gathered in astonishment, for they heard these Galileans speaking in their own languages. The Holy Spirit emboldened and empowered those in the upper room to share the good news of Jesus Christ. On that day, three thousand people were added to this pied tapestry of Holy Spirit weaving.

When they left the room, they became united with brothers and sisters from all corners of the world and all stations of life. Together they devoted themselves to teaching, fellowshiping, breaking bread, sharing resources, and praying for each other. None had any need. And day-by-day the Lord added to their number.

But what if they had never left that room?

They could have invited a few more into the room, and naturally, there would be some growth. They might form a building committee to add some new rooms to the house, or a wing for education. Their identity and nucleus would remain centered in that room. Perhaps others would hear some of the good news in passing, and want to follow the same Way. They could build their own chambers, of course, providing that they could raise enough money to do so.

The Galileans might determine that the same old room was no longer big enough for people of different opinions or persuasions. They might bisect the room with a new wall. Another group might decide to build their own house, and their own rooms, with other like-minded individuals. Some of the rooms are open to everyone—as long as the newcomers don't expect anything to change. Other doors remain tightly shut, opening only from the inside. Individuals gather in the rooms with others who look like, talk like, and think like themselves, while a whole new world develops just outside their doors. Those in the rooms fight over dwindling resources, fret about crumbling buildings, and devote more time to housekeeping, forgetting why they gathered in the first place.

What if those Galileans hadn't left the room?

As we prayed about our common future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the 21st Century, this challenge stayed in the forefront of our minds, "Will we, as Presbyterians in the 21st Century, leave our rooms? Will we venture from our comfortable sanctuaries? Will we go out into the streets, learning different languages, embracing diversity, planting new congregations, and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ?"

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Praise be to God, Creator of all that is!

Praise be to the Almighty, Advocate for us all!

Blessing and honor be to the Eternal, the Great I Am, who brought the world into being and birthed the Body of Christ, the Church. The Church is God's and God's alone; through grace and in love, God grants us the opportunity to work with the Triune God in ministry in the church and the world.

### CONFESSION

The Galileans left the room, but we have built many more rooms since then. Too often we have stayed inside our comfortable places in like-minded contentment. In this crucial time, as we discern God's call for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the 21st Century, we need to confess our sins—those things we have done as well as those things we ought to have done. We acknowledge our wrongs as we think about our inability to respond faithfully to cultural change, spiritual poverty, erected barriers, accumulated power, amassed resources, social witness, and theological education.

*Cultural Change*

The church of the 21st century exists in a radically different context than the church of the past, yet we confess that we have done little to understand and engage our surroundings. Congregations focus inward. We build and maintain buildings, programs, membership, and mostly serve our own membership. This model prospered decades ago, but has contributed to a self-centered church.

Most congregations no longer reflect our communities or engage them in significant ways. In addition, underrepresented racial ethnic and new immigrant constituencies are often perceived as unequal partners. Seeking comfort and safety in financial, cultural, and socioeconomic stability, we condemn the Gospel of Jesus Christ as irrelevant and out of touch with the needs and realities of our context.

Many church members grasp at former eras. With outdated cultural assumptions, we operate as in the past, spending for staff and programs that offer little return in terms of ministry or mission. Churches may fail to recognize, welcome, and provide support or programming for segments of their 21st century communities, including single parents, single adults, same-gender couples, disabled men and women, and underrepresented racial ethnic and immigrant adults and their families.

*Spiritual Poverty*

We confess our external and internal spiritual poverty. We neglected to share the good news of Jesus Christ to the detriment of those inside and outside of our church. We have been reluctant to step outside of comfort zones and incorporate different resources for spiritual formation. We have held onto rituals that no longer inspire and deepen faith, and some practices may obstruct the goal of nurturing disciples.

We have found easy comfort in church membership. Clinging to the way things were, we fear rather than embrace change. We worry about dying and fiercely grasp on to what we have and what we have always done. When the church does adapt, it is often to the disordered parts of the culture. Called to be countercultural, avoiding controversy keeps the church from the hard work of discipleship.

Caught up in the pressures of congregational leadership, church leaders neglect the time to nurture rich personal spiritual lives that undergird ministry. Without spiritual development, church leaders may never realize the power of prayer, and lack confidence in God's presence as we work for change. We understand the need for transformation but may be unsure how to proceed. Lacking resources, knowledge, or support to proceed with transformational work, many church leaders resort to continuing to do things the way they have always been done.

*Erected Barriers*

Though the church strives to speak the truth of God's love for all people and creation, we confess our complicity in the societal sins of racism, sexism, ageism, and homophobia, and have perpetuated them within the church through formal and informal barriers to full inclusion.

A report from the Church Growth Strategy Team to General Assembly in 1996 projected potential growth in faith communities of color.<sup>4</sup> It concluded that the church had the potential to have underrepresented racial ethnic membership of 20 percent by the year 2020. At present, the church has less than 10 percent membership from those groups. The barriers to eliminating ongoing racism are multiple. The denomination's five<sup>5</sup> "racial ethnic caucuses" and other communities must compete with one another for the shrinking resources.

Shifting patterns in immigration resulted in an influx of diverse communities, not only from Latin America, but also the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and India. Rather than being welcomed fully into the Body of Christ, their arrival can invoke fear of the other and fear of social and institutional change. The way forward must be to journey together.

We confess that we erect institutional barriers to welcoming immigrant ministers from global Presbyterian churches. The denomination has the structure to waive some requirements, but many presbyteries are not inclined to bend when new congregations ask to affiliate with the presbytery.

Racism, sexism, and patriarchy still have a hold on the church. Evidence includes the vast difference in pay for women and ministers from underrepresented racial ethnic communities in comparison to what white men receive for the same positions.<sup>6</sup> Few women or underrepresented racial ethnic pastors serve as heads of staff of congregations over 1,000 members. Guidelines about the use of inclusive and expansive language for God and the people of God have been in existence since 1984, yet pastors resist modeling this language, and parishioners follow their lead, perpetuating sexist language in the next generation.<sup>7</sup>

*Accumulated Power*

We confess that we misuse our power and privilege. As we look at the church institutions, including the six agencies of the PC(USA), mid councils, seminaries, and congregations, we recognize that we still struggle with issues of power sharing, particularly along lines of gender and underrepresented racial ethnic groups. Those with power to decide who shall be at the



table can make decisions about how far to expand the circle. Even with the best of intentions, those in power may unconsciously resist changes that threaten to take away some of that influence. Others may even make conscious decisions to exclude those with whom they are not comfortable or whom they perceive as a threat to their efforts to control. Implicit hierarchies impede the empowering of congregational leaders and diminish the priesthood of all believers.

Even though church members may realize they are called to be a welcoming, inclusive community, hospitality itself becomes an exercise of power. Members happily and easily show hospitality to those who are like them, but pull back when visitors differ in dress, language or skin color.

#### *Amassed Resources*

We confess our disordered relationship with money and pray that God will lead us to recover a faithful understanding of living into stewardship. There may be little discussion about giving, tithing, and generosity. In times of recession, teaching stewardship may seem too controversial for pastors to address except in an occasional sermon when pledges are due. We confess that we preach a God of abundance but live with a worldview of scarcity.

Substantial inequalities exist in our pay structures. Large churches offer high salaries while small churches struggle to afford part-time or weekly pulpit supply, let alone full-time pastors. While wealthy churches might be able to support ministers and ministries in contexts that cannot be self-supporting, this is rare in practice. Though we identify ourselves as a connec-tional church, that connection remains tenuous when it comes to sharing financial resources.

By continuing to define church by sustainability, independence, financial security, and size, many new churches and fellowships are not included in the Presbyterian family. It must be noted that this definition of a church—a self-governing, self-sustaining, self-propagating entity—is a 19th century church model not found anywhere in Scripture.

The majority of congregations continue to worship in buildings that require increasing costs in maintenance and upkeep, even as membership continues to decline, saddling fewer members with greater costs simply to keep the doors open. Congregations could seek out new ministries to house in the building or explore options for selling property, but often resist such alternatives. As a result, fewer and fewer resources go to support mission and outreach as funds are tied up in maintaining aging properties that are often impractical and inaccessible for many individuals.

#### *Social Witness*

We confess that the church has been more concerned with declining membership and revenues than with following the call of Jesus. Particularly in a time of economic crisis, we turn inward, focusing on buildings, budgets, and bureaucracies, while becoming isolated from the local communities we are called to love and serve. Dedicating diminished resources to self-serving survival strategies makes us prone to divisions and power struggles. In such a time as this, God urges the church to love sacrificially and serve faithfully, to take risks, to take up our cross and follow Jesus. The church must strengthen its social witness, promote just peace, and actively engage society as the heart of our mission.

#### *Theological Education*

We confess that a lack of culturally proficient theological education perpetuates blindness to the changing context of the church. Theological education often does not prepare ministers for shifting realities in our world and ministry, but seems designed to educate leaders who maintain the status quo. We lack courses that can develop social awareness and skills in the traditions and languages of new and younger communities. Courses geared toward changing needs in congregational and missional leadership are largely absent from required or elective curricula.

Theological education that includes an understanding of other Christian denominations would go far toward encouraging clergy to work cooperatively with others who share the same concerns for the needs in the context in which they minister. Sharing ideas, resources, and skills with other churches in an effort to benefit neighbors in need can provide the kind of hospitality that demonstrates God's love. Courses to expand understanding can eliminate the tendency to judge and to compete with other denominations in a local context.

#### *Call To Confession*

If we say we are without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Our God, who continually makes all things new, is ready and eager to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In faith and humility, let us confess our sin together.

#### *Litany Of Confession*

One: Holy One, we have built walls around us to keep us safe and comfortable with others who look, think, speak, and act like us.

All: Forgive us, God of grace. Help us to open the doors of our closed rooms and listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit.

## 16 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP

- One: We confess that we are timid in the face of change and do not welcome your children in all their diversity.
- All: Forgive us, God of strength. Help us to be brave enough to open the doors of our churches to the world outside to see where the Spirit of God may lead us.
- One: We have not greeted those we do not know. We have not sought ways to journey together with those different from us.
- All: Forgive us, God of all. Help us to leave our sanctuaries to listen, work, and pray with others in ministry and to the community around us.
- One: We confess we do not notice those missing from our churches, those who cannot attend church on our schedule, who do not understand our traditions and practices because of language and cultural differences, and those who may feel pressured to join and contribute, but who feel excluded because of stressful financial realities.
- All: Forgive us, God of mercy, and help us to suspend the judgments that narrow our world.
- One: Our failure to take time from our busy lives to spend time relating to you, dear God, has left us poor in spirit, fearful, clinging, and critical. We go through the motions of worship, thinking it is for our comfort but gaining little in spiritual nourishment.
- All: Forgive us, God of power. Help us remember our worship is for you.
- One: We see the poverty and injustice in our communities, yet we fail to understand how our own privilege contributes to the inequities. We do not make the effort to work with the voiceless, the marginalized, the suffering to learn how our resources and voices might be used to change oppressive systems.
- All: God of justice, forgive our blindness to our privilege and our fear that keeps us from working with others to confront the status quo.
- One: We repent of our grasping for power, position, and financial security. Our clenched hands hang on to buildings and traditions that no longer give vitality, but add burdens that overwhelm us, depriving us of joy.
- All: God of freedom, forgive us for lacking the courage to let go, share, and discover the life-giving energy that comes from hearing all the voices, not just those that are loudest. Free us from fear. Open us to new ways of being Christ's Body in the world.

### *Assurance Of Pardon*

- One: We worship a God of grace and mercy, who creates us, loves us, redeems us, and is ready to forgive our failures. The Spirit of God has opened the doors of our closed rooms and has invited us into the world, to live lives devoted to service and love. Even before we repent of the sin that separates us from God, God is ready to greet us as cleansed and renewed disciples. In the name of the Holy Trinity, we are forgiven!
- All: All thanks and praise to God!

## THE WORD

### *Present Situation*

The passing of the first decade of the 21st century reinforced how dramatically different the social landscape of this century is from the last. In the United States, the first decade has been marked by terrorism, war, and deep economic recession. Environmental disasters threaten our land and make us vulnerable. The challenges that stem from those realities affect not only Americans, but also the entire global community.

Despite these issues, we also see hope and possibility. Ethnic minority communities grow, not just in population, but in economic, social, and cultural contributions. Advancing technologies alter the structures that dominate the way we speak, write, and collaborate as a society.

Since the Nature of the Church report published in 1993, areas of tension within our denomination have become more visible and urgent. Like many denominations, our ability to influence government and business has ebbed, yet we still have a great deal of material wealth. We hope to overcome our divisions in successive generations, however, many people in younger demographics feel disaffected, neglected by Presbyterian communities of faith. We continue to ignore the gifts and contributions of underrepresented racial ethnic groups, depriving us of the richness of the full Body of Christ.

We are grateful for the churches that have come to the end of their lifespan and celebrate their ministries. We also recognize the challenging fact that the loss of churches has grown steadily over the decade. Congregations have been dissolved

(691), merged (116), or dismissed (101).<sup>8</sup> (See Figure 1, Dissolved, Merged, Dismissed Congregations, in the pdf file, sp-com-nature-of-the-church-in-21st-century; or page 1493.)

As we thank God for the vital ministries of these congregations, we hope that their land, buildings, and resources (when available) will be used to plant new communities of faith. If a congregation leaves the denomination, we encourage presbyteries to negotiate for money or resources for starting a new congregation or supporting an emerging immigrant fellowship. (See Figure 2, Merged, Received, and New Congregations, in the pdf file, sp-com-nature-of-the-church-in-21st-century; or page 1493.)

As we look at the trend over the decade, we see that we lost more churches than we planted and the loss of churches has more than doubled in the last eleven years.<sup>9</sup> (See Figure 3, Net Loss of Congregations, in the pdf file, sp-com-nature-of-the-church-in-21st-century; or page 1493.)

Currently, 44 percent of our congregations are without installed pastoral leadership, and an increasing number of congregations can no longer afford an installed pastor.<sup>10</sup> Though we rejoice in the vital work of those congregations who are led by commissioned ruling elders and stated supply pastors, we also recognize the fragile position that these congregations face in the coming decades. (See Figure 4, Pastoral Leadership, in the pdf file, sp-com-nature-of-the-church-in-21st-century; or page 1494.)

Even as we support congregations who face changing realities, as we think about our plans for our common future, we know we must put more energy into planting new congregations that focus on diverse communities and younger generations. As we look at new immigrant fellowships and new church developments, we rejoice in these new communities. Yet, we realize that there are many obstacles before these communities of faith become officially organized or can be received in our larger denomination.

Most presbyteries want congregations to be self-sustaining, self-governing, and self-propagating before they become officially organized. This causes difficulties, because it means that those who are part of new communities do not have a recognized vote or voice within our larger system. Often worshipers in new communities are more diverse and younger than the dominant church culture, and we need to hear their perspectives in order to meet the challenges of the years ahead.

We, as a committee, recognize common roadblocks for developing worshiping communities, particularly relating to our cultural bias and finances.

### *Cultural Bias*

In the next generation, Caucasians will be a minority in our country. As we look toward vital years ahead, we will need to focus on nurturing diverse communities. Even though immigrant fellowships and other diverse communities are the fastest growing groups in our denomination, they can face considerable obstacles as they try to organize as Presbyterian congregations. Here are four examples.

- A Somali community meets every week to worship together. It's a vibrant body, with more than three hundred in attendance. Yet, the presbytery has not recognized them as a "church" because they do not have enough official members.

The people who attend worship do not have the same notions of membership that the prevailing Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has. A person might be active in a congregation, but reluctant to give up membership in a former congregation. Other worshipers find it odd that they would have to stand up in front of the congregation, profess their faith, and have their names written in a book in order to become members. The PC(USA) idea of membership has kept the church from organizing.

- A Mexican community gathers in a living room, praising God. The community is Reformed and they have a Presbyterian pastor. As they work and worship together, they grow in numbers and vitality. They visit their local presbytery and ask if they can become a part of the denomination. The pastor, with many years of ordained ministry experience in Mexico, faces numerous roadblocks—he must pass culturally biased ordination exams, meet very specific educational requirements, and navigate unwieldy committee structures. The barriers become so numerous and costly that the community eventually gives up on trying to become a part of our denomination.

- A Presbyterian Portuguese community worships together. When they outgrow the living room of the pastor's house, they ask the presbytery if they know of a space where they can worship. The presbytery leads them to a wonderful building, home to an aging Caucasian congregation. At first, the situation works out well, as the Portuguese community grows into its new space. The immigrant community gives a portion of its income to the white congregation.

Friction arises over the shared space, and the white congregation begins to complain about the mess that the children make, the additional electricity costs, and the wear and tear on the building. Quickly, the white congregation no longer sees the situation as a ministry partnership, but they see themselves as landlords and the immigrant community as tenants. They begin to pressure the emerging congregation to find another home.

- An immigrant pastor begins a congregation in her neighborhood, and she is welcomed into presbytery membership. As she continues to work in her congregation, she sees that she is well below the presbytery's minimum salary. She notices that when the denominational body is planting a white church, they call it an "intentional new church development," but her community is an "immigrant fellowship." With all of the work that she has been putting into the church, she knows that her community has also been "intentional." The only thing that is not intentional is the level of commitment and resources that the denomination allots. The difference between what the presbytery puts into a white church plant versus her immigrant congregation is substantial.

As we think about the decades to come, we encourage presbyteries to understand the ways in which they work against diverse communities, and find ways to nurture the fellowships in their midst.

### *Finances*

Financial stability is a major criterion for a congregation to move from the development phase to being recognized as an organized congregation. A new immigrant fellowship or a new church development officially becomes a "church" when the membership can support a full budget. Although this hurdle seems like a practical necessity, it can be difficult for diverse and younger communities to become financially stable in the short time that funding allows. In fact, most of our congregations would not be financially independent if it weren't for the faithfulness of previous generations; existing congregations have been blessed with property, buildings, and (sometimes) endowments that have been passed onto our generation. Even with those gifts, an increasing number of established congregations can no longer afford an installed pastor.

As we plan for future decades, we can realize the tenuous position in which many new communities might find themselves. We can realize that financial independence should not be the leading signifier of a worshiping community. We can recognize alternative categories of church (such as worshiping fellowships or missional communities) and support them for longer periods.

### *Scripture Stories*

Change and crisis are not simply endemic of our present situation; they are part and parcel of the journey of God's people. When the disciples of Jesus gathered on Pentecost after his resurrection, they commemorated God's giving of the Law at Sinai. The tongues of fire sent by the Holy Spirit upon the disciples that day were like the divine fire that inscribed tablets of the Law before Moses at Sinai. The Law served as God's gift to bind together the mixed multitude that came out from Egypt in a covenant with God and one another. After the fresh experience of liberation from bondage, the Law instructed them how to remain a free people, loving God, neighbor, and self through true worship and holy living.

Many generations later during the Babylonian exile, the prophet Ezekiel had a vision that illustrated how God would again unify this chosen people in the midst of change. Ezekiel's vision of God descending from the sky on a throne moved by large wheels represented God's willingness to move in order to comfort a chosen people. It reminds us that God's presence will take up residence wherever we are. As the prophet Isaiah confirmed, God can indeed do a new thing among us (Isa. 43:19).

Because God maintained relationship with God's people in and out of exile, the disciples gathered at Pentecost knew the unbound power and presence of God. Scripture tells us that the disciples gathered together with one accord. However, the Spirit disrupted that easy unity. In its place, the Spirit offered them a deeper unity that could withstand the sending of the disciples out of the room and into a world of risk and opportunity. The world took notice of this miracle of unity amidst diversity, and the Gospel was shared to the ends of the earth. If the disciples hadn't left that upper room, where would we be today?

The New Testament gives us a portrait of what Christian community looks like when it accepts this miracle. The body of believers, conceived in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, grew into a *koinonia*—a community known by its deep communion and sharing. Common practices that resulted from their Pentecost encounter held this community together.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2:42–47).

They held things in common, sharing in the manner that Jesus had demonstrated to them in feeding multitudes. They broke bread together, sharing a common table that spoke of their willingness to welcome, overcome differences, and become mutually vulnerable. They prayed, seeking to be attentive to the Holy Spirit and to better follow their Lord and Savior.

They dared to yield to the hospitality of others. When Cornelius, a Roman soldier, sent for Simon Peter in Joppa and brought him back to instruct him as to the Gospel of God and the new community, Peter's understanding of community changed. Peter changed his behavior according to the Spirit, and his mind was transformed (Acts 10:27–28). What could have been a failure to accept the unsettling command of the Holy Spirit was redeemed in risky discipleship. Accepting the welcome of a Gentile allowed Peter to make a startling confession:

I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears [God] and does what is right is acceptable to [God]. You know the message [God] sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—[who] is Lord of all. (Acts 10:34–36).

These Scriptural reminders of the source of our unity and the unbound power of God affirm that the nature of the church in the 21st century and the heart of Presbyterian witness will be in making disciples in diverse and transformative communities to the greater glory of God.

Many have understood what has happened in our denomination in the late 20th and early 21st centuries through the lens of exile. While there are many elements of the biblical experience of exile within our context, there are signs of liberation and restoration, characteristic of exodus. Indeed both exodus and exile co-exist in the PC(USA). In exodus, we journey from the known to the unknown, from old ways to new ways. What sustained the PC(USA) in past generations is not what will sustain us in this generation and beyond. We must go out by a different way, discerning our path in discipleship together.

### *Disciples*

As disciples we witness to Christ in word and deed, and in doing so understand the fullness of our identity in Christ. To strengthen our witness within the context of 21st century America, Christians in PC(USA) congregations must move from a focus on membership to a focus on discipleship as the primary locus of their identity. Disciples seek to love God and love neighbor in the way and person of Jesus Christ.

*When we shift from membership to discipleship, our understanding of leadership changes.* In a membership-oriented model of church, members are the recipients of benefits within the congregation. In a discipleship-oriented model of church, disciples seek to serve and be served in the nurturing of Christian faith and life. The future of leadership in the 21st century church belongs not only to teaching elders, but also to ruling elders, deacons, and others equipped for the ministry to which we are being called.

*A shift from membership to discipleship occurs as God sends us out into the world.* In a membership-oriented model of church, we often stay within our own silos, more concerned with our guilds and circles than with the larger mission of Jesus Christ. We become tethered to our customs in an unhealthy way. In a discipleship-oriented church, we stay rooted in tradition and yet are sent out in an apostolic manner, requiring adaptation to changing circumstances so that we can more closely mirror Christ in our context. Education, worship, spiritual disciplines, service, and mission, form us more completely as disciples.

### *Transformed And Transformative Communities*

The Holy Spirit transforms Christian communities into communities that shape disciples, empowering them to become transformative in a world marked by God's gifts of diversity. In encounters with enemies, strangers, and the marginalized, the disciples understood the power of Christ to form their full humanity. The Christian community appreciates that it takes the whole people of God, in all their diverse perspectives, in order to get a fuller glimpse of God's vision for us in the 21st century.

While we may feel more comfortable focusing our efforts on specific groups of like-minded people, ethnically, theologically, or socially, God calls us to exhibit the reign of Christ to the world and to model a society in which the reconciling of differences is at the source of divine power and the purpose of human community. In living in such communities seeking transformation, disciples within that community are themselves transformed.

*Transformed communities need the resources necessary to thrive.* We recognize that the established churches in our denomination continue to benefit from the faithful stewardship of those saints who have gone before, through the benefits of property, endowments, and other funds that continue to enable ministry today. New church developments and new missional communities today begin without those benefits, and often find themselves reaching out to those on the margins of society and the church—groups that lack the financial means for full support. These communities need more equity and flexibility. They need more support from the connectional church, not simply in terms of prayer and good will, but in terms of finances, property, and other material helps.

Discipleship and apostleship drive us toward the risk necessary for Christian witness in our time. As Christians we should not only sustain ourselves or perpetuate our existence; rather our uniqueness is in following the one who gave himself up for others, emptied himself, humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

This servant posture accounts for the honor given Christ. Christ calls us to be willing to serve, learn from, heal, and comfort those unlike ourselves. This is the heart of true evangelism.

*God has given us a bigger mission than we have given ourselves.* Just as disciples cannot be nourished by worship or service or education alone, so our mission cannot be relegated to only one area of human life or community. Likewise, the gifts we have been given are not meant for our own satisfaction or comfort. For to whom much has been given, much is expected. At a time when Presbyterians are among the wealthiest of Christians in the United States, we need to respond with faithful stewardship, to receive our blessing as a responsibility to be a blessing to all the nations of the world.

*God is glorified when we are reconciled in our diversity* to anticipate the realm of God, and to exhibit that great vision to the world around us.

## THANKSGIVING

As we recognize the world in which we live, the ways in which we have been blessed and gifted to minister in that world, and our call to do so, we cannot help but give thanks to God. We give thanks because God is good. We belong to God in life and in death by the costly grace of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

However, for more than two decades denominations, including the PC(USA), have been preoccupied with dim statistics of relentless decline in membership and funding, and division of all kinds. Deep in anxiety, we focus upon ourselves rather than on God and God's work in our midst. The church is in danger of having its life of thanksgiving replaced by a life of anxiety. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, urges the church not to worry about anything, but instead to engage in a life of prayer and thanksgiving in joy. Paul also writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "give thanks in all circumstances . . ." From these passages and many others we learn that thanksgiving is more than an acknowledgement of mutual benefit or a kind of thankful feeling. Thanksgiving, according to Paul, is to focus our whole lives solely on God. This has several important implications for the church in the 21st century.

We give thanks, acknowledging that God is restoring and renewing the church for God's glory.

We continue to give thanks for God's faithful accompaniment and steadfast love for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as well as for the privilege of participating in mission in the past, present, and future.

We give thanks, affirming that the PC(USA) is part of God's church founded by Christ in the Holy Spirit. We give thanks and praise in all circumstances because we belong to God, and for the hope that we have through the resurrection of Christ.

We give thanks, anticipating the new and unfamiliar ways that God will renew the church for mission, in ways that may be hidden to us. We continue to trust that God will finish the good work started in us through Jesus Christ.

We give thanks for the wonderful ways God has gifted the PC(USA). We are thankful for the continuing ministries of more than 10,000 congregations and many emerging worshiping communities; for the colleges and seminaries educating people in witness to our Lord Jesus Christ; for the ordained women and men who serve as teaching and ruling elders; for the deacons who serve those in need; for the mission partners around the world bringing the Good News and hope of Jesus Christ to those thirsting for righteousness; for the mid-church councils and their leaders who serve God and neighbors; for the marvelous diversity of racial ethnic communities in our denomination; for the older and younger generations who worship and engage in mission together; for the challenging ministry and mission opportunities around us that we can engage in creative and faithful ways with the help of the Holy Spirit.

We are grateful for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit that we have received. We thank God for the rich faith tradition of our Reformed heritage through which we can thank and praise God through our minds, hearts, and strength. For the church in the 21st century, we pray that the Holy Spirit will move us powerfully and set our hearts on fire for God's justice and righteousness, that we will be passionate disciples of Christ and agents for God's steadfast love for this world. We will recover and own that part of our Reformed heritage, from Calvin to Jonathan Edwards, and from feminist and womanist theologies to liberation theologies of many different contexts, that affirm that God transforms us through faith.

We are thankful for the gift of the sacrament of the Eucharist, through which we receive the visible and the living Word by the host, our Lord Jesus Christ. Through bread and wine, words and action, this sacrament makes the promise of God visible and concrete. "In the Eucharist the church blesses God for all that God has done, is doing, and promises to do, and offers itself in obedient service to God's reign."<sup>11</sup> Eucharist is a way in which God the Holy Spirit empowers the church, nourishes the church, nurtures and challenges the church with the very presence of Jesus Christ. We will give thanks for God's mighty acts in the past, in the present, and in the future. We will praise God for God's creation of the world and the cosmos as well as God's providential care for all that God has made. We will give thanks to Christ for his redemptive life, death, and resurrection. We will continue to call upon the Holy Spirit to empower us to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ who can faithfully carry out God's work.

Looking back at the first decade of the century, we thank God that we have planted new congregations and found vital life and better use of resources as congregations merge, resulting in 370 new churches.<sup>12</sup> (See Figure 5, New Churches, Received Churches, and New Church Developments Comparison, in the pdf file, sp-com-nature-of-the-church-in-21st-century; or page 1494.)

We give thanks for the new things that God is doing in our midst.

*Sending*

Gathered by God, we confessed our sins, listened to the Word, and gave thanks for the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and church. We embraced the call and challenge to ministry. In virtue of our baptism, we are all called and empowered to go forth into the world in new and creative ways to witness to God's saving love and grace in the communities in which we live.

As we go out, we will need to meet the challenges of this transitional time—the increasing loss of congregations, the lack of diversity in our denomination, and the inability for churches to call full-time pastors. We can do it, with the Spirit’s leading, by leaving our like-minded rooms, planting diverse communities, and encouraging creative ministries and vocations.

As congregations come to the end of their lives, we will support churches that are called to close, and use our resources for emerging immigrant fellowships and new ministry opportunities. We will affirm pastors who feel called to bi-vocational ministry and innovative communities. Realizing our changing cultural contexts, we will identify, plant, and nurture immigrant fellowships, taking care to remove the barriers that might keep them from full participation in our life together. We will support and equip pastoral leaders through just and equitable pay, especially for women and people of color.

Moving forward, we lift up and learn from new and diverse models for authentic ministry in the 21st century, inspired by the faithful and creative work that God is doing in our midst. Here are several examples of models alive within the PC(USA):

*New immigrant fellowships.* A group of people who recently immigrated from another country will meet, worship, and support one another in someone’s living room. Often they outgrow their house church and continue to be a viable community and church.

*New communities planted by an established church.* Using money from a large congregation and denominational funding, a church is planted. Neema Community Church, now a chartered congregation, was birthed from Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, Kansas.

*Multicultural congregations.* Often churches realize that they can’t connect with their changing neighborhoods, so they welcome another immigrant congregation within their existing church structure. This works best when it’s not seen as a landlord/renter relationship, or even a “nesting” relationship, but a mutual ministry and partnership. Beechmont Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, has become a multicultural congregation by incorporating Latino and Sudanese communities into a multicultural model of shared ministry and governance. Alternately, multicongregational models of church share facilities and some mission, while maintaining their unique identities and leadership structures. Other congregations have managed to move away from mono-ethnic identities to incorporate members, leaders, traditions, and gifts from multiple and diverse ethnic groups in a vibrant witness to God’s diverse creation.

*Intentional Christian Communities.* A group of Christians live together and share resources so that they can serve their larger community. The members of the community might work part-time and spend the rest of their time worshipping, praying, and loving their neighbors. They might plant a community garden, provide child-care for children, or help neighbors navigate immigration bureaucracy. The Formation House in Pittsburgh is a good example of an intentional community.

*Church and nonprofit hybrids.* Presbyterian congregations, along with the presbytery, came together to form The Common Table in Bend, Oregon. It is “a nonprofit Social Entrepreneurship project for the betterment of our community and world.” As a restaurant and ministry, they put faith in action as they invest in people who need jobs, wholesome food, community, education, and experience.

*Pastors serve bi-vocational callings.* Pastors go into bi-vocational ministry so that they can serve the congregation as well as the community. Pastors may roast coffee, brew beer, counsel the community, write books, or participate in a number of callings alongside their call to the local church. Teaching Elder Edward Hilton serves as the pastor of Truckee Lutheran Presbyterian Church in Truckee, California. He works full-time as a teacher at the Sierra Continuation High School, allowing him to minister in multiple ways to the small mountain community. Some of our seminaries support this model through offering joint degrees along with the M.Div. such as the MSW, MAMFT, JD, MBA, and others.

*Art ministries.* Churches find new vitality as they begin to look toward the arts as a way of serving the community and attracting creative membership. Wicker Park Grace in Chicago is a good example of this type of community. Wicker Park Grace was planted in an art gallery, and creating art, poetry, and music has become central to who they are in their work and worship. In other places, a church might rent space to artists or partner with artists-in-residence.

*Food ministries.* Many congregations are using food—farmer’s markets, local food movements, and community gardens—to connect with the community and (in some cases) provide additional funding. Milwood Community Presbyterian Church in Spokane, Washington, has been a leader in the locavore movement, encouraging its community to eat locally produced food.<sup>13</sup>

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the years ahead, we can continue to expand into new churches and forms of ministry, supporting innovation and encouraging growth.

#### CLOSING AND SENDING

Two thousand years ago, a group of Galileans left the room where they were gathered, and the world hasn’t been the same since. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they became the diverse body of Christ in the world, going out near and far to share the good news of God’s love, grace, and mercy with all. We inherit this legacy, and the legacy of our Reformed and

Presbyterian heritage, even as we seek to follow God's call to us in a new day and time. May we be transformed through the work of the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ that God has created us to be, leaving our rooms of comfort and going out into the world of God's good creation.

*Sending Hymn*

“Send Us Out” (Can be sung to *NETTLETON* [*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*])

With the dawning of each new day, nature sings a song of praise;  
Let us join with all creation, hearts and hands and voices raised.  
For all that you've done before now, and all that you're doing new,  
God, Creator, we now offer, this new song of praise to you.

For our heritage, we thank you, and we honor what has been,  
And we pray now for your guidance to be with us, now, as then.  
Through your Holy Spirit, bind us, so that we may be set free—  
Free from all that would divide us. Lord restore our unity!

Give us sight to catch your vision of a world transformed by grace.  
Let us bear your hope and justice into every time and place.  
Lead us, God, into a new day; may we boldly heed your call.  
Send us out again in mission, serving you by loving all.

*Charge*

Go out! Let us go out from the rooms of our own creation; let us move beyond all that would divide us.

Go forth! Let us go into this world of God's creation, bearing God's justice, peace, and love to a world scarred by strife and division.

Go in the faith, hope, and love of Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God!

*Benediction (from Ephesians 6:23 and Romans 15:13)*

Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia! Amen.

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## Endnotes

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2. We will submit an informed paper that sets out a compelling vision for the nature of the church for the 21st century that will make a difference in our church. In addition, we will help create practical, interactive, well-designed resources that individual churches can use to help us to:
  - Rethink the model of the church in response to our shifting cultural contexts (immigration, race, age demographics, and technology). We will offer nimble and creative strategies for planting churches and for existing congregations to engage more fully in their context. And we will encourage congregational vocational discernment as well as individual discernment that includes pastors, elders, deacons, and lay people.
  - Communicate our faith as Presbyterians from a Reformed perspective. Equip members to evangelize and share the gospel.
  - Recognize the impact and contribution on the church of emerging majorities on U.S. society and in the PC(USA), seeking new ways of being church together, learning together, and engaging with one another.
  - Understand the particular challenges and gifts of younger generations.
  - Recognize technology's impact on our culture and church.
3. (1) What is your vision for the church in the 21st century? (2) What characteristics will draw the great diversity (racial ethnic, age, gender, etc.) of our country into our community of faith in the 21st century? (3) What do you think are the highest priorities and challenges for the church in the 21st century? (4) What unique voice do we, as Presbyterians in the Reformed tradition, bring regarding vital ministry in churches and in society? (5) How do we move the church past division in theology, evangelism and mission to work toward unity in Christ?
4. As a committee, we confess that our language has limits. We struggled with words to appropriately describe different communities. As we use the terms "people of color" or "communities of color," we refer to those underrepresented racial ethnic communities in our Euro-American constituencies.
5. African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Middle Eastern, and Native American caucuses and related councils as well as staff working with new immigrant communities.
6. *God's Work in Women's Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation*. <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gods-work-womens-hands-pay-equity-and-just-compens/>.
7. From Item 16-07 comment by the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, 212th General Assembly (2010). The use of inclusive language for the people of God and expansive language for God was affirmed by the 196th General Assembly (1984). Again, the 197th General Assembly (1985) adopted *Definitions and Guidelines on Inclusive Language* (PDS 70420-01-003).
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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 16-07**
*Advice and Counsel on Item 16-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises that Item 16-07 be answered by the advice and counsel of ACREC to Item 05-12 (Mid Council Commission Report of the General Assembly), which was to approve an alternate resolution to read as follows:

"1. Instruct the Moderators of the 218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008, 2010, 2012) to appoint a Racial Ethnic Ministry Commission.

"2. Empower the appointed commission to develop strategies to address the questions raised in the reports noted above, and to be granted adequate budget for this work.

"3. Direct the commission, in consultation with representative groups, to develop strategies toward the path forward for the PC(USA)

"a. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow established and emerging racial ethnic congregations;

“b. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support and grow multicultural congregations;

“c. for the development and support of ministries and structures that support new immigrant congregations;

“d. for the growth of understanding of the issues race, culture, and ethnicity raise within the Christian community, including development of churchwide strategies to raise consciousness of white privilege.

“4. Provide commission staffing from both the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council.

“5. Give representation on the commission to the following groups:

“a. racial ethnic caucuses

“b. new immigrant congregations and ministries

“c. racial ethnic congregations

“d. multicultural congregations

“e. Women of Color Joint Working Group

“f. mid council staff

“g. ACREC

“h. GACOR;

“and that all decisions would be made by consensus in order to ensure voice for all commission members.

“6. Direct the commission to consult with other groups as needed, both within and outside the PC(USA), to develop workable and sustainable strategies.

“7. Bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014).”

#### *Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns hears echoes of voices from across the church in the report’s Recommendation 8, which calls for the formation of a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force. Specifically in reports to this General Assembly, calls have been made for

- a national consultation to develop strategies and collaborate on growing new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith in the PC(USA) (Item 16-03, African American Church Growth Strategy Report, Recommendation 1);
- the development of a national strategy for Hispanic/Latino Church Growth, and infrastructure built to support this new strategy (Item 10-17, Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group Report, Recommendation e.);
- a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA) (Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth, Recommendations 1–6);
- recommendations to develop effective strategies for the development of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities; train seminary students in emerging cultural realities, and develop strategies within our seminaries to work toward curricular and faculty reform and change, that we might train racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders more effectively; develop multilingual resources and translation capacities to better witness within our increasingly diverse society; explore disparities in compensation between those of more and less represented groups in our church; develop resources to support the growth of new immigrant ministries and congregations, and increase the understanding among Presbyterians of white privilege that we might repent and be renewed and empowered for more faithful service (Item 16-07, Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, Recommendations 1.c., 3.a., d., e., 4., 5., 6.b., c., f., and 8, respectively).

These, in addition to the recommendation from the Mid Council Commission to develop a National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force, make it clear that while Presbyterians have been thinking about racial ethnic and new immigrant ministries for over a century—and while many faithful ministries have been launched in many contexts that have borne much fruit—we know and are voicing in many arenas our awareness that there is still much work to do. Race, culture, and language still divide us, marring the image of Christ we share with a world in need and blunting our witness to the good news. The current excitement about developing “1001 New Worshipping Communities” will not be realized without the engagement and investment of racial ethnic Presbyterians. To date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not addressed issues of race and cul-

ture sufficiently to ensure either that the needed engagement would happen, or that the voices of racial ethnic Presbyterians would be heard in the conversation.

Therefore, to faithfully steward the resources entrusted to us by taking a proactive approach to a number of overlapping initiatives and recommendations, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to answer all the recommendations noted above with the approval of this recommendation.

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#### **COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 16-07**

*Comment on Item 16-07. Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century—From the Committee on Theological Education.*

The Committee on Theological Education makes the following comments regarding the Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century:

*Recommendation 3.a.:* The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) recognizes that PC(USA) seminaries have, do, and continue to adjust courses, supervised ministry, and continuing education opportunities as the cultural and other shifts take place.

*Recommendation 3.d.:* Seminaries play supportive role in discernment for ministry where God, through the Church, calls people into ministry. Specifically, a call to ministry of a teaching elder is the responsibility of sessions, congregations, and presbyteries. The General Assembly may want to call on congregations to recognize these gifts in young persons and encourage the PC(USA) to be more intentional in seeking a diversity and depth of persons supported as they discern a potential call to ministry as a teaching elder. Seminaries of the PC(USA) have, do, and will continue to recruit members of underrepresented populations, many of which are not Presbyterian.

*Recommendation 3.e.:* Since 1997 and according to action of the 209th General Assembly (1997), the COTE has been tracking and reporting to subsequent General Assemblies the race, gender, and ecclesial status of board members of PC(USA) seminaries. See current report in Item 17-04, page 1504, New Trustees Elected by PC(USA) Theological Institutions.

*Recommendation 6.e.:* The COTE invites the 220th General Assembly (2012) to consider the larger issue of educational and consumer debt in the U.S. and to encourage the study to focus on the seminarian debt side of this complex national issue. A 2010–11 Association of Theological Schools educational debt report shows that 90 percent of students graduating from PC(USA) seminaries incur less than \$30K debt with 52 percent adding no debt versus 77 percent and 46 percent respectively for all ATS schools. The COTE welcomes continuing conversation about reducing seminarian debt.

*Recommendation 9.:* The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with this subcommittee should it be established and suggests the COTE be consulted and/or represented on it.

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#### **GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 16-07**

*Comment on Item 16-07—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comments on Item 16-07 and its recommendations:

The GACOR concurs with the recommendation made by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) in its comment on this item and Items 05-12, 10-17, and 16-03. In addition, GACOR offers these comments on Item 16-07:

1. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 1.c.*

While the scope of this recommendation is limited to mid councils using resources from the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth, GACOR wants to commend the attention paid to “encouraging underrepresented leadership (particularly women and people of color).” Seeking leaders is a first step. Connecting those leaders to resources (and people) is part of building the church and equipping the saints. We encourage the ministries and programs to make their materials accessible in the widest way possible and to search for better ways to reaching their intended leaders. We encourage mid councils to include their committees on representation in the process as it falls within their function to “advocate for diversity in leadership” in their council.

2. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 2*

The challenges of bi-vocational ministry are great and affect one’s capacity to participate in the life of the larger church. Investing resources to explore how to support these ministries better is intelligent given the recent trends of ministry in the

PC(USA). Task forces are expensive and ideally the constituents we hope would be recruited for leadership with this group will have challenges in meeting face-to-face. Being tied to additional jobs limits most bi-vocational people from serving in a traditional task force pattern. The church needs to learn new patterns of service and engaging in this work promises to provide a learning opportunity.

3. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 3.a.–e.*

The GACOR appreciates the intentional references in this recommendation to under-represented groups (including communities of color and people with disabilities). We annually examine who is serving as teaching elders in the PC(USA). When we look at that data in disaggregated forms, we find that there are missing persons and categories within the larger groups—young women of color in particular are very rare. Encouraging COTE and the seminaries to “intentionally recruit and increase the numbers of racial ethnic and immigrant students in the seminaries” is important. There’s much more to do to enable non-dominant culture groups to enter the seminary process. Perhaps this work will encourage deeper conversations and prompt insights. The efforts will be better informed and effective in this work if the communities of the desired leaders are involved in the process from the very start. Encouraging seminaries to “hire, mentor, support, and retain scholars from underrepresented communities” is a part of the solutions. May the church embody these recommendations throughout its life and ministries.

4. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 4*

This recommendation encourages connecting new immigrant communities to the PC(USA). The GACOR would want to remind the church that meaningful involvement in decision-making, true partnership, and sharing power are also important aspects of what we know to be in ministry and relationship. We encourage mid councils to think in innovative ways, to build mutuality into its shared ministries and mutual openness in its relationships with these emerging communities, opening themselves to be transformed as they do ministry together and submitting to one another’s leadership.

5. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 5*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises approval of 16-07, Recommendation 5 and offers the 220th General Assembly the following comment:

*Regarding Multi-Lingual Communications and Resource Development*, Recommendation 5 is already happening in many of the ministries of the PC(USA) but there is always room for improvement. The GACOR encourages offices in the Office of the General Assembly to do more than they have to—that said, everything from the Constitution to the Stated Clerk’s monthly column appear in Spanish, Korean, and English as a rule. The GACOR would like to see more web communications available multilingually. The primary means for distributing documents and information in the PC(USA) is web and social media. Resources need to be distributed appropriately to empower this more faithfully.

6. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 6.a.–f.*

Within its function regarding the employment of personnel, GACOR enthusiastically advises approving this action. It would reduce vulnerability to pay inequalities while bringing awareness to the ways we do not yet value all according to their gifts. If this recommendation were to be accepted and implemented, it would strengthen GACOR and other CORs ability to give effective advice with regard to the employment of personnel (G-3.0103). Parts of this recommendation strive to limit wide pay gaps and model more equitable compensation frameworks. We applaud the intent and acknowledge this would be difficult to implement. Hard conversations and decisions must be made if pay inequality is to be addressed. People from underrepresented groups generally have less wealth and are more vulnerable to the pitfalls of debt. Examining the inequities through lenses of “class, gender, ethnicity, and type of service in the church” will benefit the wider witness as well as give good contextual snapshots of how the church is an employer. Complex work: but valuable.

7. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 7*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises approval of Item 16-07, Recommendation 7, and offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment:

The Elders Conferences (now likely called Ruling Elders Conferences if we comply with the language of the Form of Government) have been growing stronger each year. “Elders Rule!” is not just a t-shirt and bumper sticker. There are good things happening to encourage these spiritual leaders and more needs to be done. The GACOR commends the special committee in reminding the church that all are called to ministry—some to particular service.

8. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 8*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises approval of 16-07, Recommendation 8, and offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment:

For a church that is 91 percent Caucasian, it is imperative we all do work in looking at privilege and power, and particularly white privilege. The GACOR has included this content in its biennial synod COR training events for more than six years and have found them critical in helping council leaders and ourselves understand the context in which we serve. We commend committees on representation in the mid councils and as resources and means for this good work. How does one till the soil for the planting so that one day the Lord can reap if one doesn't look first at the soil and its context. Discriminatory practice is alive and well, we still struggle with the words we confess, claiming belief

“In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, *to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace*” (*The Book of Confessions, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 65–71, emphasis added*).

This is but one of the confessions, but the these returns over and over (an assurance that we are not the first to claim Christ and struggle with loving one another and that it has been important to the church for a long time).

#### 9. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendation 9*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises disapproval of Item 16-07, Recommendation 9, and offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment:

While we appreciate the work the special committee did, we respectfully suggest that permanent General Assembly committees, ministry units, and offices have the means to implement their recommendations with little or no additional financial implications beyond the costs of printing or designing.

#### 10. *Comment on Item 16-07, Recommendations 10.a.–c.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises approval of Item 16-07, Recommendation 10, and offers the 220th General Assembly (2012) the following comment:

We agree with the special committee and, with them, assert, “budgets and programs must reflect our commitment to mission.” Authenticity and integrity are essential in ministry as well as other justice work.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

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### GAMC & OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 16-07

*Comment on Item 16-07—From the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and each mission area of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) provides resources, content, and expertise in various languages. The following text highlights much of the work already completed or underway in the area of multicultural translation.

#### 1. *Resources*

Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) publishes key language-specific resources for teaching and study in the Reformed Tradition. Currently CMP provides materials in Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese. While this ministry is greatly valued by the respective constituents, the costs to produce these materials substantially outweigh the available market in which to sell these resources; therefore GAMC underwrites the deficit between the sales and costs. This amounts to approximately \$350,000 per year from unrestricted monies. Resources currently provided are listed below:

##### a. *Spanish*

*Asi Creemos.* Based on the *We Believe* curriculum, this resource is the denominational curriculum for children in Spanish. This is now offered at no charge online as a way to aid Spanish-language new church developments.

The Spanish Language office has launched its new adult curriculum called *Estudio Biblico Reformado*, which is a thematic, quarterly curriculum written especially for Spanish-speaking Presbyterians.

Two of the more popular *Being Reformed* adult studies have now been translated into Spanish. Titles now available include: *Theology for Presbyterians* and *Discipleship*.

##### b. *Korean*

*Korean Present Word* is a transformational Bible study resource for building mature faith communities. The quarterly curriculum consists of both a leader's guide and a student book.

*Kuyuk. Kuyuk* Bible study has been published for more than ten years and is written by Korean Presbyterian pastors. It reflects the life and faith of Korean American immigrants and congregations and connects with a variety of subjects such as discipleship, caring ministry, stewardship, justice, and peacemaking issues.

Three of the more popular *Being Reformed* adult studies have now been translated into Korean. Titles include: *Theology for Presbyterians*, *Worship as Evangelism*, and *The Lord's Prayer*.

### c. Portuguese

*Nos Acreditamos*: Palavra de Deus para as Pessoas de Deus for youth is the newest member of the *We Believe* and *Así Creemos* family. It teaches youth about biblical truths using the Bible and the confessional documents of the church. These materials are offered free of charge to our Portuguese-language congregations and fellowships.

## 2. Documents and Materials

Key GAMC and OGA documents and other materials have been translated into other languages. The following list highlights some of the documents translated to date.

- *Book of Order 2011–2013* (Korean, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and selections in Portuguese);
- *The Book of Confessions* (Korean, Spanish, and selections in Portuguese);
- Communication regarding changes in standards of ordination (translation of different interpretation materials);
- *Presbyterians Today* magazine Lenten devotion was translated in Korean in 2011 and Spanish in 2010;
- Promotional materials for Big Tent;
- Ordination exams;
- Confession of Belhar (Korean and Spanish);
- Special Offerings (various resources);
- Presbyterian Women's *Horizons* Bible study (two times);
- Living the Vision: Multicultural Ministries in Spanish;
- Translation of Presbyterian Disaster materials (Haiti, for example);
- Materials for the Office of Immigration Issues (217th General Assembly (2006) Policy on Immigration in Spanish, Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States in Spanish, Family Plan in Spanish);
- Presbyterians and Military Service (Spanish);
- Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (document regarding mental illness: *Enfermedades mentales severas: Buscando una respuesta cristiana integral*);
- Translation of *Who Are We Presbyterians* video;
- Translation work for the Office of Mission Grants;
- Translation of OGA materials include: Proposed Form of Government materials, Peace Unity and Purity Task Force report, Proposed Book of Amendments, Statistical Workbook for Congregations, General Assembly Committee on Representation Fact Sheet (Spanish and Korean);
- In addition, OGA provides the following study documents in Spanish and Korean: All the Live Long Day; Brief Statement of Faith; Church and Homosexuality (Korean); Covenant of Life (Spanish); General Assembly Bible Study: Crossing Ten Seas, Is Christ Divided; Parliamentary Procedures; Seeking Peace, Unity, and Purity video; Turn to the Living God.

## 3. Websites

In order for Spanish- and Korean-speaking constituents to find resources efficiently, specific pages on the PC(USA) website have been created that enable language-specific material to be found in one place. Links to the webpages are referenced below.

All Spanish resources: <http://www.pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/language/spanish/>



All Korean resources: <http://www.pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/language/korean/>

All Spanish pages: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/browse/ministries-ministrycontent/language/spanish/>

Ministry page in Korean: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/curriculum/korean-language-resources/>

The current PC(USA) website is comprised of approximately 12,000 sub-pages, donation pages, and resources pages. Given the current in-house rate for translation, the estimated cost to translate the entire website using a trained translator would be approximately \$300,000 per language. If translation software were to be utilized instead, the cost would decrease, but a proofreader/editor would still be required to ensure cultural context and correct translation. Estimated cost of this process is \$84,000 per language, as well as ongoing costs for regular updates and maintenance of the website.

The Church Store ([store.pcusa.org](http://store.pcusa.org)) is equipped with multi-language functionality. Customers wishing to purchase products on-line, can choose to view the web store and shopping cart in Spanish or Korean by using the language selection feature.

#### 4. *On-site Translation for Customer Service*

The GAMC employs staff who have expertise in multiple languages and are available to serve as interpreters and translators for constituent inquiries. More than twenty staff members provide this service in the following languages: Korean, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, French, German, Hindi, Malayalam, Portuguese, Tshiluba.

Recommendation 5 calls for the GAMC and OGA to implement specific and comprehensive plans to offer all communications in Korean, Spanish, and other languages as needed, without providing specific direction on the need. Considerable effort is already expended to produce the results listed above. If additional translation efforts are sought by the General Assembly, designating some projects as a priority would assist the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly in meeting that need.

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### OGA (OFFICE OF VOCATION) COMMENT ON ITEM 16-07

*Comment on Item 16-07—From the Office of the General Assembly (Office of Vocation).*

In regards to Recommendation #2 of this report, the Office of Vocation, a department of the Office of the General Assembly, would like to inform the assembly that they have already made the nurture of bivocational ministry a priority by

- affirming bi-vocational ministry in news stories, in web resources and advisory handbooks, and in all of our education events with presbytery committees on preparation for ministry;
- providing debt assistance for bi-vocational ministers (see [www.pcusa.org/tlda](http://www.pcusa.org/tlda));
- partnering with Union Presbyterian Seminary's Supervised Ministry department as they design new contextual courses preparing for bi-vocational ministry;
- planning a webinar series "Moving into Bi-Vocational Ministry" with a variety of leaders providing expertise;
- including more types of positions, more flexibility in CLC as it is revised (2012–2013).

In regards to Recommendation 6, the Office of the General Assembly urges the 220th General Assembly (2012) to consider the following issues in relation to this recommendation:

1. Currently, the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) collects and publishes the salary and benefits information for exempt staff of all presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly agencies in the *Minutes of the General Assembly*, Part II, *Statistics*. The term : "church worker" encompasses a wide variety of exempt employees within the PC(USA) including and not limited to teaching elders and staff of local congregations. To accommodate the collection process proposed in the report, the OGA would be required to hire a part-time employee, at minimum.

2. Only 65 percent of the mid councils comply with the current mandate to submit salary information. Unless a higher percentage of the 10,000 plus congregations comply with the proposed request for salary and other information on staff, the information gathered will be inconclusive and give an inaccurate picture of the race/gender breakdown in the church.

3. Another consideration is the issue of privacy, which become a concern when asked to publish gender and race/ethnicity of persons. Policies in place at the present time prevents the PC(USA) from publishing and/or providing personal information about individuals.

## Item 16-08

[The assembly approved Item 16-08. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Directing the Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry Area to Share Stories of Great Commission Congregations.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area to do the following:**

- 1. Share the stories of Great Commission congregations and encourage all Presbyterian pastors and sessions to lead their congregations in ministry and mission shaped by the Great Commission.**
- 2. Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) examples of congregations that have significantly demonstrated their focus on the Great Commission.**

### *Rationale*

The membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to decline.

The Savior's last command was, "... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Mt. 28:18–20; see also Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:46–49; Jn. 17:18 and 20:21; Acts 1:8).

We are addressing our multiethnic and immigrant communities, but not our current, older congregations that need to grow and stay vital in Christ's mission.

We wish to share/encourage churches in our denomination with stories of Great Commission faithfulness.

This resolution was inspired by:

- A growing multiethnic congregation pastored by the Reverend Dr. Angel de la Cruz.
- 1001 new worshipping communities [[www.pcusa.org/get/resources/resource/17929/](http://www.pcusa.org/get/resources/resource/17929/)].
- "Engage" resources from Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area [<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/engage/>].
- Group bicycling to the 220th General Assembly (2012) [Ryan Althaus and his Team Sweaty Sheep, ref: [http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2012306240041&nclick\\_check=1](http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2012306240041&nclick_check=1) and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nTNb4gHfwA&feature=plcp> ].

Dale W. Deist, Presbytery of Shenango  
Bill Budnick, Presbytery of John Calvin

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### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 16-08**

*Comment on Item 16-08—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The Evangelism Office is committed to helping churches live into and out of "The Great Commission" by assisting churches and mid councils to help in the nurture and equipping of disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe that followers of Jesus authentically share faith and serve others. Our resource "Engage" is designed to help people in our churches engage the Gospel, discipleship, and mission ([www.pcusa.org/engage](http://www.pcusa.org/engage)).

See also the Evangelism Office website to view stories of how Engage is helping local churches at [www.pcusa.org/evangelism](http://www.pcusa.org/evangelism).

## Item 16-09

[The assembly approved Item 16-09. See pp. 48, 51.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Inviting the Community to Attend Presbyterian Churches.*

The 220th General Assembly (2012) designates a national day to be recognized annually [on the third Sunday of September] by all of the PC(USA). This day will encourage Presbyterian church members to offer an invitation to acquaintances outside the church community to attend a Sunday church service. This national day would facilitate church growth and would open the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the community.

Carl Batzel, Presbytery of Lackawanna  
Sydney Roosa, Presbytery of Plains and Peaks

## Item 16-10

[The assembly approved Item 16-10 with comment. See pp. 48, 51.]

**Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Office of Collegiate Ministries to present a progress report regarding the Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report received by our committee to the 221st General Assembly (2014).**

*2010 Referral: Item 09-06. On Reestablishing an Office of Collegiate Ministries as a Vital Part of Ministry and Mission. Recommendation. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Reestablish an Office of Collegiate Ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a Vital and Integral Part of the Ministry and Mission of the Church and Direct That Office to Prepare a Strategy for Mission in Higher Education in Concert with Middle Governing Bodies, Congregations, and, Where Possible, Ecumenical Partners, to Be Presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Presbytery of North Central Iowa (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72, 81, 658–60).*

*Response:* This referral is answered by the “Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report” below.

### Collegiate Ministries Task Force Report

As of January 1, 2011, the Office of Collegiate Ministries was established and staffed with a full-time associate position and a half-time administrative assistant position. The Collegiate Ministries Task Force was formed and prepared the following Strategy for Mission.

#### VISION STATEMENT

“Where there is no vision the people perish.” For decades there hasn’t been a cohesive vision or identity for PCUSA collegiate ministry. A vision statement is the first and significant step to developing and regaining a semblance of organization within and importance to church for collegiate ministries. This simple statement has elements of evangelism, compassion and education—all hallmarks of reformed ministry.

#### WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

This recommendation could have been a directive, but instead was listed as an encouragement with anticipation that it would be given the weight of a directive by the Office of Collegiate Ministry. The intention is that Collegiate Ministries would be engaged in the 1,001 New Worshipping Communities endeavor. As details become available with the 1,001 Worshipping Communities program, Collegiate Ministries would incorporate the details of the program while developing new worshipping communities near campuses that have no PC(USA) presence and transforming existing worshipping communities near college campuses that are currently underserved by the PC(USA).

#### REGIONAL OFFICES

Ministry is contextual. For local collegiate ministries to receive the most excellent and relevant help, the staff members that work with these ministries need to be familiar with their context. Also, with the 101 new ministries being established and renewed, there will hopefully be more ministries established. With the increase in ministry locations, collaboration with and support from regional entities and agencies (mid councils, related schools, camps and conference centers) is essential. The staff will need to be more aware and acquainted with the agencies in the region. For this new model, more centralized staff is not the answer; a regional staff will be more responsive.

## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

It is no secret that many of the traditional funding streams are drying up or being redirected. Many offices are dealing with a reduction in funding; the uniqueness of Collegiate Ministries is the highly restrictive nature of the overall budget. The level of restriction on the budget does not lend itself to creatively moving a program forward. In anticipation of further declines and reductions, the task force recommends that, with the help of Communications and Funds Development, a capital campaign be established to fund the important and ongoing work of the Office of Collegiate Ministries in perpetuity. For the Office of Collegiate Ministry to be able to respond to ministry needs timely and appropriately, both now and in the future, an innovative and productive fundraising effort is essential.

## PCUSA COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

## VISION STATEMENT

*We are a church that reaches, loves and teaches college students to become life-long followers of Jesus Christ.*

## STRUCTURE AND NETWORK

- A stable national office with consistent funding of programs and staff
- Network in covenant with the GAMC
  - Part-time regional coordinators
  - Communications Coordinator
  - Institute a structured, replicable and adaptable collegiate ministry model that can be used by congregations to engage in collegiate ministry
    - Establish a structure to promote establishing local Presbyterian Collegiate Ministries (PCM)
  - A national Presbyterian Collegiate Ministry Advisory Team would work with the Office of Collegiate Ministries to engage local churches and mid-councils to consider establishing a PCM

## RENEW OR START 101 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES / COLLEGIATE CONGREGATIONS

- Identify 101 university communities with the potential for collegiate ministry growth
- Identify 25 Collegiate Congregations
  - Churches located within reasonable proximity to a college campus
  - A church actively involved in living out the Collegiate Ministries vision statement
- Gather Worshiping Communities / Collegiate Congregations
  - Share how Collegiate Ministries vision plays out in a University Church setting
  - Ask congregations to research other churches and campuses in their region
- Classify Worshiping Communities / Collegiate Congregations into 3 categories
  - Those making a solid impact on the campus community through a planned ministry
    - Create a network, collect and organize best practices, get on board
  - Those with potential for such ministry but aren't organized around it or realizing it
    - Offer to partner with congregation using an eighteen-month plan
  - Those that have the right location but not potential without a major overhaul
    - Offer a three-year plan with Church Growth office

## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGY

- Office of Collegiate Ministries
  - Increased funding of OCM budget for an initial five-to-six-year period
  - Five-year Plan

16 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP

- Presbyterian Collegiate Ministries Network
  - Mainly from OCM budget preliminarily until regions are established
    - Regions will work toward 501(c)3 status for fundraising purposes
  - Regional coordinators will be trained and encouraged to raised funds immediately
  - Proactively work with entities within the church to secure collegiate ministry funds
    - Mid Councils, Foundation, Communications and Funds Development

RECRUITING AND TRAINING POSSIBILITIES

- Chaplaincy Internships
  - Positions are supported by institutions and responsible to chaplains
- Congregational Internships
  - Positions to be supported by congregation
- Collegiate Ministry Volunteers
  - Program supported by Office of Collegiate Ministries
- Seminary Field Education
  - Office of Collegiate Ministries will work with Committee on Theological Education to create a proposal to encourage PC(USA) partner seminaries (possibly other seminaries) to create field education placements in campus ministry settings
- Professional Education
  - Develop Master’s level Collegiate Ministry certificate or degree programs with one or more of our partner seminaries
- Continuing Education
  - National & Regional Gatherings
  - Online Opportunities

PCUSA COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES  
STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE  
(Tentative)

May of 2012	Local PC(USA) collegiate ministries are mapped
May of 2012	Identify 25 Collegiate Congregations
May of 2012	Identify 101 campuses with potential for growth
May of 2012	Internship proposals completed
May of 2012	Field Education proposal completed
May of 2012	Certificate/Degree program proposal completed
Upon Adoption	Encourage entities to operate under new vision and brand
July 1, 2012	Online best practices for Collegiate Ministers launched
Summer/Fall 2012	First gathering of first 25 Collegiate Congregations
Fall of 2012	Some internships available at related schools, congregations
Fall of 2012	First quarterly continuing education webinar
Fall of 2012	Communications coordinator identified
October 1, 2012	Two of five regional coordinators identified
January 1, 2013	Two regional coordinators in place
January 1, 2013	Communications coordinator in place
Spring of 2013	Research of Collegiate Congregations completed
Summer of 2013	Potential university churches identified and categorized
Summer of 2013	Gathering of first 25 plus other potential Collegiate Congregations
Summer of 2013	National Collegiate Ministries Gathering
Fall of 2013	Five regional coordinators identified

Fall of 2013	Regional Cohorts established
Fall of 2013	More internships available at related schools, congregations
Fall of 2013	Half seminaries offer CM field education opportunities
January 1, 2014	All regional coordinators in place
Winter of 2014	Regional gatherings of Collegiate Congregations
Winter of 2014	First set of regional gatherings
Fall of 2014	Degree and Certificate programs offered at seminaries
Fall of 2014	Mentoring program for collegiate ministers in place
Fall of 2014	All willing seminaries offer CM field education opportunities
Spring of 2018	Regions start to move to 501(c)3 status
Spring of 2020	All regions are individually incorporated
Fall of 2021	Worshipping communities established on 101 campuses

## Item 16-A

[The assembly acknowledged Item 16-A. See p. 48 and 52.]

### *Sam and Helen Walton Awards*

The General Assembly Mission Council reports the recipients of the Sam and Helen Walton Awards for 2011 and 2012 and recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) recognize the recipients as outstanding new church developments:

#### 2011

1. Covenant Fellowship Presbyterian Church, Synod of the Pacific, Redwoods Presbytery
2. Temecula Valley Korean Presbyterian Church, Synod of Southern California & Hawaii, Riverside Presbytery
3. Grace Presbyterian Church, Synod of South Atlantic, Cherokee Presbytery
4. Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Salem Presbytery
5. Misión Hispana El Buen Pastor, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Salem Presbytery

#### 2012

New Hope Presbyterian Church, Orange, California, Los Ranchos Presbytery, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

### *Rationale*

In late December 1991, Sam and Helen Walton made a generous gift through the Presbyterian Foundation of \$6 million that included \$3 million to be used for new church developments that have placed an emphasis on site acquisitions. All nominees must meet the qualifications as set forth in the application. The General Assembly Mission Council, acting on behalf of the General Assembly between meetings, approved the above recipients during its September 2011 and February 2012 meetings.

## Item 16-B

[The assembly acknowledged Item 16-B. See p. 48 and 52.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) recognize the following Women of Faith award recipients at the 220th General Assembly (2012):

Elder Judith Henry,

Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan,

The Reverend Ann Rhee Menzie.

### *Rationale*

#### Women of Faith Awards

The Women of Faith Awards were established in 1986 to honor women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) whose lives exemplify their Christian commitment through witness, service, and leadership.

## 16 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH GROWTH AND PILP

Each year a theme is chosen. Nominations are received from throughout the church and honorees are selected by a committee of representatives from various groups.

Awards are presented at the Women of Faith Breakfast during the General Assembly. This breakfast is an annual celebration of God's activity in the lives of women and their response to God's presence.

The theme for this year's awards is "Courageous Women Transforming Communities of Faith, Hope, Love & Witness" and therefore honors women who have courageously transformed and strengthened their congregations in an era of great change and transition.

The 2012 selection committee included Mary Marks King, moderator; Shardé Chapman, Racial Ethnic Young Women Together; Cindy Eschliman, National Network of Presbyterian College Women; Sue Ezell, General Assembly Mission Council; Gloria Moorman, Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team; and Jerri Rodewald, Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.

The selection committee members were instructed to consider the following criteria in reviewing the twenty-four nomination forms and in making their selection of the four women who receive this award:

- Selection of the Women of Faith awardees are based on the theme.
- How has the nominee courageously transformed and strengthened her congregation in an era of great change and transition?
- How has the nominee implemented a new program or ministry?
- Three nominees will be selected.
- Strive for racial ethnic diversity.
- Strive for geographic diversity.
- Awardees will be women.
- Awardees will be Presbyterian.
- Current staff serving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are ineligible for nomination.
- Previous award recipients are ineligible to be nominated again for the Women of Faith award (one time recipients; no duplications).

The election of the three honorees was approved by the Evangelism Mission Committee and the General Assembly Mission Council.

Biographical sketches of these four women are as follows:

1. *Elder Judith Henry, St. Albans, New York*

Elder Judith Henry is a member of the Presbyterian Church of St. Albans. Henry immigrated to the United States from the West Indies as a child, is a Jamaican American and a member of the Esther Circle of Presbyterian Women. She has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and is a care manager in diabetes education. Using her knowledge in nursing as a volunteer at St. Albans Presbyterian Church, she leads an annual HIV/AIDS concert at the church to benefit organizations that assist children with the disease and is an active member in the AIDS Institute of Faith, which raises community awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Henry is also involved in New York City's Community Emergency Response Team, preparing people to respond to emergency situations. She leads Black History Month event planning, plans community health fairs, blood drives, and organized donation efforts for Haiti disaster relief.

2. *Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan, Brownsboro, Alabama*

Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan was commissioned in 2003 as a commissioned ruling elder at Big Cove Presbyterian Church. She and the congregation, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have grown the small congregation of Big Cove from a membership of 18 to 95. The congregation, with the help of the presbytery, will move out of the 100-year-old, white clapboard church this spring into a new building following the congregation's vision "to be disciples who make disciples."

During the last several years, McMahan has tripled the congregation's fundraising. She also adopted a style of community outreach within the church including adding a second service with a different worship style.

3. *The Reverend Ann Rhee Menzie, San Francisco, California*

The Reverend Ann Rhee Menzie is a Korean American minister-at-large in Redwoods Presbytery. She is a founding member and director of Shimtuh, a program that addresses domestic violence within the Korean American community, including providing linguistically and culturally sensitive services for Korean American survivors of domestic violence and their children. Menzie works at the Korean Community Center (KCCEB) and is in dialog with communities of faith to support the work of Shimtuh and KCCEB. She promotes gender justice and healthy family relationships, works with both domestic violence survivors and their abusers, and sparked an initiative to write a Bible study on domestic violence.

Menzie also served as racial ethnic liaison from 1999 until 2002 for the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen and currently serves on the Board of Korean American Presbyterian Clergywomen.



Figure 1

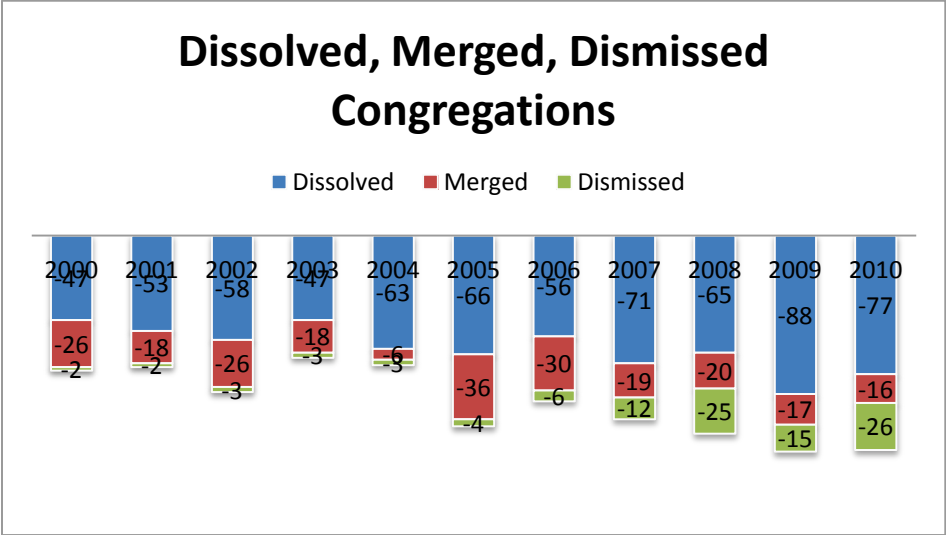


Figure 2

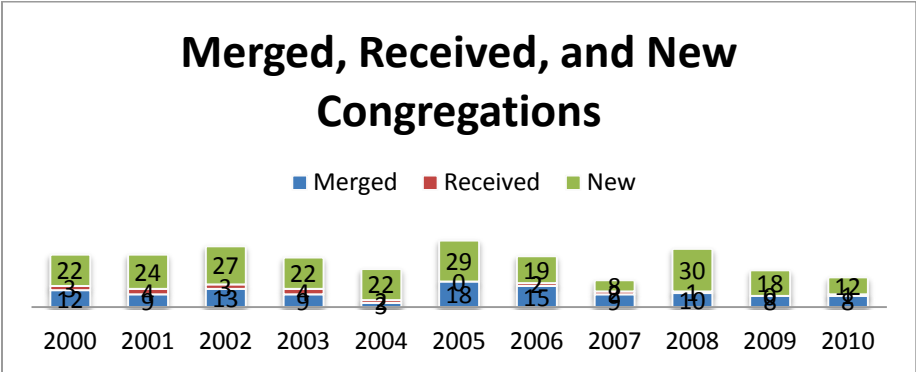


Figure 3

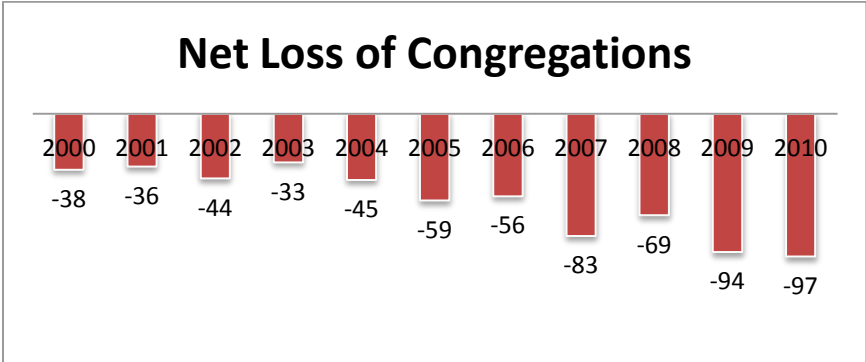
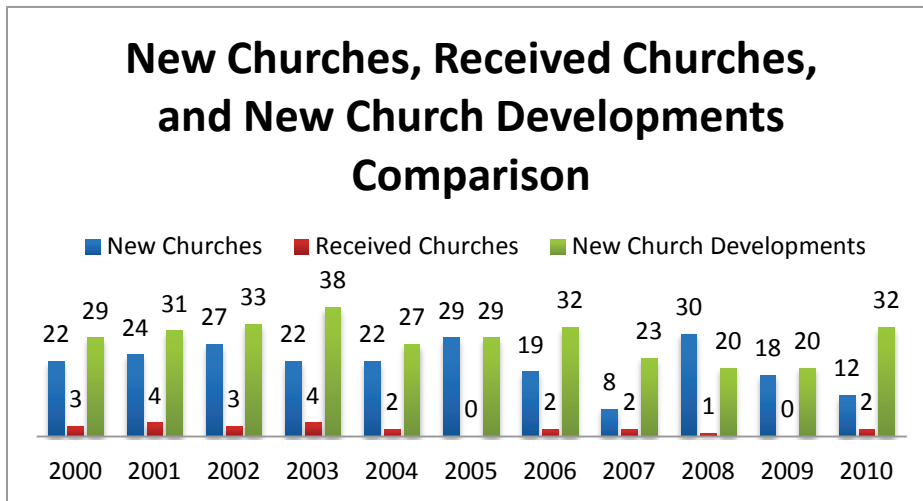


Figure 4



Figure 5



## Item 17-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 17-01 with comment. See pp. 12, 13.]

*On Undertaking a Parenting Initiative Called the “Institute for Effective Parental Leadership”—From the Presbytery of Long Island.*

The Presbytery of Long Island overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to do the following:

1. Undertake a parenting initiative called the “Institute for Effective Parental Leadership.”
2. Authorize the following four presbyteries as “project presbyteries”: the Presbytery of San Francisco, the Presbytery of Heartland, the Presbytery of New York City, and the Presbytery of Chicago.
3. Assign one of its entities to distribute the program resources and enlist consultant(s) to assist the project presbyteries to undertake the program. The appropriate entity will report progress on this overture to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

**[Comment: The Assembly Committee on Theological Issues, Institutions, and Christian Education commends the Presbytery of Long Island for its commitment to addressing parenting issues with at-risk families. The General Assembly also wishes to encourage the Presbytery of Long Island to contact the Presbyteries of Heartland, San Francisco, New York City, and Chicago, and to proceed with this hopeful and much needed ministry.]**

### *Rationale*

The Presbytery of Long Island supports a parenting initiative called the “Institute for Effective Parental Leadership” (see 023-long-island-institute-for-parental-leadership.pdf; also page 1524) that will, among other things, teach effective parenting skills for parents with children six years old and younger.

The PC(USA) has as one of its goals the building and maintaining of healthy families by focusing on raising healthy children to adulthood as paramount to sustaining society.

Unfortunately, poverty, racism, abuse, and neglect often accompany a child as he or she grows in adulthood, and these social pathologies can create complex physical, emotional, and intellectual challenges that come directly from childhood traumas.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) particularly noted the factors that especially implicated young African American males as noted: “Young African American males are dying disproportionately from homicide. They are overrepresented in the prison population and school dropouts, but underrepresented in the college population. The plight of African American males has declined to the point where they are considered an ‘at risk’ population” (*Minutes*, 1995, Part I, p. 405).

There exist overwhelming data supporting the notion that an interlocking set of socioeconomic factors account for the precarious plight of young African American males and among these data more than 65 percent of African American children are born into settings headed by a single parent (usually the mother). Such interlocking factors as racism, poverty, family disintegration, economic shifts, and community disorganization are contributing factors that continue to play critical roles in the vulnerability of African American males.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) approved a resolution stating in effect that the PC(USA) had historic interest and commitment to educating this nation’s children.

The 207th General Assembly (1995) reaffirmed the church’s position on supporting presbyteries and synods to share resources and models for congregational dialogue.

The 209th General Assembly (1997) approved a perspective on this issue entitled, “The Nature and Task of Christian Education from an African American Presbyterian Perspective,” by Gayraud S. Wilmore. It is appropriate that renewed efforts be put forward within the context of a new paradigm. The church needs to help save and build the future of African American youth by doing ministry differently, namely, by working directly with the parents of young children. The parent’s role is the single most critical contribution to a child’s development. Nothing in society can replace the importance of the role of a parent. The church must focus on educating, training, equipping, and assisting parents to be more effective in discharging their responsibilities.

As noted in a New York Times article (January 8, 2012) entitled, “A Poverty Solution That Starts with a Hug,” by Nicholas D. Kristof, “This new research addresses an uncomfortable truth: Poverty is difficult to overcome partly because of

self-destructive behaviors. Children from poor homes often shine, but others may skip school, abuse narcotics, break the law, and have trouble settling down in a marriage and a job. Then their children may replicate this pattern.”

As Frederick Douglas noted, “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 17-01

*Advice and Counsel on Item 17-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 17-01.

#### *Rationale*

The ACREC applauds efforts by presbyteries that tackle issues that impact racial ethnic communities. This overture addresses the plight of young African American males in American society and proposes a pilot program that would teach parenting skills to parents with children under the age of seven years old. While recognizing many socioeconomic factors impact the lives of African American children, the factor lifted up here is the role of a parent. The particular initiative proposed is the “Institute for Parental Leadership” and the four presbyteries selected for the pilot program are the Presbyteries of San Francisco, the Heartland, New York City, and Chicago. There is no explanation as to why this initiative was selected or whether it has been successfully implemented. Further, there is no indication that the designated presbyteries have agreed to participate in the pilot program. The ACREC believes that there should be greater involvement of the church in this area, but more information is needed before this initiative is approved.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 17-01

*Comment on Item 17-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

At the repeated urging of the church, the General Assembly Mission Council is focusing on areas of ministry where it can have the greatest impact. While developing healthy families is a concern for all who would lead Christ’s church, this focus has not emerged as one of the areas in which the GAMC can have primary impact. The 2013–2016 GAMC Mission Work Plan, which is proposed for approval with our budget for 2013–2014, focuses GAMC work on: Transformational Leaders; Young Adults; Compassionate Prophetic Disciples; 1001 New Worshiping Communities; GA Engagement; Organizational Integrity.

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## Item 17-02

**[In response to Item 17-02, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See pp. 12, 13.]**

*On Amending the “Setting of the Service” of Ordination and Installation for Teaching Elders (W-4.4002)—From the Presbytery of New Castle.*

The Presbytery of New Castle overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Amend W-4.4002 as follows [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]:

“W-4.4002 Setting of the Service

“The service of ordination and installation *for ruling elders or deacons*, ~~or~~ *for commissioning a ruling elder to pastoral service, or for commissioning other church workers* may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503). Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the proclamation of the Word. The service of *ordination or installation of a* ~~pastor or associate pastor~~ *pastor teaching elder* shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.”

**In response to Item 17-02, the 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following alternate recommendation:**

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:**

**Amend W-4.4002 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

**“The service of ordination and installation, or commissioning, may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503). Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the proclamation of the Word. The service of *ordination or installation of a ~~pastor or associate pastor~~ teaching elder shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.*”**

#### *Rationale*

The current wording of W-4.4002 does not clearly explain that the ordination service of a teaching elder (formerly “minister of Word and Sacrament”) should take place at a time that is convenient to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery. Sadly, this has sometimes resulted in these presbytery services occurring on Sunday mornings when pastors and elders from other churches cannot participate. The result is that what should be a presbytery worship service becomes a congregation’s worship service with only a handful from the presbytery present.

Ordination and installation services are celebrations that “focus upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church.” Just as a baptism is not just for the person being baptized but is a visible sign of God’s grace for the whole Church, so also services of ordination and installation are not just for those being ordained or installed and their congregation; they are times to focus on our Lord, our shared ministry, and our mission for the benefit of the whole presbytery.

Similarly, a wedding is not only for the couple being married, but we pray, “Grant that all who have witnessed these vows today may find their lives strengthened, and that all who are married may depart with their own promises renewed” (*Book of Common Worship*, p. 771). Presbytery services of ordination and installation are times when those individuals who are already ordained can be strengthened in their continuing shared ministry as they are reminded of the promises that they made at their own ordination to follow our Lord and serve the church. They can also be inspiring times when people discern God is calling them to new ministry.

At the heart of the church (including its presbyteries) is worship whereby our bonds to God and to the people of God in community are strengthened. Many people who attend regular presbytery meetings often report back to their sessions that the presbytery worship service was “the best part,” “the most inspiring time,” “the most worthwhile part” of the whole meeting. When a presbytery worship service is scheduled at a time (Sunday morning) when many people cannot attend, the presbytery deprives these people of this unifying practice that can build up the presbytery as a part of the Body of Christ. While people can worship in their own churches, a presbytery worship service builds presbytery-wide community as people worship God together.

Presbyterians believe that all should be welcome in worship and that all parts of the Body of Christ are worthy of respect. A presbytery worship service on Sunday morning contradicts these foundational beliefs, for it welcomes only those who can leave their responsibilities in their own churches to attend such a service. The implied message to those who cannot attend is that their participation simply does not matter to the presbytery or the hosting congregation.

Pastors and elders need more opportunities to worship when they are not responsible for leading in worship in their own churches. Recent insights in spiritual formation and the care of/self-care for pastors have lifted up the importance of church leaders finding opportunities to worship when they have no responsibilities for the worship service so they can focus on worship alone. Presbytery worship services help nurture the spirits of the presbytery’s members when all have the opportunity to worship together.

Beyond the benefits to the presbytery and its members when all can attend presbytery worship services not on Sunday mornings, there are also benefits to those being ordained and installed as well as benefits for the congregation hosting the presbytery worship service. They have the opportunity to see more people from presbytery supporting them by their ability to be present in the service; for example, the tradition in many presbyteries of ministers wearing robes and red stoles and processing in together makes a very positive, powerful impression and lasting memory. The increased participation by presbytery members reminds all that the service is truly a presbytery worship service and it is the presbytery that has the authority to ordain and install. The teaching elder is a member of presbytery and the service of ordination and installation with a good participation by the presbytery members builds affirming ties; these ties will help the teaching elder in the years to come as he or she is encouraged to faithfully live out the ordination vow to participate in the governing bodies of the church (thus benefiting the teaching elder and the presbytery).

While there are numerous excellent reasons for having presbytery worship services of ordination and installation at times other than Sunday mornings for better participation by the presbytery, it is important to address the concerns that led some presbyteries to allow these services on Sunday mornings.

The poor participation of members of presbytery at special worship services of ordination and installation needs to be creatively changed. The best practices by those presbyteries who are successful in having good participation can be shared

through church-wide networks (meetings and email lists) for presbytery ministry committees (formerly “committee on ministry” and “committee on preparation for ministry”), executive presbyters, stated clerks, church administrators, moderators’ conference, music & worship conferences, seminaries, and the PC(USA) web site sections for Middle Governing Councils (formerly “Middle Governing Bodies”), Presbytery Ministry Committees, and Theology & Worship Office.

Some practices that have helped to encourage attendance have included careful planning that gets the date on calendars early so people have plenty of time to arrange their schedules to participate; lifting up the date in timely individual mailings (email, postal mail, social network notes, etc.) as well as in presbytery newsletters and meetings; presbytery ministry committees making personal calls to individual presbytery members to encourage their participation; presbytery ministry committee lifting up the importance of such participation in candidates’ preparation for ministry and in visits with pastors/session (formerly “triennial visits”); all presbytery leaders (not just those who have a role in the commission or service) leading by example in their own participation and encouragement of others; news releases about the service to the media (newspapers, local television, and radio); a joint choir for the service made up of many congregations’ choir members, and a special reception with refreshments after the service (some have made this a potluck with presbytery members bringing food items).

Some of the above ideas are also used to encourage members of the congregation to attend the special service. In addition, churches may use special inserts for worship bulletins/church newsletters, and slides or video for those who use projection in sanctuaries.

Congregations are enthusiastic about those that they have nurtured in the faith when they become teaching elders and installing those they have called to be pastors. Creative ways can be shared with congregations to help them recognize teaching elders in their Sunday morning worship services (after their ordination and/or installation). Churches can be offered sample prayers, special bulletin inserts (such as “How to Minister to Your Minister” which has been adapted by some from a *Presbyterian Today* article), and ideas about gifts related to the pastoral office.

As in any presbytery worship service, careful planning should be done in preparation for services of ordination and installation. Training for officiating at services of ordination and installation needs to be made available for presbytery moderators, showing best practices from other presbyteries. Clear guidelines should be given to those planning and participating in the service.

Such planning and the presbytery worship itself is a great deal of work, but it is among the most important work that can be done. In presbytery worship at its best, God is glorified, participants are inspired to faithful ministry, the community of the presbytery is built up, and people will desire to come to future services of ordination and installation.

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#### ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 17-02

*Advice on Item 17-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) that Item 17-02 raises matters the assembly should consider.

#### *Rationale*

The overture proposes two changes in the text of W-4.4002, concerning the setting of services of ordination and/or installation. The effect of the first change is to limit the application of the first sentence to the ordination and installation of deacons, ruling elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and other commissioned church workers. The effect of the second is to include in the final sentence the requirement that services of ordination (as well as those of installation) of teaching elders be conducted at convenient times to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.

In its present form, W-4.4002 permits the setting of services of ordination and installation, as well as commissioning, as part of the Service for the Lord’s Day, but it also provides that they may also be part of a special service. This statement, in its present form, applies to the ordination and/or installation of all candidates for ordered ministry. The final sentence of the section is limited in scope to the ordination and/ or installations of pastors or associate pastors, and requires that they be conducted at such times as may permit the substantial participation of the presbytery. The intent of the overture, as stated in the accompanying rationale, is to ensure that ordination and installation services of teaching elders are conducted at times that allow for greater presbytery participation.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the assembly that the amended language of W-4.4002 does not substantially broaden the present wording of the paragraph. Differentiating between the commissioning of ruling elders to pastoral service and that of other church workers appears unnecessary; both are commissioning services, albeit to different service. Limiting the scope of the first sentence to deacons, ruling elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and other commissioned servants, does not preclude the celebration of the ordination or installation of a teaching elder at a

Service of the Lord’s Day. In both the present and the proposed amended versions, ordination and installation services of pastors and associate pastors are under the mandate of convenience to the participation of the presbytery.

The advisory committee notes, however, that the use of the term “teaching elder” in place of “pastors and associate pastors” in the final sentence does include within the reach of this provision services of ordination and/or installation of those teaching elders who serve in validated ministries other than installed pastoral relationships, such as the staff of higher councils. Whether the inclusion of these persons is significant enough reason to propose amendment to the Constitution, as opposed to entrusting the matter to the discretion of the presbytery itself, is a matter the assembly should consider in weighing the benefits of this overture. The advisory committee notes that many presbyteries have policies governing the scheduling of ordination and installation to permit maximum participation on the part of the presbytery. The assembly may wish to encourage the development of such policies as an alternative to amending W-4.4002.

If the 220th General Assembly (2012) agrees with the intent of Item 17-02, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that this intent can better be accomplished with the following alternate language:

“The service of ordination and installation, or commissioning, may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503). Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the proclamation of the Word. The service of *ordination or* installation of a ~~pastor or associate pastor~~ *teaching elder* shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.”

## Item 17-03

[The assembly approved Item 17-03 with amendment. See pp 12, 13.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the revised Covenant Between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Auburn Theological Seminary below and to review this covenant before the 223rd General Assembly (2018).**

### A COVENANT BETWEEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) AND AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this covenant is to define the nature and scope of the relationship mutually agreed to by Auburn Theological Seminary (hereinafter “Auburn”) and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

#### II. Brief History and Current Mission of Auburn

Auburn Theological Seminary was founded in 1818 to educate Presbyterian ministers to serve the growing population of the American frontier in Central and Western New York. In later years, the seminary worked across denominational lines to prepare clergy for the American frontier and foreign missions. Auburn participated in the great social movements of the time: the struggles against slavery and for women’s suffrage, temperance and reforms that uplifted the poor. Auburn was one of the first theological schools in the country to educate women and to enroll students from Asia, and it was among the first to establish a summer session and a school of religious education.

Following its move to New York City and the campus of Union Theological Seminary in 1939, Auburn transformed itself into “a seminary without walls” that understands religious leadership and the pulpit in both traditional and innovative ways.

Today, Auburn Seminary equips bold and resilient leaders—religious and secular, women and men, adults and teens—with the tools and resources they need for our complex, multifaith world. We provide them with education, research, support, and media savvy, so that they can bridge religious divides, build community, pursue justice, and help heal the world. Based in New York City and reaching across the country and around the world, Auburn focuses on at least four key areas: education, research, movement-building, and media. In these four areas, Auburn conducts its own programs, research, and events. Auburn also works with a wide range of partner institutions and organizations: Presbyterian, ecumenical Christian, multifaith and beyond; seminaries, institutes, social action organizations, and media outlets. Auburn incubates and develops educational models to galvanize religious life and leadership. It identifies, analyzes, shapes, and responds to emerging trends that affect theological education, faith communities, and society at large. It convenes diverse people from around the country and world to understand themselves and each other better and to work together for justice.

Auburn organizes its work around the kind of leaders it seeks to develop: spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous, pursuing justice, bridging divides, entrepreneurial, wise about money, courageous in the face of conflict, media savvy, and resilient.

#### *Education*

Auburn Seminary's diverse array of theological education and leadership development programs equip people of all faiths to build dynamic communities of faith and reach across lines of religious difference to build a more just and peaceful world. Auburn offers programs for religious leaders from teens to adults. These programs are housed within the Center for Christian Leadership, the Center for Multifaith Education, and Auburn Media.

#### *Research*

Through the work of the Center for the Study of Theological Education (CSTE), Auburn Seminary has become *the* pioneer in theological research. The CSTE offers research and consulting services to strengthen institutions that educate religious leaders. The Center studies a wide range of topics, including students, faculty, finances, administrative leadership, educational programs, and the public role of theological schools. Using the Center's extensive database, consultants from the Center help schools evaluate programs, balance budgets, plan strategy, forge partnerships with other institutions, organize searches, and support seminary leadership, especially new presidents.

#### *Movement Building*

Auburn Seminary's work in movement-building is housed within Groundswell, the social action initiative of Auburn Seminary. Groundswell seeks to unite people of faith and moral calling in a movement for justice that transcends partisan politics. Groundswell has led campaigns calling for people across the United States to stand together against anti-Muslim bigotry on the 10-year anniversary of 9/11 and beyond; for the eradication of sex trafficking of children and minors in the United States; and is beginning campaigns for LGBT equality and a moral economy.

#### *Media*

Auburn Media is an innovative program and platform that operates at the junction of religion and mainstream media. The program trains religious leaders, more than 2,000 to date, to communicate effectively through media channels, platforming the strongest voices to provide a faith perspective on critical justice issues. It also acts as a resource to connect journalists to engaging and responsible faith voices across the United States.

### III. Brief History of Auburn's Relationship to the General Assembly

In 1818, the Synod of Geneva, comprised of the presbyteries of Geneva, Cayuga, and Onondaga, presented an overture to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America "requesting the advice of the General Assembly relative to the establishment of an academical and theological seminary, which the synod proposes instituting within their bounds ... " (*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1818, Part I, p. 25; or *The Presbyterian Constitution and Digest*, p. 1865). Andover and Princeton were unable to supply sufficient ministers to the rapidly developing "northwest," which was experiencing a flood of immigration, and the synod deeply felt the urgency of establishing such an institution.

The General Assembly responded to this overture as follows:

Resolved, That the Assembly are not prepared at present to give an opinion or advice on the subject of the overture from the Synod of Geneva, which contemplates the establishment of an academical and theological seminary, believing the said synods are the best judges of what may be their duty in this important business. (*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America 1818, pp. 25–26; or *The Presbyterian Constitution and Digest*, p. 1865)

The Assembly's response no doubt reflected its preoccupation with the support and development of the seminary at Princeton, which it had founded in 1812. Having heard this response, the Synod of Geneva, during a special session at Auburn, N.Y., on Aug. 6, 1818, voted to found a seminary "for the purpose of completing the education of pious young men for the gospel ministry."<sup>1</sup> The synod then petitioned the legislature of the state of New York for appropriate action, which it took on April 14, 1820, when it chartered "the Presbyterian Theological Seminary" at Auburn.

In the controversies over doctrine, polity and mission that soon developed in the Presbyterian Church, Auburn stood firmly with the New School camp. A convention of New School representatives met at Auburn in mid-August 1837. Among other documents, it produced the "Auburn Declaration," which Robert Hastings Nichols called "the most important official or semi-official doctrinal formulation of the Presbyterian Church since the Adopting Act {of 1729}."<sup>2</sup>

In 1870, all the other seminaries in the northern United States that were founded under local auspices agreed to shift their relationship to the General Assembly, giving the assembly veto power over faculty appointments. Auburn decided not to enter into this relationship, believing that its presbytery-elected board already maintained sufficient connection to the church,



and after about 40 years of attempts on the assembly's part to change the board's decision, the matter seemed to have been dropped.

In 1916, the Auburn board declared the "unbroken friendship" between the seminary and the assembly. The board further declared Auburn's "organic connection with the presbyteries in Central and Western New York, maintained now as from the first; which through these ninety-eight years of history, the Seminary has sought to serve with all fidelity; and which it intends to serve in coming years with fullest service and devotion."<sup>3</sup>

In 1924, the Reverend Henry Sloane Coffin and various Auburn faculty spearheaded the drafting of the Auburn Affirmation, a plea for theological tolerance in the midst of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies.

Throughout all these years, Auburn's annual report to the General Assembly was regularly received and included in the *Minutes*.

In 1939, Auburn took up residence on the New York City campus of Union Theological Seminary (hereinafter "Union"). Auburn retained its endowment and form of governance. The proposed agreement between Auburn and Union was included in the *Minutes* of the 1939 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. One of its provisions assured that the agreement:

shall not alter or modify Auburn's relationship with the presbyteries which elect members of its Board of Directors, nor with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, nor the General Assembly thereof; and Auburn hereby reaffirms its loyalty to, and present relationship with, such presbyteries, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the General Assembly thereof. (*Minutes*, PC[USA], 1939, Part I, p. 256)

Auburn's relocation to New York City caused a temporary chill between the General Assembly and the seminary. Auburn's annual report did not appear in the *Minutes* beginning in 1940. Reporting resumed in 1947, however, and continued into the early 1980s.

Today, Auburn continues to be an independent theological institution chartered in the state of New York. While Auburn leases space from Union, it has never merged with Union. While Auburn does not currently grant degrees, it retains its authority to do so. Since 1980, Auburn has been an active participant, as a corresponding member, in the Committee on Theological Education and its predecessor. At the time of reunion in 1983, Auburn asked the Special Committee on Theological Institutions to clarify Auburn's status as a Presbyterian theological institution. That committee, appointed under the Articles of Agreement to propose a governance and funding arrangement for the 11 institutions listed in the Articles (which did not include Auburn), handed questions about Auburn to the Committee on Theological Education, which included this issue in the mandate of the Special Committee to Study Theological Institutions (SCSTI), appointed in 1988. SCSTI recommended and the General Assembly concurred that the COTE should investigate the feasibility and desirability of a covenant relationship between Auburn and the General Assembly.

In its report, approved by the General Assembly in 1993, the Special Committee to Study Theological Institutions recommended that Auburn Theological Seminary relate to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Committee on Theological Education. The special committee judged that existing categories of membership on the Committee on Theological Education did not adequately serve in respect to Auburn Theological Seminary. Accordingly, the special committee recommended the adoption of a unique agreement between the General Assembly and Auburn. The Committee on Theological Education concurred with the recommendation and developed a covenant agreement with the board of Auburn Theological Seminary was approved by the General Assembly in 1996. The original covenant between the General Assembly and Auburn expired on December 31, 2001. The covenant was renewed in 2001 and 2006; the current covenant expires on December 31, 2012.

#### IV. Parties to the Covenant

The parties to this covenant, Auburn Theological Seminary, governed by its board of directors, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), operating as a [~~governing body~~] [council], are distinct entities. They are independent, neither being controlled by the other.

#### V. Partnership Agreements Under the Covenant

A. Auburn affirms its commitment in the following areas:

##### 1. Educational Programs and Research

- a. Auburn's mission is to equip bold and resilient leaders who can bridge religious divides, build community, pursue justice and heal the world. It does so through its programmatic emphases on Christian leadership, multifaith education, religion and media, and through its research center on theological education. In all these arenas, relationships with Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries and other governing bodies will continue to be a priority for Auburn, which also has strong ecumenical and multifaith commitments.

- b. Auburn will continue to provide an array of innovative theological education for ordained and lay leadership in a variety of configurations and locations, working with individuals, congregations, networks, and governing bodies, with special attention given to Presbyterian leaders, congregations, and councils.
- c. Auburn will continue to conduct research on theological education through its Center for the Study of Theological Education. The Center is the foremost educational research center with a major focus on theological education. It provides research and reports that benefit a wide spectrum of schools and faith traditions. Auburn will continue to make research findings available to the Committee on Theological Education, other interested Presbyterian Church agencies, and Presbyterian theological institutions, as appropriate.
- d. Auburn will continue to provide resources for Presbyterian students enrolled for degrees at Union Theological Seminary in New York and at New York Theological Seminary. These provisions include: qualified instructors for courses in the polity, worship, and confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); a program of counseling, informal denominational instruction, and fellowship for these students; and assistance in matters related to candidacy and placement. Auburn will provide a letter to the Committee on Theological Education in January 2016 to report an update on its relationship with these and any other theological schools.
- e. Auburn will continue to administer the Presbyteries' Cooperative Examinations, designating a proctor as appropriate.

## 2. Denominational Cooperation

- a. Auburn will continue to participate in cooperative ventures undertaken by other Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) institutions. As is the case with the other institutions, this cooperation is voluntary.
- b. The seminary will submit reports to the Committee on Theological Education (or its successor), for informational purposes only. Such reports shall ordinarily include information about finances, program and mission, student enrollment and graduates, changes in the charter and bylaws, appointments to the staff, elections to the board of directors, and a brief narrative account of activities.
- c. Auburn and its staff will maintain an active presence in PC(USA) meetings, events, councils, and networks, particularly those related to its areas of expertise (e.g., leadership development, media issues, interreligious concerns, movement-building, theological education).
- d. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), from time to time, turns to its related theological institutions as an educational and theological resource for various purposes. Auburn will offer such resources when feasible and fitting.
- e. Auburn recognizes the importance of the Theological Education Fund for support of the preparation of ministerial leadership. Therefore, Auburn will encourage support for the Theological Education Fund from PC(USA) congregations. Auburn may seek funding from the Theological Education Fund, as well as from other Presbyterian sources.

B. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that Auburn has, throughout its history, been a significant partner in the education of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Today Auburn continues to play a critical role in the PC(USA) through vital enterprises for the benefit of the church in the world. Therefore, the PC(USA) affirms its commitment to this covenant in the following ways:

### 1. Membership on the Committee on Theological Education (or its successor)

This covenant relationship with Auburn will give to that institution voice and vote on the Committee on Theological Education (or its successor). Travel and lodging expenses associated with attendance of Auburn's representative at meetings of the Committee on Theological Education (or its successor) shall be reimbursed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with its reimbursement policies.

### 2. Public Identification of Auburn

Auburn will be publicly identified, in relevant announcements of the Committee on Theological Education and other entities that refer to theological institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as a "theological institution related by covenant to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." For PC(USA) financial aid for studies purposes, Auburn will be understood as a Presbyterian-related seminary.

### 3. Representation of Auburn in Presbyterian Church Life

Presbyterian students whom Auburn Seminary enrolls in its Presbyterian Student Program will be represented at meetings of the General Assembly on an occasional basis as specified in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly. Auburn will be represented at occasional Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gatherings on the same basis as other institutions that are in a

covenant relationship with the General Assembly. The General Assembly and its entities will welcome and encourage Auburn’s participation and service in the range of Presbyterian events and networks that take place throughout the denomination.

4. Auburn’s Autonomy

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Covenant, the General Assembly acknowledges and agrees that the board of directors of Auburn is elected in accordance with its charter from the state of New York. Also notwithstanding any other provision of this covenant, the General Assembly acknowledges and agrees that, in the event of the dissolution or winding up of the affairs of Auburn or any of its successors, or the insolvency or bankruptcy of Auburn or any of its successors, or any merger, consolidation or other change in the legal structure or status of Auburn or any of its successors, none of the rights, privileges, powers, purposes, or property, and none of the liabilities, of Auburn or any of its successors shall be distributed to, assigned to, or otherwise revert to or be appropriated by the General Assembly or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or any successor of either or both. All such rights, privileges, powers, purposes and property, and all such liabilities, shall be disposed of or transferred as the board of directors of Auburn or any of its successors shall determine in its sole discretion, in accordance with the laws of the United States and the state of New York.

VI. Amendment

Changes in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or in the circumstances of Auburn may affect portions of this covenant. Either party to this covenant—Auburn and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as represented by the Committee on Theological Education—or their successor entities may request revision of parts or all of this covenant during the term of this agreement. Amendment to this covenant may be executed by mutual agreement of the board of directors of Auburn and the General Assembly.

VII. Term

The term of this covenant shall commence when formally approved and signed by the designated parties and shall expire on December 31, 2022. The covenant may be renewed by mutual consent.

VIII. Formal Approval

This covenant shall be effective upon formal approval by the board of directors of Auburn and by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and when signed by the moderator and the stated clerk of the General Assembly for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and by the president and the chair of the board of directors for the seminary.

<p><b>REPRESENTING AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY</b></p> <p><b>Katharine Rhodes Henderson, President</b></p> <p><b>Mark Hostetter Chair, Board of Directors</b></p>	<p><b>REPRESENTING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)</b></p> <p><b>[Insert Name] Moderator of the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly</b></p> <p><b>[Insert Name] Stated Clerk General Assembly of PC(USA)</b></p>
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Endnotes

1. Charter, State of New York, Laws of 1820, chapter 215: AN ACT to incorporate the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, established by the Synod of Geneva, at Auburn, in the County of Cayuga. Passed April 14, 1820. Reprinted in Auburn Theological Seminary: By-Laws adopted May 21, 1940, Original Charter of 1920, with Subsequent Amendments of 1906–1917–1939, p. 19.
2. Robert Hastings Nichols, *Presbyterianism in New York State: A History of the Synod and Its Predecessors*, edited and completed by James H. Nichols (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), pp. 135–36.
3. John Quincy Adams, *A History of Auburn Theological Seminary, 1818–1918* (Auburn, N.Y.: Auburn Theological Seminary, 1918), pp. 140–41.

**Rationale**

The content of the proposed covenant with Auburn Theological Seminary remains largely the same as the covenant approved in 1996 by the General Assembly and reaffirmed in 2001 and 2006. However the document structure of the proposed covenant is reordered, a few partnership agreements highlighted below would change, and the term of the covenant

would be extended from six to 10 years. The current covenant expires on December 31, 2012, and this is the fourth time the General Assembly of the PC(USA) will consider renewing a covenant agreement with Auburn. While the covenant is between Auburn and the PC(USA) and not with the Committee on Theological Education, some of the changes in the proposed covenant have a direct bearing upon Auburn's relationship to the COTE. Those changes have been approved by COTE as it forwards this revised covenant to the 220th General Assembly that has:

1. *A new document structure:* It now begins with a brief history of the school and focuses on its current mission to equip "bold and resilient leaders ... with the tools and resources they need for our complex, multifaith world" through "at least four key areas: education, research, movement-building and media." [Proposed covenant, Sections I. and II.]

2. *An updated description of Auburn's expanded and expanding mission:* Auburn agrees to prioritize relationships and service to Presbyterian organizations in addition to PC(USA) seminaries. Similarly, will continue to provide resources for Presbyterian students at Union Theological Seminary, but also promise to serve schools they already have been serving, including New York Theological Seminary. Notable here is a provision added that Auburn will send a letter to the COTE in January of 2016 as "an update on its relationship with these and any other theological schools." The COTE would have time to revisit this covenant, if need be, in preparation for the 222nd General Assembly (2016). [Proposed covenant, Section VII.A.]

3. *A provision that Auburn "may seek funding from the Theological Education Fund"(TEF):* The language of "funding" is specific here. The percentage of the TEF allocation going to PC(USA) seminaries is 97.5 percent. A small cooperative grant fund of 2.5 percent of the allocation is the funding this covenant is describing.

4. *A provision that Auburn be given voice and vote on the COTE:* Auburn has had a corresponding member status that includes only a voice on the COTE. This would mirror the privileges of the only other covenant member of the COTE, the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico. [Proposed covenant, Section VII.B.1.]

5. *Extended term length:* The COTE affirms this renewal process; but given the long relationship, multiple renewals of covenants with Auburn and outstanding service, Auburn believes ten years is a more appropriate term. This would save on costs of time, energy, and funds as well. As noted above, the COTE will check in with Auburn about halfway into this covenant period. [Proposed covenant, Section VIII.]

Members of the COTE elected task force to review the former covenants with the Auburn Theological Seminary include: Chandler Stokes (convener), K. Nicholas Yoda, and Iain Torrance. The task force worked closely with the following leaders at Auburn: Katharine Rhodes Henderson, president; J. C Austin, director of the Center for Christian Leadership; and Mark Hostetter, chair of the board of directors. In addition, the task force was staffed by Lee Hinson-Hasty of the Office of Theological Education.

The Committee on Theological Education's Auburn-PC(USA) Covenant Renewal Task Force met with leaders of Auburn in New York, N.Y., Jan. 25–26, 2012. The meeting was the culmination of several months' planning for the renewal of the covenant relationship.

The task force reviewed and discussed the covenant as it currently stands a number of times. The task force invited representatives from Auburn to share their expectations, to state their priorities, and to describe the mission and vision of Auburn with the task force. From those conversations, Auburn redrafted the covenant at least twice.

The current version was approved by the trustees of Auburn in February 2012 and by the COTE Executive Committee on behalf of the COTE in March 2012.

## Item 17-04

[The assembly approved Item 17-04. See pp. 12, 13.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the new trustees elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological institutions in 2010–2011:**

1. **Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary:** Claudia D. Carroll, Consuelo Donahue, Jackson Farrow Jr., G. Archer Frierson II, Roy Kim, James H. Lee, David Peeples, Cynthia Rigby, James C. Shaw, Lita Simpson, Carlton D. Wilde Jr.

2. **Columbia Theological Seminary:** Laura Cunningham, Pam Driesell, Lucie B. Eggleston, Andrew Kintz, Jan Swetenburg, Thomas W. Walker, Valarie Wilson.

3. **University of Dubuque Theological Seminary:** Jeffery Keith, Ozell Hudson, Scott Tayler.

4. **Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Warner Durnell, Anita Eerdmans, Nancy M. Falls, Scott Black Johnston, Virginia R. Merkel, Terrance T. Newland.**

5. **McCormick Theological Seminary: Peter J. Cochrane, Byron Brazier, Sherri Hausser, Heahwan Rim, Mark Anderson, Ronald G. Cruikshank, Ellen Gignilliat, Jason A. Janning, Hardy Hyoung Nyun Kim, Eric Yin-Ling Liu, Malene Minor Johnson, Brian R. Paulson, Paul Thomas Rock, Ozzie E. Smith, David G. Strom, Deborah J. Kapp, Rachel Miller Jacobs, Theresa Nolan, Alexander J. Wirth.**

6. **Pittsburgh Theological Seminary: Darryl Canady, Paul Dimmick, Andrea Hall, Douglas Hawthorne, David Hosick, Robert S. Jamison Jr., Nancy Lowmaster, Susan Mullin Moudry, Donald Scandrol, Sheldon Sorge, Michelle Wahila.**

7. **Princeton Theological Seminary: Darrell L. Armstrong, Paul A. Branstad, Sang Chang, Alf E. Halvorson, Dorothy A. Johnson, Richard Kannwischer, F. Carter Karins, Jinsoo Kim, Scott Renninger.**

8. **San Francisco Theological Seminary: Adlai J. Amor, Tom DeMund, R. John Harris, Wayne Hoffman, John Hokenstad, Timothy C. Lanham, William N. Parham Jr., Hugh J. Ralston, Juan J. Sarmiento, Joseph L. Woollett.**

9. **Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary: Marilyn Borst, Kathy D. Bremer, Ann Earnest, Robert Hull, Kenneth Kovacs.**

10. **Union Presbyterian Seminary: Gary W. Charles, Susan Forester DeWyngaert, Fairfax Fair, Rich Hodde, Ron James, Shannon Johnson Kershner, Steven C. Lilly, Edward McLeod Jr., Owen B. Melton Jr., David Renwick, Ernest Trice Thompson III.**

### *Rationale*

“A Plan for the Governance and Funding of the Theological Institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986), requires the COTE to present presidents and trustees of PC(USA)-related seminaries to the General Assembly for approval. A list of the entire board of trustees of each of the ten seminaries as well as biographical information about trustees to be approved will be made available by the COTE for review by the appropriate committee during the 220th General Assembly (2012). Similar information will also be made available about those currently serving on the boards of Auburn Theological Seminary and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, which are related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through covenant agreements.

In addition, and as required by vote of the 209th General Assembly (1997), the following information is offered in regard to racial ethnic, gender, and clergy / lay representation on the various seminary boards.

10 PC(USA) Seminaries	Total on Board	Caucasian	Hispanic	Black	Asian	Native American	Other Ethnic	Male	Female	Clergy	Lay
Austin	34	27	3	3	1	0	0	21	13	12	22
Columbia	36	36	0	0	0	0	0	21	15	12	24
Dubuque	32	30	0	2	0	0	0	25	7	2	30
Louisville	27	24	0	3	0	0	0	17	10	10	17
McCormick	49	36	1	7	5	0	0	31	18	25	24
Pittsburgh	32	30	0	2	0	0	0	23	9	12	20
Princeton	36	30	2	2	2	0	0	24	12	18	18
SFTS	35	28	2	2	2	0	1	24	11	12	23
J.C. Smith	23	8	0	15	0	0	0	14	9	7	16
Union Presbyterian	36	31	0	4	1	0	0	23	13	15	21
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>215</b>

Covenant Partner Schools											
Auburn	20	17	0	2	1	0	0	13	7	8	12
ESPR	25	0	25	0	0	0	0	21	4	18	7
Overall TOTALS	385	297	33	42	12	0	1	257	128	151	234

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## Item 17-05

[The assembly approved Item 17-05. See p. 12, 13.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) grant permission to the following theological institutions to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in 2013–2014: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in cooperation with the Interdenominational Theological Center and Union Presbyterian Seminary.

### *Rationale*

Beginning in 1989, the General Assembly became the governing body that grants permission to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Presbyterian theological institutions. The 219th General Assembly (2010) granted permission for celebrations in 2011–2012.

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## Item 17-06

[The assembly approved Item 17-06. See pp. 12–13, 14.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Approve Frank Yamada as president of McCormick Theological Seminary and James McDonald as president of San Francisco Theological Seminary.
2. Docket time in the plenary session for their brief remarks.

### *Rationale*

General Assembly approval of Dr. Yamada's appointment as president of McCormick Theological Seminary and Dr. McDonald's appointment as president of San Francisco Theological Seminary is required by "A Plan for the Governance and Funding of the Theological Institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) and by the seminaries' current bylaws.

The Reverend Dr. Frank M. Yamada is the president and Cyrus McCormick Professor of Bible and Culture at McCormick Theological Seminary. He is the first Asian American to serve as president of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminary. Prior to becoming president, Dr. Yamada was the director of the Center for Asian American Ministries and associate professor of Hebrew Bible at McCormick. He also taught Hebrew Bible for nine years at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. Dr. Yamada is author of *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary Analysis of Three Rape Narratives* (Peter Lang) and an editor for and contributor to *The Peoples' Companion to the Bible* and *The Peoples' Bible*, a cross-cultural study Bible (Augsburg Fortress Press). Dr. Yamada is a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Reverend Dr. James McDonald was appointed the 11th president of San Francisco Theological Seminary in 2011. Since 1998, he began serving in various roles at Bread for the World, a faith-based advocacy organization in Washington, D.C.; including most recently, he served as acting president and managing director. Dr. McDonald holds degrees from Princeton University, Union Theological Seminary (in New York), and American University, where he completed his Ph.D. in 1998. Jim previously served as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, Indiana; pastor at Tabernacle United Church in Philadelphia; and director of the Humphrey Fellowship Program at American University.

## Item 17-07

[The assembly approved Item 17-07. See pp. 12, 14.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve the following nominees to the Mountain Retreat Association, Inc.'s Board of Directors:

Class of 2014: Heath Rada—General Assembly Mission Council

Class of 2015: Dean Thompson—General Assembly Mission Council

## Item 17-08

[The assembly approved Item 17-08 with comment. See pp. 12, 14.]

The General Assembly Mission Council recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Approve the following list of colleges and universities as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Ga.; Alma College, Alma, Mich.; Arcadia University, Glenside, Pa.; Austin College, Sherman, Tex.; Barber-Scotia College, Concord, N.C.; Belhaven University, Jackson, Miss.; Blackburn College, Carlinville, Ill.; Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, N.J.; Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa; Carroll University, Waukesha, Wisc.; Centre College, Danville, Ky.; Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho; College of the Ozarks, Point Lookout, Mo.; The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio; Cook Native American Ministries, Tempe, Ariz.; Davidson College, Davidson, N.C.; Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W.V.; Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Grove City College, Grove City, Pa.; Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden-Sydney, Va.; Hanover College, Hanover, Ind.; Hastings College, Hastings, Nebr.; Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.; Jamestown College, Jamestown, N.Dak.; Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N.C.;

King College, Bristol, Tenn.; Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tenn.; Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.; Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Ill.; Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, N.C.; Lindenwood University, St. Charles, Mo.; Lyon College, Batesville, Ark.; Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn.; Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, Va.; Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.; Millikin University, Decatur, Ill.; Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Mo.; Monmouth College, Monmouth, Ill.; Montreat College, Montreat, N.C.; Muskingum University, New Concord, Ohio; Presbyterian College, Clinton, S.C.; Queens University of Charlotte, Charlotte, N.C.; Rhodes College, Memphis, Tenn.; Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Mont.; St. Andrews University, Laurinburg, N.C.; Schreiner University, Kerrville, Tex.;

Sterling College, Sterling, Kans.; Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex.; Tusculum College, Greeneville, Tenn.; Universidad InterAmericana de Puerto Rico, San Juan P.R.; University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa; University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Ark.; University of Pikeville, Pikeville, Ky.; University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Okla.; Warren Wilson College, Asheville, N.C.; Waynesburg University, Waynesburg, Pa.; Westminster College, Fulton, Mo.; Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.; Westminster College, Salt Lake City, Utah; Whitworth University, Spokane, Wash.; William Peace University, Raleigh, N.C.; Wilson College, Chambersburg, Pa.

2. Approval the following list of secondary schools as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Bachman Academy, McDonald, Tenn.; Blair Academy, Blairstown, N.J.; Chamberlain-Hunt Academy, Port Gibson, Miss.; French Camp Academy, French Camp, Miss.; Goodland Academy, Hugo, Okla.; Menaul School, Albuquerque, N.M.; Presbyterian Pan-American School, Kingsville, Tex.; Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, Rabun Gap, Ga.; Wasatch Academy, Mt Pleasant, Utah.

[Comment: Just as we attempt to be clear on the nature and scope of our church's relationship with seminaries and covenant partner schools, it is important that we attempt to be similarly clear on the nature and scope of our church's relationship with Presbyterian affiliated colleges, universities, and secondary schools. We would, therefore, request the General Assembly Mission Council, in consultation with the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities, to consider developing a more precise and succinct definition of exactly what it means to be considered "Presbyterian affiliated."]

*Rationale*

It has been customary for the General Assembly annually to recognize and approve a list of institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through history, tradition, and covenants with governing bodies, and various relationships of program and financial support.

**Item 17-A**

[The assembly received Item 17-A. See pp. 11, 14.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) recognize the outstanding lifetime contributions of the Reverend Dr. John B. Trotti, professor emeritus of bibliography of Union Presbyterian Seminary, to theological education in and for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the Award for Excellence in Theological Education.**

*Rationale*

The Award for Excellence in Theological Education was established by the Committee on Theological Education in 1996 to “honor a person biennially who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution to theological education in and for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” The award is normally presented during the meeting of the General Assembly. The COTE has selected John B. Trotti, professor emeritus of bibliography at Union Presbyterian Seminary, to be recognized in 2012. Trotti served on the faculty of Union Presbyterian Seminary from 1968 to 2002. A pioneer at sharing theological resources with institutions for theological education around the world for more than twenty-nine years, Trotti organized the contribution of more than 135,000 volumes (books and periodicals) to the libraries of 103 theological seminaries in 49 countries. His example sparked the creation of an American Theological Book Redistribution Project whereby American Theological Library Association (ATLA) libraries share their excess resources with their international counterparts through the Theological Book Network. A graduate of Davidson College, Trotti received his B.D. from Union Theological Seminary, his master’s in library science from the University of North Carolina, and his doctorate in Old Testament from Yale University. He has taught Old Testament or religion and literature at Union, Yale, and Randolph-Macon Women’s College (now Randolph College). Ordained as a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Trotti served as pastor of the Altavista Presbyterian Church in Altavista, Virginia, for four years before accepting a call to Union and is an honorably retired member of the Presbytery of the Peaks. Trotti has served as a board member of the American Theological Library Association (president in 1977–1978, vice president in 1976–1977), the Presbyterian Library Association (president, 1973–1974), the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (1989–1997), Historical Foundations of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (1979–1986), and Stillman College (1969–1978). In addition, he has taught adult Sunday school classes at First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia, since the 1970s. Two seminary presidents, five seminary librarians, his current pastor, and the executive director of the American Theological Library Association wrote letters supporting his nomination for this award. The nomination was affirmed unanimously by the Committee on Theological Education on September 15, 2011.

**Item 17-C**

[The assembly approved Item 17-C. See p. 13, 14.]

**The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) docket time in plenary session to celebrate the bicentennial celebrations of Union Presbyterian Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary.**

*Rationale*

In 1811 the General Assembly approved the plan for a theological seminary “... to unite that piety of the heart with solid learning, believing that religion without learning or learning without religion in the ministers of the gospel, must ultimately prove injurious to the church” (*General Assembly Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 1811). That plan created the first Presbyterian seminary in America, Princeton Theological Seminary.

One year later, in 1812, the first Presbyterian seminary in the South was established in Farmville, Virginia, as the Theology Department of Hampden-Sydney College. It became independent of the college in 1822. After the synods of Virginia and North Carolina assumed joint ownership in 1827, it was called Union Theological Seminary. In 1898 the seminary moved to Richmond, Virginia, and now also has a campus in Charlotte, North Carolina.

In agreement with the bicentennial committees and boards of trustees of Princeton Theological and Union Presbyterian Seminaries, the COTE took action on September 15, 2010, to respectfully request time on the docket of the 220th General



Assembly (2012) to give thanks for 200 years of support for theological education service to the church, and to celebrate with commissioners and colleagues the gifts of two centuries of theological education in each of these institutions.

## 17-Info

### *Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary*

#### I. Overview

##### A. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has the responsibility for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for theological education from the perspective of the whole church. The committee seeks to identify, develop, and propose strategies for a denomination-wide approach to theological education. The committee serves as an advocate for theological education, seeking to support the seminaries and to strengthen them for their mission in the world. The Committee on Theological Education can be seen as a two-way communication link between the denomination and its graduate theological institutions. Voting members of the committee include thirteen people elected to represent the church at large and a representative from each of the ten seminaries related directly to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Corresponding members of the COTE include: representatives from Auburn Theological Seminary and from the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico (both institutions related to the General Assembly through covenant agreements negotiated every six years), a representative of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, and representatives of two non-Presbyterian seminaries invited by the committee.

##### B. *Accomplishments*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) reviewed the COTE, “commend[ed] the recent reorientation of the agenda of the COTE toward various emerging themes,” urged it to “continue the important conversation begun in the Raising Leaders document, particularly in the areas of exploring the changing leadership needs of the Presbyterian churches” and “encouraged COTE to continue to explore opportunities to develop additional funding, particularly in support of students and reducing the indebtedness of beginning clergy” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1251). Under the leadership over the last two years of Theodore J. Wardlaw, chair of the COTE and president of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and Kathy Wolf Reed, vice chair of the COTE and associate pastor for youth and campus at First Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the COTE fulfilled its General Assembly assigned functions by working collaboratively on initiatives and projects facilitated by generative conversation time in the 219th General Assembly (2010) affirmed directions outlined above and described below. Committee meetings were held on the campuses of McCormick, Austin Presbyterian, and Pittsburgh Theological seminaries, where the COTE learned firsthand about the ministry and mission of each institution.

##### 1. *Cooperative and Collaborative Initiatives*

###### a. *COTE Leadership Initiative*

In September of 2010, the COTE created a COTE Leadership Initiative, along with a task force chaired by Cynthia M. Campbell, president emerita of McCormick Theological Seminary and interim pastor of Highland Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky. More than a dozen partners from four of the six General Assembly agencies, as well as mid council, congregational, and foundation leaders, plus the COTE institutional and elected members, have been meeting since March of 2010 to address “support of students and reducing the indebtedness of beginning clergy” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1251). They have assisted the COTE in sending a communication to the larger church (Pentecost 2011) affirming how many congregations and presbyteries have the capacity to support ministry residencies, new ministry ideas, and joint ventures. The task force also is inviting the Board of Pensions into a conversation regarding possible alternatives to meet pension dues for new and innovative ministries. Continuing previous efforts, the task force is exploring the ordination process, seeding ideas to spur responses to issues around first call and leadership in the church, and devising solutions to make first call pastorates more affordable. The task force is now, therefore, seeking to partner with agencies and other entities of the PC(USA) to mobilize the talents of a new generation of pastoral leaders to meet mission needs.

###### b. *COTE Research and Development*

In an effort to continue to “reorient ... the agenda of the COTE toward various emerging themes” (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1251), the COTE formed a Research and Development Task Force that serves as a strategic planning group for the committee. After reviewing research done for the COTE review in 2010 as well as data from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and other relevant sources, this group of COTE members, an academic dean, and an ATS official are considering organizing Theological Education Symposia in 2012.

c. *Other Representative Cooperative Projects*

Through Theological Education Fund special project funds, the COTE sponsored grant requests for the work of the COTE Leadership Initiative and Research and Development task forces and for continuing an Online Supervised Ministry Project: This project of the Presbyterian and Reformed Theological Field Educators Caucus (PRTFE) seeks to improve online supervisor training for seminary students that may be used by all the participating schools. Susan Fox at Union Presbyterian Seminary directs this project. The COTE also referred partnership opportunities with the Young Adult Volunteer program of the General Assembly Mission Council's Presbyterian World Mission and the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association to PRTFE.

2. *Funding for Seminaries Related to the PC(USA)*

Raising money for the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan), which is the sole source of denomination-wide support for the ten PC(USA) seminaries and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, has been reaffirmed as a priority task for the COTE and the Office of Theological Education. The Theological Education Fund (TEF) was established by the 198th General Assembly (1986). Throughout the twenty-three years of the TEF's operational life, more than \$50 million has been contributed by more than half of the PC(USA) congregations contributing at some time during this history. In 2010, more than 1,500 PC(USA) congregations and middle governing bodies made voluntary contributions to the Theological Education Fund. As a result, \$1,350,000 in TEF monies were distributed to eligible schools in 2011, according to a formula developed and monitored by the COTE Institutional Review Subcommittee on which only elected members not representing seminaries sit. In 2011, about 1,450 of PC(USA) congregations and middle governing bodies contributed, and \$1,066,432 will be sent to support PC(USA) schools in 2012. While the number of contributing churches declined, the COTE celebrates that 83 congregations have given consecutively for all 23 years, totaling more than \$3.6 million and in 2011, 63 congregations contributed for the first time. The TEF helps underwrite quality theological education at PC(USA) seminaries to provide for the leadership of the wider church.

A Seminary Support Network includes more than 130 enthusiastic volunteers and representatives from presbyteries and synods who advocate on behalf of the seminaries with passion for the message "Seminaries and Churches Together—For Generations to Come." Participation at annual network training conferences continues to grow. Fifteen network synod-level representatives continue to work on a contract basis to make possible improved regional coordination for the Seminary Support Network. Pastors, clerks of sessions, presbytery resource centers, and designated contact persons in PC(USA) congregations receive interpretive materials about our seminaries and requests for support of the Theological Education Fund. Some of the new resources include an e-newsletter focusing on the mission and impact our seminaries are engaging to transform lives, and a joint viewbook that presents an overview of all PC(USA) seminaries. One student representative from each of the twelve PC(USA)-affiliated seminaries also serves on the Seminary Support Network. The COTE is excited about the energy and future direction of this ministry. By action taken September 15, 2011, by the COTE, contributions to the TEF may be invested with the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), to help grow ministries of congregations before being distributed to PC(USA) seminaries.

In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, active promotion of the Theological Schools Endowment Fund has continued to grow at a modest pace. The Theological Schools Endowment Fund provides an opportunity for individuals to contribute monies to benefit PC(USA) seminaries through gifts and bequests. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation manages this fund.

3. *Charter Changes in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions*

One of the governance functions assigned to the COTE by the Report of the Special Committee on Theological Institutions approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) is the reporting of charter changes by the individual schools to the General Assembly. Two seminaries reported changes in their charters or other constitutional documents since the 219th General Assembly (2010).

a. *Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

See Appendix A, new charter of LPTS at the end of this COTE report.

b. *Princeton Theological Seminary*

Princeton Theological Seminary reported the following change to its charter:

**“ARTICLE VII.** There shall be a Board of Trustees (“Board”) ordinarily consisting of between thirty (30) and forty (40) persons, with the actual number serving at any particular time to be determined by the Board. All members of the Board shall be members of Christian churches. Approximately one-half of the trustees shall be ordained ministers and approximately one-half shall be communicant (lay) members of a Christian church. All but a maximum of five (5) of those members shall be members of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation or ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Normally, any trustees who are ordained ministers and not members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be

graduates of the Seminary. The officers of the Board shall be a chair, a vice chair, a secretary, and such others as the Board may from time to time determine, each of whom shall be a minister or an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The number, names and addresses of the Trustees constituting the current Board are as set forth on Schedule A<sub>2</sub> attached hereto.”

#### 4. *Reports from Individual Institutions*

The Committee on Theological Education brings to the assembly a narrative report from each of the ten seminaries related to the PC(USA), Auburn Theological Seminary, the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, and the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation.

##### a. *Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), Austin Seminary has welcomed a new dean, Dr. Allan H. Cole Jr., who is leading the development of new degree programs that will be more responsive to the changing needs of the church. We have also begun the quiet phase of a \$44 million comprehensive campaign. The seminary welcomed two new Old Testament professors, Dr. Suzie Park and Dr. Gregory Cuéllar, and created the Education Beyond the Walls department, the outward-looking face of Austin Seminary, to provide expansive theological education for clergy, church leaders, congregations, and communities through workshops and educational experiences. We are also welcoming the AYAVA House, an intentional community for young adults engaged in a year of service, which was made possible through a grant from the Cousins Family Foundation.

##### b. *Columbia Theological Seminary*

The ninety-seven members of the Class of 2011 received their degrees and departed to serve Christ’s church shortly after construction began on the Vernon S. Broyles Jr. Leadership Center. The 30,000-square-foot facility includes classrooms, offices, an education technology center, and bookstore. The \$11.6 million project was funded by gifts to a successful \$60 million campaign concluded in December 2011. In addition to the leadership center and a new residence hall, campaign gifts support student scholarships and have made possible substantial investments in faculty and program development as well as education and information technology. New appointments include Deborah Mullen, dean of faculty/executive vice president, John Azumah, associate professor of world Christianity and Islam, and Ralph C. Watkins, associate professor of evangelism and church growth.

##### c. *University of Dubuque Theological Seminary*

The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary graduated its first class of distance Master of Divinity students at the seminary commencement on May 12, 2012. The Distance Master of Divinity Program, which was accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in 2007, allows students to take two-thirds of their required degree credits online. The remaining credits are earned during intensive on-campus residencies in August and January. In 2010, the Association of Theological Schools approved the Master of Arts in Missional Christianity to be offered in distance format. Students in the distance programs represent more than twenty-five states. The University of Dubuque is the only seminary of the PC(USA) to offer fully accredited online degree programs.

##### d. *Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary announced a bold strategic plan, [Covenant for the Future](#), which aims to make seminary indebtedness a thing of the past by providing full scholarships for all students in the school’s master’s degree programs: full-tuition scholarships by 2015, and additional stipends for living expenses by 2021. In covenantal exchange for financial aid, students will be required to engage in service throughout their time at the seminary. The plan will enable graduates to go wherever God calls them: planting new congregations, helping struggling congregations, serving in dual vocations, or any of countless roles yet imagined. Liberated from seminary debt, LPTS graduates will be free to take more risks as servants and leaders for the church.

##### e. *McCormick Theological Seminary*

This year saw many changes at McCormick Theological Seminary. The Reverend Dr. Cynthia Campbell retired after sixteen years of faithful service as president. In May 2011, the board of trustees called the Reverend Dr. Frank M. Yamada as the tenth president of the seminary. He is the first Asian American to serve as president of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminary. We said goodbye to the Reverend Dr. Deborah Mullen, who was called to be academic dean and executive vice president of academic affairs at Columbia Theological Seminary, and the Reverend Dr. Jennifer Ayres, who accepted an offer from Candler School of Theology to join the faculty and direct the school’s Religious Education program. We welcomed the Reverend Dr. Brad Braxton as distinguished visiting scholar.

f. *Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary recognizes the dynamic life of the church and Christ's call on Christian leaders whose vision transcends traditional boundaries, and has therefore combined biblically grounded theological education with relevant practical preparation for mission-oriented ministry through a new program: the Master of Divinity with Church Planting Emphasis. The Reverend Dr. John Burgess, professor of systematic theology, received Fulbright and Luce fellowships to further his research on the resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church and to teach at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Humanitarian University in Moscow. The Reverend Rebecca Jones (2011) received the Phillips Talbot Global Ministry Fellowship, awarded by Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, for a two-year program that includes a year-long ministry in Zambia, where she is training lay pastors through Theological Education by Extension Zambia.

g. *Princeton Theological Seminary*

Of most significance during Princeton Theological Seminary's 2010–2011 academic year was a campus-wide process to create a strategic plan to take the seminary into its third century. Led by the board of trustees and President Torrance, the entire seminary community provided input and discussion toward a plan whose initiatives will re-envision the Master of Divinity curriculum (of which spiritual formation will be one primary component, and in which the church will become a primary classroom); will build a community that reflects the diversity of the church and world (reflected in the seminary's new Navigating the Waters Diversity Competence Initiative); and will reach out to the global church—through a new library that enhances discovery and access both on-site and digitally around the world, and through intentional partnerships with the world church, with a commitment to contribute distinctively Reformed perspectives to the discussion.

h. *San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS)*

At SFTS, the 2010–11 academic year was a pivotal year, which included the closure of the seminary's Southern California campus, the search and subsequent hiring of a new SFTS president, and the creation and hiring of a new senior staff position, vice president of communications. The SFTS president, the Reverend Dr. Phil Butin, resigned his post effective February 1, 2010. Dr. Laird Stuart was named interim president on March 1, 2010, serving in that capacity until July 2011. Interim President Stuart and the board of trustees, as part of the Financial Equilibrium Plan, closed the SFTS Southern California campus. This effort was deemed necessary in an effort to help restore the financial health of SFTS. On July 8, 2011, the Reverend Dr. James McDonald was hired to lead SFTS as the eleventh president of the seminary. President McDonald added a key position to the SFTS administrative cabinet, vice president of communications. On Nov. 28, 2011, Kay Carney, Ph.D., was hired to fill the position. A search was launched for vice president of development, which was filled in May 2011 by Interim Vice President the Reverend Scott Sheldon, until his departure on Dec. 10, 2011. In September 2011, a committee was formed to plan the inauguration of President McDonald.

i. *Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary*

Johnson C. Smith Seminary is working to define itself as a national hub of urban ministry training, congregational transformation, and leadership development. We want our students to understand the relationship between their priestly role in the church and their prophetic role in the community. We want them to gain the broad-based skills needed to lead God's people in conventional and nonconventional ways in the 21st century.

During the 2010–2011 academic year, Johnson C. Smith Seminary's HIV/AIDS Initiative was birthed in response to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy's report entitled, *Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action*. This report was approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in June 2010. The HIV/AIDS Initiative provides students with a compelling opportunity to serve an underserved urban community alongside experienced clergy, activists and volunteers from a host of faith traditions. The inaugural HIV/AIDS conference, scheduled for May 17–19, 2012, will offer an HIV/AIDS certification program for clergy and lay leaders. The certification program will produce AIDS-competent churches and church leaders.

j. *Union Presbyterian Seminary*

Union Presbyterian Seminary has launched a bicentennial campaign to celebrate 200 years of theological education. The celebration began with the September 2011 convocation on the campus of Hampden-Sydney College, where the seminary began in 1812, and will conclude in September 2012 at the new, 22,000-square-foot Charlotte campus facility. The seminary anticipates the initiation of a newly revised curriculum with the start of the 2013 academic year. Already initiated is a Communities of Learning program that brings newly admitted candidates into conversation with faculty, alumni/ae mentors and biblical and theological concepts they will soon address as students. To help facilitate these and other exciting programming initiatives, the seminary anticipates the inauguration of a public capital campaign in the near future.

k. *Auburn Theological Seminary*

Auburn Theological Seminary continued to equip bold and resilient religious leaders, reorienting our mission into four areas of focus: research, education, movement building, and media. During this academic year, Auburn's Center for the Study of Theological Education (CSTE) released "**Leadership That Works: A Study of Theological School Presidents,**" a major report that identifies the ingredients of leadership that create stable, forward-looking theological institutions. The Center for Christian Leadership at Auburn Theological Seminary received a major grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. to equip bold and resilient leaders for 21st century ministry by bringing pastoral coaching to clergy across the country, bolstering women's leadership and cultivating wisdom about money in congregational leaders. Auburn launched Groundswell, a multifaith social action initiative that seeks to unite people of faith and moral calling in a movement for justice that transcends partisan politics. Auburn Media continued to provide media training for religious leaders, launching two exciting initiatives to train and provide a platform for religious voices for the 2012 election cycle.

l. *Seminario Evangelico de Puerto Rico/ Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico*

The Doctor in Ministry Program has modified its schedule framework while maintaining its academic goals. The new schedule consists of two two-week intensives in January and July each year. This framework allows Hispanic students in the mainland United States and students from Latin America to participate in the program. It also eases the routine adjustments our students in Puerto Rico need to make to complete the program successfully. In addition to the Doctor in Ministry, Master in Divinity, and Master in Arts Programs, the seminary offers an intensive Master in Arts degree oriented to U.S. Hispanic Pentecostal students in Miami and Los Angeles. The seminary maintains its New Immigrants Program, which equips lay Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastors from Africa, Asia, East Europe, and Latin America for ministry. Finally, we are grateful for our new effort in continuing education, *Creciendo Juntos* (Growing Together), addressed to alumni, laypersons of our sponsoring denominations and church leaders.

m. *Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation*

Since the 2010 General Assembly, the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation has continued to provide scholarships for inquirers and candidates attending any of our ten Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries. It has increased the amount and number of the scholarships and provided a growing list of lifelong education events independently as well as in cooperation with other institutions and programs. Last year, for example, we initiated, along with the University of Nebraska-Omaha, a distance education certificate program in church administration. We are committed to a five-year effort to offer the program with significant scholarship assistance to clergy participants. At present, they are in the second of a three-year strategic planning process it believes will broaden its ministry even further.

## Appendix A

AMENDED AND RESTATED BYLAWS OF THE LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## ARTICLE I

SECTION 1. The name of this corporation shall be "LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY" (also referred to in these Bylaws as the "Seminary").

SECTION 2. The Seminary is an educational institution related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("General Assembly") and from time to time may be in a covenant relationship with other governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as is more fully described in the Seminary's Articles of Incorporation.

## ARTICLE II

## The Board of Trustees

SECTION 1. All corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of, and the business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed under the direction of, the Board of Trustees (the "Board" or "Board of Trustees") except as otherwise provided by law or the Articles of Incorporation. The number of Trustees of the Seminary may vary as the Board of Trustees may determine, provided that the number shall be no fewer than twenty-five (25) and no more than thirty-seven (37), which minimum and maximum numbers shall be changed only by amendment to these Bylaws.

The Board of Trustees ordinarily shall elect Trustees during the annual meeting of the corporation. Election to the Board ordinarily shall be for a term of four years and shall be by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Trustees present at a duly constituted meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustees are eligible to serve three consecutive four-year terms, after which they ordinarily will step down from the Board for at least one year. After that year, the Board may choose to elect a former Trustee for another term of four years, and that person again would be eligible for three four-year terms. Ordinarily, no Trustee shall serve more than two sets of three consecutive four-year terms. Any exceptions to this pattern of election must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Trustees shall be divided into four classes, as nearly equal in number as possible, with approximately one-quarter (1/4) of the total number of Trustees being elected at each annual meeting. Trustees shall hold office until the adjournment of the annual meeting of the

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Board of Trustees at which their successors are to be elected and until their successors shall have been elected and qualified or until their deaths or until they shall resign or shall have been removed from office in the manner provided in the Articles of Incorporation of the Seminary.

One (1) Trustee shall be nominated by the board of directors of the Alum Association of the Seminary. Said Trustee ordinarily shall be nominated in the spring meeting of the board of directors of the Alum Association. If elected by the Board of Trustees, such Trustee shall serve a term of four (4) years. Such Trustee shall not be eligible for re-election. The President of the Seminary, by virtue of the Office, serves as a member of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2. After they have been elected, Trustees shall qualify and assume their offices by taking an oath orally or in writing that they will faithfully perform the duties of a Trustee of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Newly elected Trustees shall be installed formally at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees, normally in October.

SECTION 3. The meetings of the Board of Trustees shall ordinarily be held semi-annually in the fall and the spring. The spring meeting, normally held in March or April, shall be designated as the annual meeting. The Board may provide, by resolution, the time and place for the holding of additional regular meetings without other notice than such resolution. Special meetings may be called by the Chair. The Chair shall call a special meeting upon the request of any five Trustees. Written personal notice of special meetings shall be given at least ten days before the time of meeting. A majority of the voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Trustees may participate in any convened meeting of the Board or any committee appointed by the Board by or through the use of any means of communication by which all Trustees participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A Trustee participating in any meeting by this means is considered to be present in person at the meeting.

SECTION 4. The Board shall approve the degrees to be conferred by the Seminary. The Board, upon recommendation from the Faculty, may confer such degrees and make such awards as it deems to be in accord with the resources and objectives of the Seminary and the laws of Kentucky.

SECTION 5. The Board shall from time to time fix the amounts of tuition, fees, fines, housing, and other necessary contingent expenses of the Seminary.

SECTION 6. The Board shall have the power to confer the title of Honorary Life Member on any Trustee, who, in the judgment of the Board, has rendered extraordinary service to the Seminary. Honorary Life Members may sit with the Board as a deliberative body and upon invitation of the Board Chair may sit with and vote in Board committees. Honorary Life members may not sit with the Board in executive session or vote in Board meetings.

SECTION 7. The Board shall promulgate and maintain policies governing the operation of the Board and the conduct of Trustees, including, but not limited to, a conflict of interest policy.

SECTION 8. The Board shall set policies for the Seminary regarding: mission and strategic direction; governance; academic programs and curricula; personnel; student admissions, continuance, welfare and conduct; resource allocation and management; Seminary facilities and campus use; asset acquisition, disposition, and management; fiscal matters; ethics; risk management; and audit. Ordinarily, policies established by the Board shall be at the strategic level and provide guidance to the administration's actions or at the functional management level and guide activities in major Seminary functions and operations.

SECTION 9. As a deliberative body, the Board adopts the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order, with the exception that mail ballots, facsimile ballots, and decisions reached in conference calls authorized by the Board are as legitimate and binding as decisions reached in a regular meeting of the Board or Board committee.

SECTION 10. The Board shall have the authority to appoint representatives of outside organizations associated with the Seminary to serve as Advisory Members of the Board. Advisory Members shall be entitled to report, in writing, at least annually to the Board and shall have voice, but not vote, in meetings of the Board. At the invitation of the Board Chair, Advisory Members may sit with Board committees. Advisory Members shall not sit with the Board in executive session.

### ARTICLE III

#### Officers of the Board

SECTION 1. The officers of the Board shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary. These officers shall be elected by the Board from its members and shall serve for two-year terms, or until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election for up to three additional two-year terms. Vacancies in these offices may be filled at any meeting of the Board for the unexpired term.

SECTION 2. The Chair, or in the event of the Chair's absence or disability, the Vice Chair, shall establish the agenda for meetings of the Board, shall preside at meetings of the Board, and shall have the powers and perform the duties usually pertaining to the office. In the event of the absence of both these officers, the Secretary shall preside until a Chair pro tempore has been elected.

SECTION 3. The Secretary shall maintain a full and accurate record of all the meetings of the Board and its committees and shall give due notice of its meetings. The Secretary shall also authenticate records of the Seminary.

SECTION 4. The Board may appoint, pursuant to applicable Kentucky law and upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, agents who will serve as managers and/or custodians of all securities and/or property held by the Seminary. These agents may invest and reinvest the properties and funds of the Seminary under their control as they may deem advisable and as permitted by investment policies approved by the Board and permitted by Kentucky law. These agents shall collect all income from the investments in their custody and shall disburse

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these funds to the Seminary upon direction of the Vice President for Finance and Administration. These agents shall collect the proceeds of all securities sold, matured, or redeemed and invest the proceeds as herein provided.

### ARTICLE IV

#### Committees

SECTION 1. The Chair shall annually appoint an Executive Committee with the approval of the Board, consisting of at least eight (8) Trustees and the President of the Seminary. The elected officers of the Board shall be members of this Committee. The Chair of the Board shall be the chair of the Executive Committee. To the extent allowed pursuant to Kentucky law, the Executive Committee shall have the full powers of the Board in the interim between the meetings of the Board, excepting the power to amend Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation and to elect, transfer, and terminate the Seminary President or an Officer of Instruction. The presence of five (5) members of the Board who have been appointed to the Executive Committee or, in the alternative, one-third of the total membership of the Executive Committee (whichever is larger) shall constitute a quorum. It shall report all its actions at the next regular meeting of the Board.

SECTION 2. The Chair shall appoint annually an Academic Affairs Committee, an Audit Committee, a Finance Committee, a Governance Committee, a Seminary Relations Committee, and a Student Life Committee. The membership, powers, and duties of these Committees shall be as authorized by the Board in policy.

SECTION 3. The Board may create such other committees as it sees fit. The members and chairs of all committees shall be appointed by the Chair of the Board except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, Board policy or other Board action. The Chair and the President, by virtue of their Offices, shall be members of all Board committees, with voice and vote, except that the President shall not be a member of the Audit Committee or a committee charged with reviewing the performance of the President. A Trustee may attend any meeting of any Board committee and may participate in committee discussion but may not vote unless the Trustee is a committee member.

### ARTICLE V

#### Administration

SECTION 1. General:

(a) Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws or in a Board policy, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members present, the Board shall have the power, at a regular or a special meeting called for the purpose, to take the following actions with reference to the President and those other persons who are designated herein as “administrative officers:”

- (i) To elect and to induct or to inaugurate them into office, chair, or position to serve at the pleasure of the Board or for a term;
  - (ii) To transfer them from one office, chair, or position to another;
  - (iii) To suspend them preliminary to and pending investigation of charges against conduct or competent performance of duties;
  - (iv) To remove them from office within the limitations and subject to the procedures stated in Board policy; and
  - (v) To fix their duties, compensation, remuneration, and emoluments of office and position and, within the limitations, if any, provided by express written agreement or contract, change such duties, compensation, remuneration, or emoluments at any time and from time to time.
- (b) The administrative officers shall include the following: President, Academic Dean (also referred to in these Bylaws as the “Dean”), Vice President for Finance and Administration, and Vice President for Seminary Relations.
- (c) The title of Vice President may be conferred upon another administrator upon recommendation of the President and approval by the Board.
- (d) The qualifications, authority, and duties of such other administrative officers as the Board may authorize shall be prescribed by the Board upon recommendation of the President.
- (e) The President shall be elected by the Board and shall serve for an indefinite period at the pleasure of the Board unless the Board should authorize a term appointment. The Academic Dean shall be elected by the Board on recommendation of the President and shall serve for an indefinite period at the pleasure of the Board unless the Board should authorize a term appointment on recommendation of the President. All other administrative officers shall be appointed by the President and shall serve for an indefinite period at the pleasure of the President unless the Board should authorize a term appointment on recommendation of the President. The President is authorized to accept the resignations of other administrative officers, including the Dean, and shall report resignations to the Board. The Chair of the Board is authorized to suspend the President from the active duties of office as provided in Section 1(a)(iii). The President is authorized to suspend other administrative officers, including the Dean. In the event that the Chair suspends the President or the President suspends another administrative officer, the Chair or the President shall notify the Board or the Executive Committee.

## 17 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### SECTION 2. The President:

- (a) The President is the chief executive officer of the Seminary, shall administer the Seminary under the direction of the Board, and shall implement the policies of the Board. The President shall be a teaching elder in good standing in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or an active member in a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as these terms are used in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The authority and duties of the President shall be those ordinarily vested in the chief executive officer of an educational institution, except as they may be otherwise prescribed in these Bylaws.
- (b) The President of the Seminary shall be responsible to the Board. The President shall have general supervision and direction of all other officers and agents of the Seminary and shall supervise in general the work of the Faculty, the administration, and the students.
- (c) The President shall be the principal representative and spokesperson for the Seminary. The President shall ordinarily preside on public occasions and shall confer degrees and make awards authorized by the Board.
- (d) The President, by virtue of the Office, shall be a member of the Faculty and all Faculty committees. The President shall be the Presiding Officer of the Faculty. As Presiding Officer, the President's responsibilities shall include: calling all regular and special meetings of the Faculty, presiding over those meetings, appointing the standing committees of the Faculty, appointing, in consultation with the Faculty, all Faculty search committees, and performing such other duties as are ordinarily conferred on a Presiding Officer. The President attends and has voice and vote at any meeting of the Faculty or component of the Faculty constituted to conduct the business of the Seminary. The President may delegate any or all of the President's authority and responsibilities as Presiding Officer to the Dean.
- (e) The President shall recommend long-range goals and objectives to the Board and, upon adoption by the Board, devise the organization, policies, financial plans, and schedules designed to reach those goals. The President shall recommend strategic academic and curricular decisions to the Board following Board policy and procedures in which the Faculty has a principal role. The President shall submit annually for adoption by the Board a budget for the next fiscal year's operations and shall have general supervision of all expenditures authorized by that budget. At meetings of the Board, the President shall report on the progress of the Seminary. Normally, all petitions and recommendations to the Board shall reach the Board through the President.
- (f) In the event of an extended absence or incapacity of the President or in the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, unless the Board designates otherwise, the duties and powers of the President shall devolve upon the Dean or, in the event that the Dean is unavailable or unable to act, upon the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

### SECTION 3. The Dean:

- (a) The authority and duties of the Dean shall be those ordinarily vested in such an officer of an educational institution, except as they may be otherwise prescribed in these Bylaws. The Dean shall perform such other duties as are assigned by the President. The Dean shall be elected by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the President made pursuant to Board policy and procedures that include substantive consultation with the Faculty.
- (b) The Dean shall be the chief academic officer of the Seminary, shall report to the President, and shall be supervised by the President in the performance of all duties. The Dean shall serve as staff person for the Board's Academic Affairs Committee.
- (c) The Dean shall have general oversight of student services and general student welfare; of Faculty Members' performance, development, and general welfare; and of curricular matters, including Field Education, Lay Education, Continuing Education and Library Services curricula.
- (d) The Dean, by virtue of the Office, shall be a member of the Faculty and all Faculty committees and shall be entitled to attend and to have voice and vote at any meeting of the Faculty or component of the Faculty constituted to conduct the business of the Seminary. In the absence of the President, the Dean shall preside at Faculty meetings and public occasions. The Dean shall have such other authority and responsibilities of the Presiding Officer of the Faculty as are delegated by the President.

### SECTION 4. The Vice President for Finance and Administration:

- (a) The Vice President for Finance and Administration shall be the chief fiscal officer of the Seminary, shall report to the President, and shall be supervised by the President in the performance of all duties. The Vice President for Finance and Administration shall serve as staff person for the Finance Committee of the Board.
- (b) The Vice President for Finance and Administration shall prepare current operating and capital budgets, financial reports, and long-range financial plans; shall advise the President and the Board regarding the implementation of investment guidelines; shall supervise managers of support operations; and shall manage human resource administration, property, fiscal, and liability risk and insurance. Subject to Board policy and authority, the Vice President for Finance and Administration shall have general control of all invested funds and properties. The Vice President for Finance and Administration shall perform such other duties as are assigned by the President.

### SECTION 5. The Vice President for Seminary Relations:

- (a) The Vice President for Seminary Relations shall report to the President, shall be the chief development officer of the Seminary, and shall be supervised by the President in the performance of all duties.



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- (b) The Vice President for Seminary Relations shall serve as staff person for the Seminary Relations Committee of the Board and shall perform such other duties as the President may assign.

### SECTION 6. Other Administrators:

- (a) Other administrative positions necessary for the efficient operation of the Seminary may be authorized by the Board. Persons filling those positions shall be appointed by the President and shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the President. The Board shall approve their salaries.
- (b) Such administrators shall ordinarily report either to the Dean, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, or the Vice President for Seminary Relations.
- (c) Duties of such administrative positions shall be set forth in job descriptions prepared by the President and provided to the Board for its information.

## ARTICLE VI

### Officers of Instruction

Officers of Instruction in this Seminary (sometimes referred to herein individually as “Faculty Members” or collectively as the “Faculty”) shall perform their duties in a climate of academic freedom and moral responsibility. Such freedom is required for the fulfillment of the Seminary’s obligation as a community of scholars to which the Church has reason to look for thoughtful leadership in bringing the minds of people into harmony with the will of God in intellectual integrity. As members of a community of Christian scholars, Faculty Members and students exercise their freedom within the restraints of the Seminary which is the servant of God and which is related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Faculty Members and students have special responsibilities in view of the mission of the Seminary.

### SECTION 1. General

- (a) Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws or in a Board policy, the Board shall have the power, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members present at a regular or special meeting called for the purpose, to take the following actions with reference to Faculty Members:
  - (i) To elect and to induct or to inaugurate them into office, chair, or position to serve at the pleasure of the Board, for a term, or for indeterminate tenure;
  - (ii) To transfer them from one office, chair, or position to another;
  - (iii) To suspend them preliminary to and pending investigation of charges against conduct or competent performance of duties;
  - (iv) To remove them from office within the limitations and subject to the procedures stated in Board Bylaws or policy; and
  - (v) To fix their duties, compensation, remuneration, and emoluments of office and position and, within the limitations, if any, provided by express written agreement or contract, change such duties, compensation, remuneration, or emoluments at any time and from time to time.
- (b) All Officers of Instruction shall be elected by the Board upon the recommendation of the President made pursuant to Board policy and procedures in which the Faculty has a principal role.
- (c) Officers of Instruction shall be classified and shall rank according to the following titles:
  - (i) Professors.
  - (ii) Associate Professors.
  - (iii) Assistant Professors.
  - (iv) Instructors.
- (d) Part-time Faculty Members, Lecturers and other adjunct Faculty Members are designated as special Officers of Instruction and shall be appointed and removed by the President. In appointing such Faculty Members, the President shall follow Board policy and procedures in which the Faculty has a principal role. The honor of “emeritus” or “emerita” may be bestowed upon a Faculty Member by the Board of Trustees upon his or her retirement.
- (e) In addition, upon recommendation by the President made after the President consults with the Faculty, the Board of Trustees may elect to enter into term contracts with Officers of Instruction who are called to administrative positions with Faculty rank. Officers of Instruction who serve under such term contracts shall have all the responsibilities and rights accorded to other Officers of Instruction, except that they shall not be eligible for indeterminate tenure in the posts to which they are appointed. The renewal of their term contracts and promotion shall be recommended by the President, after consultation with the Faculty, to the Board of Trustees for its approval. Officers of Instruction who serve under term contracts shall be reviewed regularly as required by and in accordance with Board policy and procedures.

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SECTION 2. A majority of the tenured and tenure-track Faculty Members, in the aggregate, shall be members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or another church with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion.

SECTION 3. Every Officer of Instruction, before entering upon the execution of his or her office, shall respond affirmatively to such declaration of purpose as is required by Board policy.

SECTION 4. Any Officer of Instruction proposing to resign his or her office shall give at least three (3) months' notice to the President, unless relieved by the President from giving such notice. The President is authorized to accept resignations and shall report resignations to the Board. No Officer of Instruction shall be deprived of his or her office without at least three (3) months' notice. The three (3) month notice period shall be extended as necessary for the completion of pre-termination procedures required by Board policy. The President is authorized to suspend an Officer of Instruction from the active duties of office as provided in Section 1(a)(iii) above. In the event that the President suspends an Officer of Instruction, the President shall notify the Board or the Executive Committee.

SECTION 5. A Faculty Member shall ordinarily remain in the rank of Assistant Professor for four years and an Associate Professor shall ordinarily remain in the rank for four years. Ordinarily the appointment of Instructors shall be for one year only, but may be made for longer periods of time at the discretion of the Board.

SECTION 6. The review for tenure shall take place in the eighth year of a Faculty Member's service to the Seminary. Upon approval by the President and agreement of the Faculty Member, a Faculty Member may receive up to four years' credit towards this requisite period of service prior to tenure review as a result of service in another academic or ecclesiastical appointment. The tenure review will be preceded by one comprehensive review. For Faculty Members appointed initially to the rank of Assistant Professor, that review will occur prior to consideration for promotion to Associate Professor, using the criteria and procedures referred to in Article VI, Section 7 of these Bylaws. Exceptions to these tenure review requirements must be made by the Board upon recommendation of the President.

SECTION 7. Recommendations for the promotion and tenure of Officers of Instruction shall be made to the Board of Trustees by the President pursuant to a Board policy that shall describe criteria and procedures for promotion and tenure and shall provide for a principal role by the Faculty.

SECTION 8. Indeterminate tenure implies permanent status as an Officer of Instruction. Tenure is to be rescinded only under the following circumstances: 1) just cause for reasons of incompetence, failure to perform the duties of the office, moral turpitude (including, but not limited to, dishonesty, plagiarism, unethical conduct, and sexual abuse or harassment), and lack of faithfulness to the Seminary's basic purpose; 2) program reduction or elimination; 3) financial exigency or a merger of the Seminary with another institution; and 4) mental or physical incapacity. A term appointment is to be rescinded during its term only under the circumstances described in this Section 8. A decision to rescind indeterminate tenure or a term appointment must be made in accordance with Board policies and procedures. The procedures must include Faculty review. The policy and procedures for disciplinary rescission must include a system of progressive discipline. The termination of an Officer of Instruction as a result of the nonrenewal of a term appointment or a decision not to award tenure is not a rescission and does not result in the application of the requirements of this Section 8.

SECTION 9. Should a tenured Faculty Member be terminated from service on the Faculty, the Faculty Member shall ordinarily be given a year of terminal leave at full salary and benefits, unless other full-time employment is received prior to the end of the year of terminal leave, except when the Faculty Member is dismissed on grounds of moral turpitude. A Faculty Member dismissed on the grounds of moral turpitude may be dismissed immediately at the end of the three (3) month notice period described in Section 4 or the time required for the completion of the requisite dismissal proceedings, if longer than three (3) months.

SECTION 10. All Faculty Members shall be reviewed and evaluated regularly as required by and in accordance with these Bylaws and Board policy and procedures. In the event that, as a result of a review and evaluation process, it is determined that a Faculty Member has failed to meet requisite performance standards and the Faculty Member fails to correct the deficiencies within a reasonable period thereafter, the Faculty Member's tenure or term appointment may be rescinded for incompetence or failure to perform the duties of office as described in Section 8 above.

SECTION 11. As a deliberative body, the Faculty shall consist of all Faculty members and such administrators, who are not Faculty members, as the Faculty may elect to serve with voice and vote.

SECTION 12. To the Faculty is committed the instruction of the students, the immediate government of the students and all student organizations, the pastoral oversight of the students, the selection, supervision, and control of the various courses of study, and the adoption and administration, subject to the review and ultimate control of the Board of Trustees, of such rules and regulations as may be found necessary for the performance of these duties and obligations.

SECTION 13. The Faculty may choose to discharge the responsibilities described in Section 12 by delegating them to a deliberative council. The composition and authority of such a council shall be set forth in a Faculty policy approved by the Board of Trustees.

### ARTICLE VII

#### Curriculum

SECTION 1. Such courses of study shall be offered by the Faculty as it shall deem best suited to preparing students for the most effective ministry in the church and for such other Christian work as may be deemed to be within the scope of the purposes of the Seminary and in accord with the standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and any other communions with which the Seminary is in covenant relationship. Minor changes in the curriculum may be made by Faculty action, but major changes shall be made only after approval by the Board upon recommendation of the President.

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SECTION 2. The length of the academic year and the division of it into semesters, quarters, or terms shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.

### ARTICLE VIII

#### Degrees

SECTION 1. In accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws, the Board of Trustees, prior to the day of graduation and on recommendation of the Faculty, will grant degrees to students of the Seminary who have met the requirements set forth by the Faculty and approved by the Board.

SECTION 2. The President is authorized, with the approval of the Board, to confer degrees annually at Commencement on all candidates who shall be certified by the Dean and the Faculty as having completed the published requirements for the respective degrees.

### ARTICLE IX

#### Management of Funds and Other Assets

SECTION 1. All the funds invested for the Seminary shall be invested in the name of "LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY," or in any other name by which the Seminary legally is doing business, except that the agents authorized by the Board to serve as managers and/or custodians of all securities and/or property held by the Seminary may hold title to securities when authorized by the Finance Committee of the Board in order to facilitate transfer of such securities.

SECTION 2. Money or property donated to the Seminary, without special designation or condition, shall be added to institutional funds and managed as provided in Board policy.

SECTION 3. When authorized by action of the Board or the Finance Committee, two persons in any of the three following positions, President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, and Controller, shall have the power to sell, convey, transfer, or otherwise dispose of any real estate, stocks, bonds, mortgages, or other real or personal property of the Seminary. Notwithstanding the foregoing, two persons in any of the three following positions, President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, and Controller, shall have authority to sell, convey, transfer or otherwise dispose of, in their discretion, any real estate, stocks, bonds, mortgages, or other real or personal property acquired by gift as provided in Board policy.

### ARTICLE X

#### General

SECTION 1. The official colors of the Seminary shall be National Blue and White.

SECTION 2. The fiscal year of the Seminary shall close on the thirty-first (31st) day of May.

### ARTICLE XI

#### Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

SECTION 1. The Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the President and after consultation with the Seminary's constituent groups through the governance process, shall define the rights and responsibilities of members of the Seminary's constituent groups, including the Seminary's rights and responsibilities and including the procedural matters and causes for student separation. All new members of such constituent groups, upon their entrance to the Seminary, shall be informed of their rights and responsibilities as set out in such document.

SECTION 2. All constituent groups of the Seminary shall have well defined channels of communication and accountability to the Board of Trustees as described in Board policy.

### ARTICLE XII

#### Indemnification and Insurance

SECTION 1. The Seminary shall indemnify any person who is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (including an action by or in the right of the Seminary), by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Trustee or officer of the Board of Trustees or is or was serving at the request of the Seminary as a voting member of a Board committee or as a board member or officer of the board of another corporation or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with the defense of such action, suit or proceeding. However, the Seminary shall not indemnify any such Trustee or officer of the Board of Trustees or individual serving at the request of the Seminary as a voting member of a Board committee or as a board member or officer of the board of another corporation or other enterprise: (i) for any transaction in which such Trustee or officer of the Board of Trustees or individual serving at the request of the Seminary as a voting member of a Board committee or as a board member or officer of the board of another corporation or other enterprise has a personal financial interest which is in conflict with the financial interests of the Seminary; (ii) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or are known to such Trustee or officer of the Board of Trustees or individual serving at the request of the Seminary as a voting member of a Board committee or as a board member or officer of the board of another corporation or other enterprise to be a violation of law; or (iii) for any transaction which such Trustee or officer of the Board of Trustees or individual serving at the request of the Seminary as a voting member of a Board committee or as a board member or officer of the board of another corporation or other enterprise derived an improper personal benefit.

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SECTION 2. Unless ordered by a court, an indemnification shall be made in a specific case upon a determination that indemnification, whether full or partial, of the Trustee, voting member of a Board committee, board member, or board officer is proper in the circumstances because he or she has met the applicable standards of conduct set forth in Section 1. Such determination shall be made by the Board of Trustees by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of Trustees who were not parties to such action, suit, or proceeding, or, if such a quorum is not obtainable, or even if obtainable, a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested Trustees so directs, by independent counsel in a written opinion. Indemnification shall be determined whenever the Trustee, voting member of a Board committee, board member, or board officer has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in Section 1, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter therein.

SECTION 3. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding may be paid in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the Board of Trustees in a specific case upon receipt of a commitment by or on behalf of the Trustee, voting member of a Board committee, board member or board officer to repay such advanced amounts unless it shall be determined that such trustee or officer is entitled to indemnification.

SECTION 4. The Seminary may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who was or is a Trustee, voting member of a Board committee, board member or board officer, or is or was serving at its request as a trustee or board officer of another corporation or other enterprise, against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by him or her in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the Seminary is empowered to indemnify such person against liability under the laws of Kentucky.

SECTION 5. This entitlement to indemnification and advancement of expenses provided for in this Article shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Trustee, voting member of a Board committee, board member, or board officer and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs and legal representatives of any person entitled to indemnification or advancement of expenses under this Article.

SECTION 6. If any provision of this Article shall be held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable for any reason (1) such provision shall be invalid, illegal or unenforceable only to the extent of such prohibition and the validity, legality and enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Article shall not be affected thereby; and (2) to the fullest extent possible, the remaining provisions of this Article shall be construed so as to give effect to the intent of the prohibited provision(s).

SECTION 7. This Article shall apply to every proceeding filed after April 17, 2010, the date of the Board's adoption of Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation.

### ARTICLE XIII

#### Bylaws and Amendments

SECTION 1. The Board of Trustees may adopt Bylaws not in conflict with the Articles of Incorporation to provide for the regulation of any aspect of the work of the Seminary not clearly or explicitly provided in the Articles of Incorporation.

SECTION 2. Amendments to these Bylaws, not in conflict with the Articles of Incorporation, shall be adopted in one of the following three ways: (a) by unanimous written consent of the Trustees; (b) after Trustees have been given at least two weeks' written notice of the proposed amendment, upon receiving the affirmative votes of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Trustees present at a duly constituted meeting of the Board of Trustees; or (c) without prior written notice, upon receiving the affirmative votes of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Trustees present at a duly constituted meeting of the Board of Trustees.

#### ADDENDA AND EFFECTIVE DATES

These Amended and Restated Bylaws are effective upon adoption. Except as specifically preserved below, all provisions of previously adopted Bylaws are revoked. The following provisions of previously adopted Bylaws shall remain in effect until May 31, 2012 (unless revoked earlier by the Board) to provide process guidance until requisite policies and procedures can be developed and adopted by the Board. The following shall be considered as Addenda to these Amended and Restated Bylaws. If still in effect, these Addenda shall be rescinded on May 31, 2012 without further action by the Board of Trustees.

##### 1. Addendum to Article II, Section 5:

- (a) Charges made for board, room, and fees shall be made on a semester basis and shall be payable in advance, except as arrangements may be made with the President for the payment of board and room rent in smaller installments.
- (b) A student withdrawing from Seminary shall be eligible for a refund of charges on a policy and schedule approved by the President and published in the catalog.
- (c) No student shall be advanced in class standing or transferred to another institution or be eligible for a degree until the student shall have made satisfactory arrangements regarding debts owed to the Seminary.
- (d) Financial aid may be extended to students according to procedures approved by the President.
- (e) Students shall be required to exhaust other possibilities of financial aid, such as loans made by the Boards of the church, before being granted financial aid from funds of the Seminary.

*(Source: Article XI, Sections 2-6 of the previous Bylaws)*

## 17 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### 2. Addenda to Article VI, Section 1(b):

Searches for new Faculty Members shall be done through committees comprised of Faculty Members.

*(Source: Amendment to the previous Bylaws adopted by the Board of Trustees on October 23, 2011.)*

All Officers of Instruction shall be elected by the Board with the recommendation of the President subsequent to the following procedure:

- (a) The Faculty shall prepare a profile of the major qualifications desirable in the office under consideration, and may submit to the Committee on Nominations names of prospective candidates.
- (b) The ad hoc Committee on Nominations shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Faculty as provided in Article V, Section 2(d).
- (c) After the Committee has duly explored and appraised the qualifications of prospective candidates, its proposed nomination shall be submitted to the Full Professors, Associates Professors, and Assistant Professors for consideration. All members of the Committee on Nominations are to meet with the Full Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors, as the recommendation is submitted and share in the discussion until the Professors vote to go into Executive Session. If the Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors approve the Call of the proposed nominee by a two-thirds majority voting by secret ballot, tenured Full Professors shall then vote to determine rank and tenure of the nominee. The nomination shall be presented to the Board of Trustees through the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board with recommendation of the President. Through the President, the Committee on Nominations shall keep the Academic Affairs Committee informed of its work during the course of the search. The President shall seek the candidate's permission to be nominated only after the Academic Affairs Committee has considered the recommendation of the Faculty.

*(Source for (a) and (c): Article VII, Section 1 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 3. Addendum to Article VI, Section 3:

Every Officer of Instruction, before entering upon the execution of his or her office, shall respond affirmatively to the following declaration of purpose:

- (1) Is it your purpose to work with your colleagues to achieve the basic objectives of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary?
- (2) Is it your purpose to exercise the freedom accorded to you by this institution with an accompanying sense of responsibility for the Seminary's total mission in the church and the world?
- (3) Is it your purpose to perform the duties of a theological teacher in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of the Scriptures and under the continuing instruction and guidance of the confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
- (4) Is it your purpose to subject the faith and practice of the church to loyal but critical scrutiny in the light of Scripture and of your particular field of specialization?
- (5) Is it your purpose to give to research and teaching in your chosen field your best energies and devotion and to work continuously for the increase of knowledge and the improvement of your teaching skills?
- (6) Is it your purpose to give to your students that measure of respect, candor, and loving concern which will enable them to grow toward Christian maturity?
- (7) Is it your purpose to join responsibly with your colleagues in establishing policies for the Seminary and to work cooperatively in the implementation of the policies of the Seminary?

*(Source: Article VII, Section 3 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 4. Addendum to Article VI, Section 5:

Faculty members who are appointed to the faculty without the Ph.D. or other terminal degree approved by the Faculty and the Board may be appointed at the rank of Assistant Professor; eligibility for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor depends upon receipt of a Ph.D. or other terminal degree, which is expected within four years of appointment, excluding leaves of absence.

*(Source: Article VII, Section 6 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 5. Addendum to Article VI, Section 6:

If the Faculty Member has been four years in rank as an Associate Professor, then promotion to Full Professor shall accompany the granting of tenure.

*(Source: Article VII, Section 7 of the previous Bylaws)*

## 6. Addendum to Article VI, Section 7:

The recommendation of the President shall include the recommendation of the Faculty. The recommendation of the Faculty shall be by two-thirds vote of the tenured members of the Faculty, acting as a committee, the President serving as Chair.

The recommendations regarding promotion and tenure shall be brought to the tenured members of the Faculty by a Review Committee appointed by the Academic Dean consisting of two tenured professors and the Dean, the Dean serving as Chair. The tenured professors selected by the Dean shall be agreeable to the candidate's being considered for promotion and/or tenure.

Criteria to be used in decisions concerning promotion and tenure are:

- (1) Institutional commitment as demonstrated by participation in the various activities constituting the life of the Seminary as it seeks its stated purpose;
- (2) Teaching performance as measured by student course evaluation, peer observation, and self-evaluation;
- (3) Increasing competence in one's academic field as measured by participation in scholarly meetings, recognition by others in the field, and the capacity to interpret one's field of study to students and others;
- (4) Contribution to one's academic field as measured by publications, membership on editorial Boards of academic journals/book series, invitations to deliver lectures in colleges/universities/seminaries, conduct workshops, participate on panels at academic conferences, etc.
- (5) Service to the church and world as measured by commitment to the life and worship of the church and involvement in local, national, and international communities.

In making decisions on the basis of these criteria, the Review Committee shall consider the following:

- (a) Data in a file developed by the Dean in cooperation with the candidate, including a resume of the candidate's professional career, memoranda from periodic consultations, annual reports submitted to the Dean for report to the Board's Academic Affairs Committee, along with any other material that the candidate may wish to supply.
- (b) Data prepared by a student committee following a form provided by the Dean, such data to include a review of the candidate's effectiveness in instruction, quality of advising, and contribution to the life of the Seminary.

This committee shall be elected by the students serving on the Seminary Council from a list of ten (10) students nominated by the candidate. The Student Committee shall consist of five (5) students including within their number at least one (1) who has been an advisee and two (2) who have been in classes with the candidate.

- (c) Data provided by the Dean and the Faculty Members on the Review Committee based on class evaluations provided by students and comments derived from classroom observation by peers. Particular attention will be given to course development, appropriateness of readings, constructive use made of previous criticism, and assessment of the effectiveness of instruction.
- (d) Data provided from other Faculty Members and staff at the Seminary not on the Review Committee as solicited by the Dean inviting specific comment concerning the criteria noted above.
- (e) Data derived from persons outside the Seminary community solicited by the Dean inviting comment particularly on categories 3, 4, and 5 of the above criteria. The candidate will supply three names of persons to be contact by the Dean for comment. The Review Committee will choose at least three additional persons for the Dean to contact for comment, the names of these persons to be shared with the candidate.

*(Source: Article VII, Section 9 of the previous Bylaws)*

## 7. Addendum to Article VI, Section 8:

Where the performance of a particular Faculty Member appears to warrant rescission of indeterminate tenure or a term appointment, the President shall report to the Executive Committee of the Board, and with its approval, the President and the Dean shall appoint a Faculty Review Committee of three tenured professors. If the Faculty Review Committee decides by a majority vote that rescission is warranted, the President shall convene the Committee of Full Professors to hear the report of the Faculty Review Committee and by secret ballot take appropriate action. By a majority vote, the Committee of Full Professors may recommend rescission to the Board of Trustees, and its action shall be reported to the Board after an adequate hearing and appropriate action.

*(Source: Article VII, Section 10 of the previous Bylaws)*

## 8. Addendum to Article VI, Section 10:

The Review Committee shall consist of the President, the Dean, and one or more other Faculty Members. The President and the Dean shall select the third and/or fourth member of the Review Committee in consultation with the Faculty Member under review. The Faculty Member(s) on the Review Committee shall consult with at least five former students of the Faculty Member

## 17 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

under review and/or others in the Faculty Member's field of specialization or in the church. The agenda for review may include the following:

- (a) The amount and quality of teaching in which one is engaged;
- (b) One's scholarly research and engagement in one's field of specialization;
- (c) One's participation in the life of this Seminary community;
- (d) One's availability to our students for conversations with them;
- (e) One's active contribution to the mission and ministry of the church and to the world; and
- (f) One's extracurricular activities.

*(Source: Article VI, Section 12 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 9. Addendum to Article VI:

SECTION 14. The Faculty shall meet regularly at least once a month during the academic year. The President shall call all regular and special meetings. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum, and all questions at issue shall be decided by at least a majority of the votes cast. It shall be the duty of every Faculty Member to attend the stated meetings, unless formally excused from attendance.

SECTION 15. The Faculty shall elect a Clerk, who shall keep a permanent record of its proceedings, and all Faculty minutes shall be subject to review by the Board of Trustees. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Faculty shall designate those Committees to be elected or appointed by the President, which are needed for the efficient and proper discharge of its duties.

SECTION 16. Each full-time Officer of Instruction shall be provided with a "Call to Instructional Office" in standard form as approved by the Board. Part-time Officers of Instruction shall be provided letters of appointment signed by the President and containing the terms of service which are relevant to such appointment. Such letters constitute in effect contracts with the Seminary.

SECTION 17. Any changes of title, status, duties, or compensation of Instructional Officers, which have been authorized by the Board, shall be communicated to them in writing by the President, either in the form of a new call or contract or in the form of a letter having the effect of amending a former contract in a manner clearly set forth as such an amendment.

*(Source: Article VII, Sections 16, 17, 18, and 19 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 10. Addendum to Article VIII:

SECTION 3. The Seminary may admit to candidacy for its degrees applicants who have met requirements established by agencies that accredit the academic programs offered by the Seminary and who are recommended by the Faculty. Other applicants who shall satisfy the Faculty as to their abilities and attainments may be admitted to particular courses as special students.

*(Source: Article IX, Section 1 of the previous Bylaws)*

### 11. Addendum to Article XI, Section 2:

If any group feels that its desires have not been properly handled, it has the right of petition. The Board of Trustees, however, will act on a complaint only when the matter has been thoroughly investigated and written responses have been obtained from the responsible Seminary personnel. This means that under ordinary circumstances the Board of Trustees will acknowledge a petition when it is properly presented but will not act on it until the Board's next stated meeting after the prescribed steps have been completed.

*(Source: Article XIV, Section 2 of the previous Bylaws)*

## Institute for Parental Leadership

Effective Parenting Saves Children and Builds Communities

Reginald Tuggle

When looking at the social pathologies of many of our youth, we often look at empirical data like grade point averages, high school dropout rates, anti-social behavior, police incident reports, gang activity, teenage pregnancy, and others. Our practice has been to then initiate programs and activities that will hopefully address these concerns...i.e. after school tutoring and manhood training programs, sex education and mentoring initiatives, intense counseling and more. Many, if not most, of these practices fail because they do not begin to touch on the primary cause of the problem. A week is 168 hours in it and most of these traditional programs have access to these children only 10-12 hours per week. A young child spends far more time at home with their parents than at any other place. **Many families are dysfunctional. In far too many instances, active, effective, and consistent parental leadership is absent.**

Parents should and must be the mentors, coaches, police, and leaders of their child's self esteem. By themselves, teachers, churches and the judicial system can't do it.

Virtually, all parents would say that they love their children while at the same time stand idle when their children fail to make decisions or behave in ways that would lead to positive and productive lifestyles. Or, they watch as though helpless when their children don't execute plans leading to fruitful results. The consequences of this dysfunction lead to isolation, frustration, social and emotional pain, economic hardship and desperation, and a perpetuation of the same for succeeding generations.

How the Institute for Parental Leadership works

The institute would be a learning environment where parents of young children (children 7 and under) would come and learn skills in the following areas (this is not a complete course list):

- **Parental engagement** in the total life of a child...sharing techniques and paradigms of effective engagement skills so that parents see successful models from many parts of society, e.g. corporate leaders, professionals, artists, etc. Parents will interview successful African American people and hear their stories. They will learn what it takes to be successful and hence help prepare their own children for success.
- **Cultural Life** would address basics in cultural events across a wide range of activities, plays, concerts, lectures on topics of interests, etc.
- **The excitement of knowing** would focus on why knowledge is essential as one matures through the stages of development towards success. It would focus on the consequences



of not knowing certain bits of information and how that reality alone could potentially place social, economic and political barriers in the path of a child.

- **The joy of watching children grow** would focus on the importance of parents keeping an eye (i.e. paying close attention) on their children from birth through high school and beyond. The course would focus on topics of how best to be engaged in a child's life when teaching values, morality, life choices, and direction in life for both child and parent.
- **How to fight for your child** would focus on the need to be vigilant in effectively protecting the child from harmful external social and political forces.
- **How to love yourself** ( the idea here is that if you don't love yourself, you can't love other well, including children). The course would include discussions on the value of maintaining a consistent exercise and nutrition regimen, hygiene, appropriate dress, rest habits, lifestyle choices that promote joy and happiness verses choices that will cause harm and distress.
- **Measuring a child's success** would teach parents how to instill in their children a strong sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, and a strong spiritual presence, the core of one's being.
- **Helping a child develop dreams and the reason why it's important to work hard to make them a reality** would focus on the idea that nothing worthwhile comes easy. One has to work hard for success and to remember that when obstacles/challenges come into one's live, one has to find a way around them, over them, or under them, but permit them to stop the pursuit of dreams and aspirations.

The Institute for Parental Leadership would create opportunity for bringing together critical institutions to address, what is arguably the most important issue of this generation, namely, the saving of the African American family and those children born into poverty. It would match local church missional purpose with a workable plan to effectively address the threats to the survival of African American youth. The Institute of for Parental Leadership would train local clergy and their designees on techniques of effective parenting. The plan would finally address in a deliberate way the often omitted part of the equation, the parent. If we don't have parents equipped with the necessary skill sets to raise, protect, train, and promote their own children, then all efforts mounted to save our youth will fall woefully short.

Frederick Douglas noted: "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."



## Item 18-01

[The assembly approved Item 18-01 with amendment. See p. 11.]

*On Amending The Book of Confessions to Include the Confession of Belhar—From the Presbytery of National Capital.*

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to begin the process of amending *The Book of Confessions* to include the Confession of Belhar, as provided in G-6.03.

**[That the special committee formed to study the Confession of Belhar be granted a budget for education across the church about the confession, in addition to its committee budget for direct expenses.]**

[Financial Implications: (2013) \$36,250, (2014) \$21,535 (Per Capita—OGA)]

### *Rationale*

The recommendation to include the Confession of Belhar in the PC(USA) constitution, *The Book of Confessions*, was approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) and was sent to the presbyteries for approval and fell only eight votes short of the two-thirds necessary for ratification.

The Reformed Church in America, which is in full communion and fellowship with the PC(USA), adopted the Confession of Belhar as its fourth doctrinal standard at its 2010 General Synod. The Christian Reformed Church of North America proposed at its 2009 General Synod, for vote in 2012, the adoption of the Confession of Belhar as its fourth confession of faith, the first since its founding in 1857.

The Presbytery of National Capital, a multiracial inclusive presbytery with a history of activism in civil rights, voted on June 28, 2010, in favor of inclusion of the Confession of Belhar, in spite of knowledge that the denominational vote had already failed. The action taken now represents the presbytery claiming its prophetic voice.

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### **Concurrence to Item 18-01 from the Presbytery New York City.**

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#### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 18-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 18-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The original purpose, biblical substance, and ecumenical importance of Belhar deserve serious consideration and we concur with the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns. Nothing among the church's criteria for considering confessions, however, should rule out re-consideration of a confession, particularly one that has received majority support among the presbyteries.

We trust the committee will examine carefully the procedures for admitting confessions into *The Book of Confessions*, yet in the broadest sense, the committee is called upon to assess the needs of both the church and society at this time, as well as the theological "fit" of Belhar within that written embodiment of the Reformed tradition.

A framework for considering a re-circulation of the Belhar Confession to the church contains at least these several factors:

1. What kind of confession is Belhar, in its initial context, and what purposes would it serve in the current U.S. context, given that it assumes a national responsibility for the church?

The purposes of Belhar in 1980s South Africa and today, in the United States:

a. Presbyterian theological historian Eugene TeSelle identified several main purposes of confessional statements: "controversial" confessions, which challenge and are primarily prophetic in nature; teaching documents such as catechisms; "reforming" confessions addressed most to the church itself; "church-founding" confessions that justify a new formation; "irenical" (peace-making, or union-celebrating) confessions; and "apologetic" confessions (defending faith and practice to outsiders). (See Eugene TeSelle, "C-67 and the *Book of Confessions*," in *Church & Society*, 92:5, 2002, pp. 44–45.)

b. Simply put, Belhar served a prophetic and reforming task during the theological struggle against apartheid in South Africa, a task somewhat paralleled by the Kairos Document (South Africa), and a task modeled on the Barmen Declaration of 1930s Germany.

c. In the PC(USA), the initial concern for a confession that would address continuing racial ethnic challenges—including perhaps immigration concerns today—was seen as addressed from the South African context. Although Belhar has

not been accepted by all churches within South Africa, it is a clear affirmation of the unity of the church against the church-dividing threat of racism. Race clearly remains a, if not the, primary dividing line in the culture of the United States, and is a salient factor in social divisions around the globe.

2. What are the primary challenges to the faith and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) today that a church, “reforming, and always to be reformed,” should address? Our confessions, for example, are to give content to the common phrase, “missional.” What are the dimensions of mission that Belhar, or any new confession, should help us address?

*Current Challenges to Faith other than Race:*

a. Economic divisions structure all aspects of life in the U.S. as inequality grows and political capacity for change is weakened by the dominance of personal and corporate wealth in campaigns. A “no-tax” pledge functions as a confession of faith for many; the concept of a common good to be served by a democratic government is examined in Item 11-09: “World of Hurt, Word of Life: Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction.”

b. Divisions over the status of sexual orientation and sexual practice: clearly these matters are a driving force in the PC(USA) and several other denominations today. Do they have effective confessional status as church-dividing issues, given that *The Book of Confessions* may be accepted by Presbyterians on both of the primary “sides” of the sexuality debate? The corporate nature of the PC(USA) is clearly at stake in these debates, but structure alone may not be a confessional issue.

c. Gender inequality and a deeper analysis of patriarchy: few confessional statements address the profound, even primal, influence of gender differentiation and how it has functioned within church and society.

d. Ecological destruction: this is the primary physical threat to creaturely existence on the planet and is intensifying due to the spread of consumer aspirations around the globe. A “next” church, at most basic level, needs to be a “green church.”

3. What are the ecumenical considerations that accompany the placement of Belhar, or any other confession, in *The Book of Confessions*? (We do not address interfaith dimensions that would necessarily, in our view, require an ecumenical body to consider.)

*Ecumenical Considerations:*

a. Adopting the Belhar Confession would be an act of solidarity with churches in South Africa and elsewhere in the World Communion of Reformed Churches, and could contribute to the theological unity within this family.

b. Adopting Belhar could contribute to ecumenical deliberations over the theological significance of racism in the U.S. context, such as have been debated within the Churches Uniting in Christ ecumenical project.

c. The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), non-confessional Reformed bodies, unlike the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church in North America, have not considered Belhar.

4. What other confessions would be considered if we understand that the broader Reformed and Christian family has lessons to teach the church in North America?

*Other Confessions or Declarations of Faith:*

a. The Accra Statement of the then-World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 2004, received for guidance but not approved by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2006, bears a clear “family resemblance” to Belhar. Both show the influence of Barmen, and both address church-dividing issues. In Accra’s case, this is the economic threat of global inequality, intensified by anti-regulatory forms of globalization. Its warnings about a financial system dominating and unbalancing social considerations were reinforced by the credit collapse of 2008. Yet it has not been given confessional status by many European and North American members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, and was not termed a confession at its adoption by the WCRC. At the same time, it was the outcome of a “processus confessionis,” and involved a wide process of debate within the Reformed family. A “Covenanting for Justice” process continues the work of Accra and cooperates with study teams of the World Council of Churches and Lutheran World Federation (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/message-colloquium-accra-and-belhar-confessions/> and <http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/hunger/pdf/accra-confession.pdf>).

b. The Kairos Palestine document adopted by a notably ecumenical body of Christian leaders on December 11, 2009, represents a carefully wrought declaration of theological resistance to the occupation and de-humanization of Arab Christians and Muslims. It is steadfastly non-violent and based in a “logic of love;” it addresses issues of power, justice, and the mission of the church in some unprecedented ways. Though calling for liberation, it is not only liberation theology, and while calling for actions of economic solidarity strongly opposed by the Israeli government, it is not only a document of courage and resistance. Its understandings of faith and hope speak to ways that all churches must combine tradition and re-

newal with an integrity that stands against cultures and politics of domination (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/kairos-palestine-document-and-study-guide/>).

c. A Social Creed for the 21st Century, adopted by both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2008 and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., distilled the social teachings of the church in a Trinitarian theological framework of one page. This document built on the 100 year tradition of social creeds going back to the first adopted in 1908 in response to industrialization and urbanization in the U.S., and identifies a range of current challenges and core resources of Christian faith (<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/connecting-creed/>).

### *Conclusion*

The confessions in *The Book of Confessions* set a high standard for all subsequent confessions, though comprehensiveness is not a requirement. New confessions can depend upon the older confessions' more comprehensive treatment of the faith when they sharpen our focus, as The Confession of 1967 did on "the mission of reconciliation," or A Brief Statement of Faith did on liturgical and narrative summary. Thus the relatively sharp issue foci of Belhar (or the broader Accra) would not disqualify it from adoption.

The confessions tune and train the church's theological voice; they are the basis for its social witness policies; and they are intended to be reflected in the mission programs and structures of the church, locally, nationally and internationally. Above all, confessions help the church understand the purposes of its unity for witness in, but not of, and sometimes against the world: they identify the primary antagonists to faithful discipleship. If the Belhar Confession is not the best way to address these concerns at this time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we would encourage this committee to write a brief report summarizing its own reading of the "signs of the times" today for an occasion when the church can again take up a confessional task, perhaps in another time of ecumenical engagement or a new form of church union in the face of new world challenges.

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### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 18-01

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 18-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 18-01 as amended, to include the following recommendation:

"[That the special committee formed to study the Confession of Belhar in preparation for bringing recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014) regarding its possible inclusion in *The Book of Confessions* be granted a budget for education across the church about the confession, in addition to its committee budget for direct expenses.]"

### *Rationale*

The original overture passed by the 219th General Assembly (2010) was defeated by a slim margin of the two-thirds vote of the presbyteries needed to pass, and we believe including its witness in our confessional standards is too important and powerful to founder on such a small margin.

In addition, we believe that a more robust educational program is necessary for the church to responsibly engage the question of Belhar's suitability for *The Book of Confessions*. We believe the lack of an educational mandate (with accompanying resources) for the previous special committee on Belhar, as has been provided in other cases (like the nFOG task force, for example), calls the validity of the church's discernment against Belhar into question.

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 18-01

*Comment on Item 18-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

Item 18-01 seeks to amend *The Book of Confessions* by adding to it the Confession of Belhar.

In its confessions, the church, "... declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do ..." (*Book of Order*, F-2.01).

The Belhar Confession is a confession of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa that comes to us from apartheid South Africa in the 1980s. In September 2011 the Uniting Reformed Church celebrated the 25th anniversary of its passage (<http://www.vgksa.org.za/documents/BELHAR%20CELEBRATIONS%20PROGRAM.doc>). Belhar's strong witness to the unity of the church as both a gift and obligation (especially in a context where apartheid divided the church) has spoken to Christians around the world, particularly in the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). Many in the WCRC have adopted Belhar, including the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) called upon Presbyterians to confront the sin of racism in our history and in our midst. It urged presbyteries and congregations to study the Belhar confession as a way to deepen commitment to dealing with racism and strengthen our unity. Study materials were developed by the Office of Theology and Worship of the General Assembly Mission Council in printed and electronic formats. The 217th General Assembly (2008) approved the recommendation of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns that a special committee be appointed to consider whether the Belhar Confession should be included in *The Book of Confessions*. The special committee did recommend inclusion of the Belhar Confession to the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the assembly concurred. This amendment to *The Book of Confessions* to add Belhar was sent to the presbyteries and failed to receive the required 2/3 vote (108 affirmative, 63 negative; passage would have required 116 affirmative votes).

Because of the defeat of the amendment following the 219th General Assembly (2010), the process to amend *The Book of Confessions* would need to start over, requiring this assembly to affirm the creation of a special committee, that special committee to recommend Belhar's addition to *The Book of Confessions*, a subsequent assembly to affirm Belhar's inclusion, an affirmative vote from 2/3 of the presbyteries, and then a final confirmation vote from a third General Assembly (See "Amending *The Book of Confessions*," G-6.03).

The question before this assembly is whether or not to begin again the process to discern whether the Confession of Belhar helps the PC(USA) declare "... to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do ..." (*Book of Order*, F-2.01).

## Item 18-02

[The assembly approved Item 18-02 with amendment. See pp. 10, 11.]

*On Setting Aside Time to Study The Book of Confessions in Preparation for a Celebration in 2016—From the Presbytery of the Cascades.*

**The Presbytery of the Cascades overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to encourage every presbytery and congregation to set aside time to study *The Book of Confessions* in preparation for the grand celebration in 2016.**

### *Rationale*

The 222nd General Assembly (2016) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be meeting in Portland, Oregon. Portland was the site of the 1967 General Assembly at which the Confession of 1967 and the concept of *The Book of Confessions* were approved. The Presbytery of the Cascades is preparing for this 2016 meeting of General Assembly by setting aside the next three years to study each of the confessions found in *The Book of Confessions*.

## Item 18-03

[The assembly approved Item 18-03 with amendment. See pp. 10, 11.]

*Report of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to the 220th General Assembly (2012).*

**The General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

1. Approve the proposed new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism, with accompanying Scriptural references [immediately following each question and answer], as amendments to *The Book of Confessions*, and direct the Stated Clerk to send the proposed amended Heidelberg Catechism to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes by July 2013.

2. Dismiss the Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism [with thanks].

### *Rationale*

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2010 Referral: Item 16-11. Response to Recommendation to Present a New Translation of the Present Heidelberg Catechism in The Book of Confession in Cooperation with Christian Reformed Church in America and the Reformed Church of America and to Consider Inclusion of Scriptural Citations—From the Report of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 8, 9, 1209 of the electronic version; pp. 8, 9, 387 of the printed version).*

## 18 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CONFESSIONS OF THE CHURCH

The 219th General Assembly (2010) took the following actions:

1. Appoint the presently constituted Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to recommend to the 220th General Assembly (2012) a new translation of the present Heidelberg Catechism in The Book of Confessions in cooperation with the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) and the Reformed Church of America (RCA).
2. Instruct the Special Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism to consider inclusion of appropriate Scriptural citations. ... (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, p. 1209 of the electronic version; p. 387 of the printed version)

The composition of the special committee is as follows:

The Reverend Heidi Husted Armstrong of Tacoma, Washington; the Reverend Warner M. Bailey of Fort Worth, Texas; Elder Dawn DeVries of Richmond, Virginia; Elder Sylvia Dooling of Loveland, Colorado; the Reverend James Edwards of Spokane, Washington; the Reverend Christopher Elwood of Louisville, Kentucky; the Reverend Gary Neal Hansen of Dubuque, Iowa; Elder Susan Haskell of Birmingham, Alabama; Elder Patrick Hunt of San Francisco, California; Elder David Todd Mulford of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; the Reverend Shelly Barrick Parsons of Morgantown, West Virginia; the Reverend Neal D. Presa of Middlesex, New Jersey; the Reverend Lorna Shoemaker of Indianapolis, Indiana; the Reverend David Stubbs of Holland, Michigan; the Reverend Floretta Watkins of Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Reverend Neal D. Presa served as chair.

The special committee was staffed by the Reverend Thomas Hay of the Office of the General Assembly and the Reverend Charles Wiley of the Office of Theology Worship and Education (General Assembly Mission Council).

### A. *Work of the Special Committee*

Regarding Recommendation 1 of our mandate, the special committee continued work with representatives of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) and the Reformed Church of America (RCA) in finalizing a common new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism that was in keeping with the original 16th century versions of the catechism.

Consequently, the special committee unanimously approved the common new translation and recommends this new translation to the 220th General Assembly (2012). The CRCNA and the RCA, in their respective national synods, have approved the new translation.

Regarding Recommendation 2 of our mandate, the committee decided to restore the Scripture citations that were originally published with the catechism in 1563. Other current translations either have no Scripture citations (as is the case in the present version in *The Book of Confessions*) or include sets of citations developed by modern interpreters. Our hope has been to give the catechism back to the church in full as it was first presented, with the Scripture citations that allow the readers to explore the text in conversation with the texts of the Bible that informed the people who wrote it.

The special committee was divided into three subgroups, with each subgroup carefully and meticulously analyzing the scriptural references in the 1563 German and Latin editions of the Catechism. Because the Latin edition provided versification to scriptural references whereas the German edition used only book and chapter reference, the special committee decided to use the Latin edition as the “base” text. In some instances, the Latin edition corrected citations in the German edition, omitted some of the citations that were in the German, added citations not found in the German, or shifted citations in the German edition to another part of the given section of the catechism. From the beginning, the special committee sought to retain the historical accuracy of the scriptural reference as found in both the German and Latin editions, and used the following textual notation markers:

- Citations in ordinary type reflect the citations of the Latin where the Latin simply adds verse numbers to a citation found in the German.
- Citations in italics indicate texts present in the German original but omitted from the Latin edition.
- Citations in **bold** indicate texts not found in the German original but added in the Latin edition.
- Square brackets [ ] indicate the present editors’ corrections of apparent typographical errors in the 1563 texts as well as necessary clarifications.

As noted above, the special committee did make editorial corrections where there was an apparent typographical error in the 1563 texts; such practice was done very sparingly and after extensive and intensive committee deliberations, careful verification of the 1563 texts, and reviewing cited Scripture texts with their scriptural context.

Subgroups met via teleconference and corresponded electronically, then exchanged their work with the other subgroups as the whole special committee held a face-to-face meeting, March 7–9, 2011, in Louisville, Kentucky. The special committee unanimously approved the scriptural references, pending further double checking by the subgroup leaders and committee chair.

A subsequent round of review and editing by the subgroup leaders and committee chair further refined the scriptural references.

The whole committee reviewed the re-edited scriptural references, submitted further suggestions, and the whole committee approved the scriptural references as is being presented to the assembly.

The special committee conferred with representatives of the Office of the General Assembly to ensure that the scriptural references could be printed underneath each corresponding Question-and-Answer, with the citations pegged to the pertinent line of the catechism, all to make them more usable by readers. Also, the special committee has proposed updated language for a revised historical-theological introduction for this new translation that would be included in a reprinted version of *The Book of Confessions*, if the way be clear with the approval of this catechism by the assembly and ratification by presbyteries.

## B. *Closing Words*

What began in 2008 by action of the 218th General Assembly to review proposed corrections to five sections of the catechism has resulted in a monumental and historic project involving three Reformed churches in North America, an ecumenical partnership that bears witness to our common commitment to seek the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and which appropriately recognizes the Heidelberg Catechism on the eve of its 450th anniversary in 2013 as a chief standard of Reformed confessional documents because of its widespread liturgical, catechetical, and devotional usage in North America and throughout the world.

It is our hope that this new translation and the accompanying Scriptural references, coupled with the worldwide celebration of the 450th anniversary of the catechism in 2013, will spark renewed interest in studying the Reformed tradition and appreciation of its evangelical message of God's deliverance through our Mediator Jesus Christ.

### Attachment—Proposed New Translation of Heidelberg Catechism with Scripture References and Editorial Notation in Preface

[Below is the editorial notation that would be printed as a preface on its own page following a revised historical-theological introduction.]

The biblical citations in this text are those found in the German 3rd edition of 1563 and the Latin translation of 1563. The citations in the German 3rd edition include book and chapter without verse numbers, inviting the reader to use the Catechism as an aid to the study of larger passages of Scripture. The citations in the Latin edition are often a place to begin reading on a topic, or the conclusion of a relevant passage, rather than simple proof-texts. Placement of the notes varies slightly in the German, the Latin, and here in English according to the nature of the language.

Here, citations in ordinary type reflect the citations of the Latin where the Latin simply adds verse numbers.

Citations in *italics* indicate texts present in the German original but omitted from the Latin edition.

Citations in **bold** indicate texts not found in the German original but added in the Latin edition.

Square brackets [ ] indicate the present editors' corrections of apparent typographical errors in the 1563 texts as well as necessary clarifications.

## LORD'S DAY 1

### 1 Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

A. That I am not my own,<sup>1</sup> but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—<sup>2</sup> to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup> He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,<sup>4</sup> and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.<sup>5</sup> He also watches over me in such a way<sup>6</sup> that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven,<sup>7</sup> in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.<sup>8</sup> Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life<sup>9</sup> and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 6:19

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 14:8

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 3:23

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. 1:18; 1 Jn. 1:7; 2:2

<sup>5</sup> 1 Jn. 3:8

<sup>6</sup> Jn. 6:39

<sup>7</sup> Mt. 10:30; Lk. 21:18

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 8:28

<sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14; Rom. 8:16

<sup>10</sup> Rom. 8:14



**2 Q. What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?**

**A.** Three things:<sup>1</sup> first, how great my sin and misery are;<sup>2</sup> second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;<sup>3</sup> third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lk. 24:47; 1 Cor. 6:11; Tit. 3:3

<sup>2</sup> **Jn. 9:41**; Jn. 15:[6-]7

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 17:3

<sup>4</sup> Eph. 5:10

*Part I: Misery*

**LORD'S DAY 2**

**3 Q. How do you come to know your misery?**

**A.** The law of God tells me.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:20

**4 Q. What does God's law require of us?**

**A.** Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22:37-40: “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

**5 Q. Can you live up to all this perfectly?**

**A.** No.<sup>1</sup> I have a natural tendency to hate God and my neighbor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:10; 3:23; 1 Jn. 1:8

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:3

**LORD'S DAY 3**

**6 Q. Did God create people so wicked and perverse?**

**A.** No.<sup>1</sup> God created them good and in his own image,<sup>2</sup> that is, in true righteousness and holiness, so that they might truly know God their creator, love him with all their heart, and live with God in eternal happiness, to praise and glorify him.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:31

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 1:26-27

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24

**7 Q. Then where does this corrupt human nature come from?**

**A.** The fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise.<sup>1</sup> This fall has so poisoned our nature that we are all conceived and born in a sinful condition.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12, 18–19

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 51:5; **Gen. 5:3**

**8 Q. But are we so corrupt that we are totally unable to do any good and inclined toward all evil?**

**A.** Yes,<sup>1</sup> unless we are born again by the Spirit of God.<sup>2</sup>

1 Jn. 3:6; **Gen. 6:5**; Job 14:4; 15:16, [35]; Isa. 53:6

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 3:5

**LORD'S DAY 4**

**9 Q. But doesn't God do us an injustice by requiring in his law what we are unable to do?**

**A.** No,<sup>1</sup> God created human beings with the ability to keep the law. They, however, provoked by the devil,<sup>2</sup> in willful disobedience, robbed themselves and all their descendants of these gifts.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 4:[22–23], 24–25

<sup>2</sup> **Lk. 10:30**–[37]

**10 Q. Does God permit such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?**

**A.** Certainly not.<sup>1</sup> God is terribly angry with the sin we are born with as well as the sins we personally commit. As a just judge, God will punish them both now and in eternity, having declared: “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5:12; Heb. 9:27

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10

**11 Q. But isn’t God also merciful?**

**A.** God is certainly merciful,<sup>1</sup> but also just.<sup>2</sup> God’s justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty—eternal punishment of body and soul.

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 34:6

<sup>2</sup> Ex. 20:5; Ps. 5:5; 2 Cor. 6:14

**Part II: Deliverance**

**LORD’S DAY 5**

**12 Q. According to God’s righteous judgment we deserve punishment both now and in eternity: how then can we escape this punishment and return to God’s favor?**

**A.** God requires that his justice be satisfied.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the claims of this justice must be paid in full, either by ourselves or by another.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20:5; 23:7

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:3–4

**13 Q. Can we make this payment ourselves?**

**A.** Certainly not. Actually, we increase our debt every day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Job 9:3; 15:15; Mt. 6:12

**14 Q. Can another creature—any at all—pay this debt for us?**

**A.** No. To begin with, God will not punish any other creature for what a human is guilty of.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, no mere creature can bear the weight of God’s eternal wrath against sin and deliver others from it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 2:14

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 130:3

**15 Q. What kind of mediator and deliverer should we look for then?**

**A.** One who is a true<sup>1</sup> and righteous human,<sup>2</sup> yet more powerful than all creatures, that is, one who is also true God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 15:21

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 33:15; **Isa. 53:9**; *Ps. 53*; 2 Cor. 5:21

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 7:[15–]16; Isa. 7:14; Rom. 8:3; Jer. 23:6

**LORD’S DAY 6**

**16 Q. Why must the mediator be a true and righteous human?**

**A.** God’s justice demands that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for sin;<sup>1</sup> but a sinful human could never pay for others.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5:12, 15

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. 3:18; **Isa. 53:3-5**, 10–11

**17 Q. Why must the mediator also be true God?**

**A.** So that the mediator, by the power of his divinity, might bear the weight of God’s wrath in his humanity<sup>1</sup> and earn for us and restore to us righteousness and life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Isa. 53:8**; Acts 2:24; 1 Pet. 3:18

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 3:16; **1 Jn. 1:2, 4:12**; Acts 20:18 [28]; *Jn. 1[:4,12]*

**18 Q. Then who is this mediator—true God and at the same time a true and righteous human?**

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup> who was given to us to completely deliver us and make us right with God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16; Lk. 2:11

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 1:30

**19 Q. How do you come to know this?**

A. The holy gospel tells me. God began to reveal the gospel already in Paradise;<sup>1</sup> later God proclaimed it by the holy patriarchs and prophets<sup>2</sup> and foreshadowed it by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law;<sup>3</sup> and finally God fulfilled it through his own beloved Son.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3:15

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 22:18; 49:10–11; Rom. 1:2; Heb. 1:1; Acts 3:22–24; 10:43

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 5:46; Heb. 10:7 [1–10]

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4

**LORD’S DAY 7**

**20 Q. Are all people then saved through Christ just as they were lost through Adam?**

A. No. Only those are saved who through true faith are grafted into Christ and accept all his benefits.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 1:12; **3:36**; Isa. 53:11, Ps. 2:11[–12]; Rom. 11:17, 19; Heb. 4:2; 10:39

**21 Q. What is true faith?**

A. True faith is not only a sure knowledge by which I hold as true all that God has revealed to us in Scripture;<sup>1</sup> it is also a wholehearted trust,<sup>2</sup> which the Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup> creates in me by the gospel,<sup>4</sup> that God has freely granted, not only to others but to me also, forgiveness of sins, eternal righteousness, and salvation.<sup>5</sup> These are gifts of sheer grace, granted solely by Christ’s merit.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 11:1, 3; Jas. 2:19

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 4:16[–25]; Jas. 1:6**; Rom. 5:1; *Rom. 10[9–10]*

<sup>3</sup> *2 Cor. 4[6, 13]; Eph. 2[8, 18]; Mt. 16:17; Jn. 3[5–13]; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:29*

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 1:16; **10:17**

<sup>5</sup> *Heb. 2[9–11]; Rom. 1[16]; Heb. 10:38; Hab. 2:4; Mt. 9:2; Eph. 2:7–9; Rom. 5:1*

<sup>6</sup> *Eph. 2[8]; Rom. 3:24–25; Gal. 2:16*

**22 Q. What then must a Christian believe?**

A. All that is promised us in the gospel,<sup>1</sup> a summary of which is taught us in the articles of our universal and undisputed Christian faith.

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 20:31; Mt. 28:20

**23 Q. What are these articles?**

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**LORD’S DAY 8**

**24 Q. How are these articles divided?**

A. Into three parts: God the Father and our creation; God the Son and our deliverance; and God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

**25 Q. Since there is only one divine being,<sup>1</sup> why do you speak of three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?**

A. Because that is how God has revealed himself in his Word:<sup>2</sup> these three distinct persons are one, true, eternal God.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:4

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 61:1; Ps. 110:1; Mt. 3:16–17; Mt. 28:19; 1 Jn. 5:7[–8]

*God the Father***LORD’S DAY 9****26 Q. What do you believe when you say, “I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth”?**

- A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them,<sup>1</sup> who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence,<sup>2</sup> is my God and Father because of Christ the Son.<sup>3</sup> I trust God so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul,<sup>4</sup> and will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends upon me in this sad world.<sup>5</sup> God is able to do this because he is almighty God<sup>6</sup> and desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1; Ps. 33:6

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 104; Ps. 115:3; Mt. 10:29; Heb. 1:3

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5–7; Eph. 1:5

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 55:22; Mt. 6:25–26; Luke 12:22

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 8:28

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 10:12

<sup>7</sup> Mt. 6:32; 7:9

**LORD’S DAY 10****27 Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?**

- A. The almighty and ever present power of God<sup>1</sup> by which God upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them<sup>2</sup> that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink,<sup>3</sup> health and sickness,<sup>4</sup> prosperity and poverty—<sup>5</sup>all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand.

<sup>1</sup> Acts 17:25[–28]

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 1:3

<sup>3</sup> Jer. 5:24; Acts 14:17

<sup>4</sup> Jn. 9:3

<sup>5</sup> Prov. 22:2

**28 Q. How does the knowledge of God’s creation and providence help us?**

- A. We can be patient when things go against us,<sup>1</sup> thankful when things go well,<sup>2</sup> and for the future we can have good confidence in our faithful God and Father<sup>3</sup> that nothing in creation will separate us from his love.<sup>4</sup> For all creatures are so completely in God’s hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5:3; Jas. 1:3; Job 1:21

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 8:10; 1 Thess. 5:18

<sup>3</sup> **Rom. 5:5–6**

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 8:38–39

<sup>5</sup> Job 1:12; **2:6**; Acts 17:28; Prov. 21:1

*God the Son***LORD’S DAY 11****29 Q. Why is the Son of God called “Jesus,” meaning “savior”?**

- A. Because he saves us from our sins,<sup>1</sup> and because salvation should not be sought and cannot be found in anyone else.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 1:21; **Heb. 7:25**

<sup>2</sup> Acts 4:12

**30 Q. Do those who look for their salvation in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?**

A. No. Although they boast of being his, by their actions they deny the only savior, Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 1:13, 31; *Gal. 3[1-4]*; **Gal. 5:4**

<sup>2</sup> **Heb. 12:2**; Isa. 9:6; Col. 1:19-20; 2:10; Jn. 1:16

**LORD'S DAY 12**

**31 Q. Why is he called “Christ,” meaning “anointed”?**

A. Because he has been ordained by God the Father and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup> to be our chief prophet and teacher<sup>2</sup> who fully reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our deliverance;<sup>3</sup> our only high priest<sup>4</sup> who has delivered us by the one sacrifice of his body, and who continually pleads our cause with the Father;<sup>5</sup> and our eternal king who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Ps. 45:[7]**; Heb. 1:9

<sup>2</sup> **Deut. 18:15**; **Acts 3:22**

<sup>3</sup> **Jn. 1:18**; **15:15**

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 110; Heb. 7:21; **10:12**

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 8:34; 5:9-10

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 2:6; Lk. 1:33; Mt. 28:18; **Jn. 10:28**

**32 Q. But why are you called a Christian?**

A. Because by faith I am a member of Christ<sup>1</sup> and so I share in his anointing.<sup>2</sup> I am anointed to confess his name,<sup>3</sup> to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,<sup>4</sup> to strive with a free conscience against sin and the devil in this life,<sup>5</sup> and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for eternity.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts 11:26; **1 Cor. 6:15**

<sup>2</sup> 1 Jn. 2:27; **Isa. 59:21**; Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28; Mark 8:[34-]38

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 12:1; Rev. 5:8[-14]; **1 Pet. 2:9**

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 6:12; Rev. 1:6

<sup>5</sup> **1 Tim. 1:19**

<sup>6</sup> **2 Tim. 2:12**

**LORD'S DAY 13**

**33 Q. Why is he called God’s “only begotten Son” when we also are God’s children?**

A. Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.<sup>1</sup> We, however, are adopted children of God—adopted by grace through Christ.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 1:29; Heb. 1:2

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:15; Eph. 1:[5-]6

**34 Q. Why do you call him “our Lord”?**

A. Because—not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood—he has set us free from sin and from the tyranny of the devil, and has bought us, body and soul, to be his very own.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2:9; 1 Cor. 6:20; **7:23**

**LORD'S DAY 14**

**35 Q. What does it mean that he “was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary”?**

- A. That the eternal Son of God, who is<sup>1</sup> and remains true and eternal God,<sup>2</sup> took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit,<sup>3</sup> from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, a truly human nature<sup>4</sup> so that he might also become David's true descendant,<sup>5</sup> like his brothers and sisters in every way<sup>6</sup> except for sin.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 1:1; **17:5**; Rom. 1:4

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 9:5; *Gal. 4[:4]*

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:27, 35; *Eph. 1*

<sup>4</sup> John 1:14; **Gal. 4:4**

<sup>5</sup> Ps. 132:11; Rom. 1:3

<sup>6</sup> Phil. 2:7

<sup>7</sup> Heb. 4:15; **7:26**

**36 Q. How does the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit you?**

- A. He is our mediator<sup>1</sup> and, in God's sight, he covers with his innocence and perfect holiness my sinfulness in which I was conceived.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Heb. 2:16–17**

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 32:1; 1 Cor. 1:30

**LORD'S DAY 15**

**37 Q. What do you understand by the word “suffered”?**

- A. That during his whole life on earth, but especially at the end, Christ sustained in body and soul the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race.<sup>1</sup> This he did in order that, by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice,<sup>2</sup> he might deliver us, body and soul, from eternal condemnation, and gain for us God's grace, righteousness, and eternal life.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. 2:24; **3:18**; Isa. 53:12

<sup>2</sup> 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10; Rom. 3:25

**38 Q. Why did he suffer “under Pontius Pilate” as judge?**

- A. So that he, though innocent, might be condemned by an earthly judge,<sup>1</sup> and so free us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lk. 23:14; Jn. 19:4

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 69:5; Isa. 53; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

**39 Q. Is it significant that he was “crucified” instead of dying some other way?**

- A. Yes. By this I am convinced that he shouldered the curse which lay on me,<sup>1</sup> since death by crucifixion was cursed by God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gal. 3[:10]*

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 21: [23]; Gal. 3:13

**LORD'S DAY 16**

**40 Q. Why did Christ have to suffer death?**

- A. Because God's justice and truth require it:<sup>1</sup> nothing else could pay for our sins except the death of the Son of God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 2:17

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 2:9, 15; **Phil. 2:8**

**41 Q. Why was he “buried”?**

- A. His burial testifies that he really died.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts 13:29; Mt. 27:60; Lk. 23:50[–53]; Jn. 19:38[–42]

**42 Q. Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?**

A. Our death does not pay the debt of our sins. Rather, it puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 5:24; Phil. 1:23; Rom. 7:24 [21–25]

**43 Q. What further benefit do we receive from Christ’s sacrifice and death on the cross?**

A. By Christ’s power our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him,<sup>1</sup> so that the evil desires of the flesh may no longer rule us,<sup>2</sup> but that instead we may offer ourselves as a sacrifice of gratitude to him.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:6–8, 11–12; Col. 2[:11–12]

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:12

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 12:1

**44 Q. Why does the creed add, “He descended to hell”?**

A. To assure me during attacks of deepest dread and temptation that Christ my Lord, by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul, on the cross but also earlier, has delivered me from hellish anguish and torment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa.53:10; Mt. 27:46

**LORD’S DAY 17**

**45 Q. How does Christ’s resurrection benefit us?**

A. First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, so that he might make us share in the righteousness he obtained for us by his death.<sup>1</sup> Second, by his power we too are already raised to a new life.<sup>2</sup> Third, Christ’s resurrection is a sure pledge to us of our blessed resurrection.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 15:17, 54–55; Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 1:3, 21

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1–5; Eph. 2:5

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 15:12; Rom. 8:11

**LORD’S DAY 18**

**46 Q. What do you mean by saying, “He ascended to heaven”?**

A. That Christ, while his disciples watched, was taken up from the earth into heaven<sup>1</sup> and remains there on our behalf<sup>2</sup> until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts 1:9; Mt. 26[:64]; Mk. 16[:19]; Lk. 24[:51]

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 4:14; 7:15[–25]; 9:11; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 4:10; Col. 3:1

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1:11; Mt. 24:30

**47 Q. But isn’t Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?<sup>1</sup>**

A. Christ is true human and true God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth;<sup>2</sup> but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is never absent from us.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 28:20

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 26:11; Jn. 16:28; 17:11; Acts 3:21

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 14:17[–19]; 16:13; Mt. 28:20; Eph. 4:8, 12; also cited: **Augustine, Tractates on the Gospel of John 50**

**48 Q. If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren’t the two natures of Christ separated from each other?**

A. Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere,<sup>1</sup> it is evident that Christ’s divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity that has been taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts 7:49; **17:28**; Jer. 23:24

<sup>2</sup> Col. 2:9; Jn. 3:13; 11:15; Mt. 28:6

**49 Q. How does Christ's ascension to heaven benefit us?**

A. First, he is our advocate in heaven in the presence of his Father.<sup>1</sup> Second, we have our own flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that Christ our head will also take us, his members, up to himself.<sup>2</sup> Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth as a corresponding pledge.<sup>3</sup> By the Spirit's power we seek not earthly things but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Jn. 2:1–2; Rom. 8:34

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 14:2; 20:17; Eph. 2:6

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 14:16; **16:7**; Acts 2; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5

<sup>4</sup> Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:14

**LORD'S DAY 19****50 Q. Why the next words: "and is seated at the right hand of God"?**

A. Because Christ ascended to heaven to show there that he is head of his church,<sup>1</sup> the one through whom the Father rules all things.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 1:20–23; **5:23**; Col. 1:18

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 28:18; Jn. 5:22

**51 Q. How does this glory of Christ our head benefit us?**

A. First, through his Holy Spirit he pours out gifts from heaven upon us his members.<sup>1</sup> Second, by his power he defends us and keeps us safe from all enemies.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 4:10

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 2:9; **110:1-2**; John 10:28; Eph. 4:8

**52 Q. How does Christ's return "to judge the living and the dead" comfort you?**

A. In all distress and persecution, with uplifted head, I confidently await the very judge who has already offered himself to the judgment of God in my place and removed the whole curse from me.<sup>1</sup> Christ will cast all his enemies and mine into everlasting condemnation,<sup>2</sup> but will take me and all his chosen ones to himself into the joy and glory of heaven.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lk. 21:28; Rom. 8:23, 33; Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. 1:6-7; 1 Thess. 4:16; Mt. 25:41

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 25:34

***God the Holy Spirit*****LORD'S DAY 20****53 Q. What do you believe concerning "the Holy Spirit"?**

A. First, that the Spirit, with the Father and the Son, is eternal God.<sup>1</sup> Second, that the Spirit is given also to me,<sup>2</sup> so that, through true faith, he makes me share in Christ and all his benefits,<sup>3</sup> comforts me,<sup>4</sup> and will remain with me forever.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:2; Isa. 48:16; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Acts 5:3–4

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 1:21–22

<sup>3</sup> Gal. 3:14; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Cor. 6:17

<sup>4</sup> Acts 9:31

<sup>5</sup> Jn. 14:16; 1 Pet. 4:14

**LORD'S DAY 21****54 Q. What do you believe concerning "the holy catholic church"?**

A. I believe that the Son of God<sup>1</sup> through his Spirit and Word,<sup>2</sup> out of the entire human race,<sup>3</sup> from the beginning of the world to its end,<sup>4</sup> gathers, protects, and preserves for himself,<sup>5</sup> a community chosen for eternal life<sup>6</sup> and united in true faith.<sup>7</sup> And of this community I am<sup>8</sup> and always will be<sup>9</sup> a living member.



<sup>1</sup>Jn. 10:11

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 59:21; Rom. 1:16; 10:14, 17; **Eph. 5:26**

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 26:4

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 71:18; 1 Cor. 11:26

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 16:18; Jn. 10:28–30; 1 Cor. 1:8

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 8:29–30; Eph. 1:10–13

<sup>7</sup>**Acts 2:46**; Eph. 4:3–5

<sup>8</sup> 1 Jn. 3:21; **2 Cor. 13:5**

<sup>9</sup> 1 Jn. 2:19

**55 Q. What do you understand by “the communion of saints”?**

**A.** First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts.<sup>1</sup> Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and joyfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1 Jn. 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 8:32

<sup>2</sup> **1 Cor.6:17**; 12:12–21; 13:5; Phil. 2:4–6

**56 Q. What do you believe concerning “the forgiveness of sins”?**

**A.** I believe that God, because of Christ’s satisfaction,<sup>1</sup> will no longer remember any of my sins or my sinful nature which I need to struggle against all my life.<sup>2</sup> Rather, by grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Jn. 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 31:34; Ps. 103:3, 10–12; Rom. 7:24–25; 8:1–3

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 3:18

**LORD’S DAY 22**

**57 Q. How does “the resurrection of the body” comfort you?**

**A.** Not only will my soul be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head,<sup>1</sup> but also my very flesh will be raised by the power of Christ, reunited with my soul, and made like Christ’s glorious body.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lk. 23:43; Phil. 1:23

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 15:53–54; Job 19:25–26; 1 Jn. 3:2; Phil. 3:21

**58 Q. How does the article concerning “life everlasting” comfort you?**

**A.** Even as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy,<sup>1</sup> so after this life I will have perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human heart has ever imagined;<sup>2</sup> a blessedness in which to praise God forever.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 5:2–3

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 2:9

<sup>3</sup> *John 17*

**LORD’S DAY 23**

**59 Q. What good does it do you, however, to believe all this?**

**A.** In Christ I am righteous before God and heir to life everlasting.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Jn. 3:36

**60 Q. How are you righteous before God?**

**A.** Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God’s commandments, of never having kept any of them,<sup>2</sup> and of still being inclined toward all evil,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless,

without any merit of my own,<sup>4</sup> out of sheer grace,<sup>5</sup> God grants and credits to me<sup>6</sup> the perfect satisfaction,<sup>7</sup> righteousness, and holiness of Christ,<sup>8</sup> as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, and as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.<sup>9</sup> All I need to do is accept this gift with a believing heart.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:21–28, 5:1; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8–9; Phil. 3:9

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 3:9[–18]

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 7:23

<sup>4</sup> 2 Tim. 3:5

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 4:4; 2 Cor. 5:19

<sup>7</sup> 1 Jn. 2:2

<sup>8</sup> 1 Jn. 2:1

<sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. 5:21

<sup>10</sup> Rom. 3:22; Jn. 3:18

**61 Q. Why do you say that through faith alone you are righteous?**

**A.** Not because I please God by the worthiness of my faith. It is because only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness make me righteous before God,<sup>1</sup> and because I can accept this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than through faith.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2

<sup>2</sup> 1 Jn. 5:10

**LORD'S DAY 24**

**62 Q. Why can't our good works be our righteousness before God, or at least a part of our righteousness?**

**A.** Because the righteousness which can pass God's judgment must be entirely perfect and must in every way measure up to the divine law.<sup>1</sup> But even our best works in this life are imperfect and stained with sin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 64:6

**63 Q. How can our good works be said to merit nothing when God promises to reward them in this life and the next?**

**A.** This reward is not earned; it is a gift of grace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke 17:10

**64 Q. But doesn't this teaching make people indifferent and wicked?**

**A.** No. It is impossible for those grafted into Christ through true faith not to produce fruits of gratitude.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. [7]:18

*The Holy Sacraments*

**LORD'S DAY 25**

**65 Q. It is through faith alone that we share in Christ and all his benefits: where then does that faith come from?**

**A.** The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts<sup>1</sup> by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 2:8; Jn. 3:5

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 28:19–20; 1 Pet. 1:22–23

**66 Q. What are sacraments?**

- A. Sacraments are visible, holy signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and seal that promise. And this is God's gospel promise: to grant us forgiveness of sins and eternal life by grace because of Christ's one sacrifice accomplished on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 17:11; Rom. 4:11; Deut. 30:6; Lev. 6:25; Heb. 9:8–9, [11–]24; Ezek. 20:12; **1 Sam. 17:36[–37]**; **Isa. 6:6–7**

**67 Q. Are both the word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?**

- A. Yes! In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us and by the holy sacraments confirms that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27

**68 Q. How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?**

- A. Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.

*Holy Baptism*

**LORD'S DAY 26**

**69 Q. How does baptism remind and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross benefits you personally?**

- A. In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing and with it promised that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, that is, all my sins.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3

**70 Q. What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?**

- A. To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven our sins because of Christ's blood poured out for us in his sacrifice on the cross.<sup>1</sup> To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed and sanctified us to be members of Christ, so that more and more we become dead to sin and live holy and blameless lives.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; **22:14**; Zech. 13:1; Ezek. 36:25

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 1:33; 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12

**71 Q. Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?**

- A. In the institution of baptism, where he says: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup> "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned."<sup>2</sup> This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism "the water of rebirth"<sup>3</sup> and the washing away of sins.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:19

<sup>2</sup> Mark 16:16

<sup>3</sup> Titus 3:5

<sup>4</sup> Acts 22:16

**LORD'S DAY 27**

**72 Q. Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?**

- A. No,<sup>1</sup> only Jesus Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; Eph. 5:26

<sup>2</sup> 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:11

**73 Q. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the water of rebirth and the washing away of sins?**

- A. God has good reason for these words. To begin with, God wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ take away our sins just as water removes dirt from the body.<sup>1</sup> But more important, God wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that we are as truly washed of our sins spiritually as our bodies are washed with water physically.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. 1:5; 7:14; 1 Cor. 6:11

<sup>2</sup> Mk. 16:16; Gal. 3:[2]7

**74 Q. Should infants also be baptized?**

**A.** Yes. Infants as well as adults are included in God's covenant and people,<sup>1</sup> and they, no less than adults, are promised deliverance from sin through Christ's blood<sup>2</sup> and the Holy Spirit who produces faith.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, by baptism, the sign of the covenant, they too should be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers.<sup>4</sup> This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision,<sup>5</sup> which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 17:7

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 19:14

<sup>3</sup> Luke 1:15, [4]4; Ps. 22:[9-]11; Isa. 46:1-5; Acts 2:39

<sup>4</sup> Acts 10:47

<sup>5</sup> Gen. 17:[9-]14

<sup>6</sup> Col. 2:11-13

*The Holy Supper of Jesus Christ*

**LORD'S DAY 28**

**75 Q. How does the holy supper remind and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all his benefits?**

**A.** In this way: Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup in remembrance of him. With this command come these promises: First, as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup shared with me, so surely his body was offered and broken for me and his blood poured out for me on the cross. Second, as surely as I receive from the hand of the one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely he nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with his crucified body and poured-out blood.

**76 Q. What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink his poured-out blood?**

**A.** It means to accept with a believing heart the entire suffering and death of Christ and thereby to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life.<sup>1</sup> But it means more. Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us, we are united more and more to Christ's blessed body.<sup>2</sup> And so, although he is in heaven<sup>3</sup> and we are on earth, we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.<sup>4</sup> And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit, as the members of our body are by one soul.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 6:35, 40, 47-48, 50-54

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 6:55-56

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1:9; 3:21; 1 Cor. 11:26

<sup>4</sup> Eph. 3:17; 5:29-32; 1 Cor. 6:15, 17-19; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:13; Jn. 14:23

<sup>5</sup> Jn. 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15-16

**77 Q. Where does Christ promise to nourish and refresh believers with his body and blood as surely as they eat this broken bread and drink this cup?**

**A.** In the institution of the Lord's Supper:<sup>1</sup> "The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is [broken]\* for you.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood;<sup>2</sup> do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'<sup>3</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." This promise is repeated by Paul in these words: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 11:23[-26]; Mt. 26:26[-29]; Mk. 14:22[-25]; Lk. 22:17[-20]

<sup>2</sup> Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:20

<sup>3</sup> Ex. 13:9

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 10:16–17

\*The word “broken” does not appear in the NRSV text, but it was present in the original German of the Heidelberg Catechism.

## LORD’S DAY 29

### 78 Q. Do the bread and wine become the real body and blood of Christ?

A. No. Just as the water of baptism is not changed into Christ’s blood and does not itself wash away sins but is simply a divine sign and assurance of these things,<sup>1</sup> so too the holy bread of the Lord’s Supper does not become the actual body of Christ,<sup>2</sup> even though it is called the body of Christ in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 26:[28–]29; Mk. 14:24

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 10:16–17; 11:26–28

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 17:10, 14–19; Ex. 12:27, 43–48; **13:9; 24:8; 29:36; Acts 7:8; 22:16; Lev. 16:10; 17:11; Isa. 6:6–7; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 10:1–4**

### 79 Q. Why then does Christ call the bread his body and the cup his blood, or the new covenant in his blood, and Paul use the words, a participation in Christ’s body and blood?

A. Christ has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that just as bread and wine nourish the temporal life, so too his crucified body and poured-out blood are the true food and drink of our souls for eternal life.<sup>1</sup> But more important, he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge, that we, through the Holy Spirit’s work, share in his true body and blood as surely as our mouths receive these holy signs in his remembrance,<sup>2</sup> and that all of his suffering and obedience are as definitely ours as if we personally had suffered and made satisfaction for our sins.

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 6:51, 55

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 10:16–17

## LORD’S DAY 30

### 80\* Q. How does the Lord’s Supper differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?

A. The Lord’s Supper declares to us that all our sins are completely forgiven through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which he himself accomplished on the cross once for all.<sup>1</sup> It also declares to us that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ<sup>2</sup> who with his true body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father<sup>3</sup> where he wants us to worship him.<sup>4</sup> But the Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present under the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshiped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26–28; 10:10, 12–14; Jn. 19:30; Mt. 26:28; Lk. 22:19–20

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:16; **12:13**

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 1:3; 8:1

<sup>4</sup> Jn. 4:21–23; 20:17; Lk. 24:52; Acts 7:55–56; Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10

\*Question and Answer 80 reflects the polemical debates of the Reformation and was added in the second German edition of 1563. The second and fourth sentences of the Answer, as well as the concluding phrase, were added in the third German edition of 1563. After the fourth sentence, the third German and Latin texts have a note to the section on consecration in the Canon of the Mass.

As detailed in the preface to *The Book of Confessions*, these condemnations and characterizations of the Catholic Church are not the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and are not applicable to current relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Catholic Church.

### 81 Q. Who should come to the Lord’s table?

A. Those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their remaining weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life. Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, eat and drink judgment on themselves.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 10:21; 11:28[–29]

### 82 Q. Should those be admitted to the Lord’s Supper who show by what they profess and how they live that they are unbelieving and ungodly?

- A. No, that would dishonor God’s covenant and bring down God’s wrath upon the entire congregation.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, according to the instruction of Christ and his apostles, the Christian church is duty-bound to exclude such people, by the official use of the keys of the kingdom, until they reform their lives.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 11:20, 34; Isa. 1:11; 66:3; Jer. 7:21[–26]; Ps. 50:16

**LORD’S DAY 31**

**83 Q. What are the keys of the kingdom?**

- A. The preaching of the holy gospel and Christian discipline toward repentance. Both of them open the kingdom of heaven to believers and close it to unbelievers.

**84 Q. How does preaching the holy gospel open and close the kingdom of heaven?**

- A. According to the command of Christ: The kingdom of heaven is opened by proclaiming and publicly declaring to all believers, each and every one, that, as often as they accept the gospel promise in true faith, God, because of Christ’s merit, truly forgives all their sins. The kingdom of heaven is closed, however, by proclaiming and publicly declaring to unbelievers and hypocrites that, as long as they do not repent, the wrath of God and eternal condemnation rest on them.<sup>1</sup> God’s judgment, both in this life and in the life to come, is based on this gospel testimony.

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 20:21–23; Mt. 16:19

**85 Q. How is the kingdom of heaven closed and opened by Christian discipline?**

- A. According to the command of Christ: Those who, though called Christians, profess unchristian teachings or live unchristian lives, and who after repeated personal and loving admonitions, refuse to abandon their errors and evil ways, and who after being reported to the church, that is, to those ordained by the church for that purpose, fail to respond also to the church’s admonitions—such persons the church excludes from the Christian community by withholding the sacraments from them, and God also excludes them from the kingdom of Christ. Such persons, when promising and demonstrating genuine reform, are received again as members of Christ and of his church.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 18:15–18; 1 Cor. 5; 2; Thess. 3:14–15; *Jn. 2[:13–22]*; **2 Jn. 10-11**

**Part III: Gratitude**

**LORD’S DAY 32**

**86 Q. Since we have been delivered from our misery by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why then should we do good works?**

- A. Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image, so that with our whole lives we may show that we are thankful to God for his benefits,<sup>1</sup> so that he may be praised through us,<sup>2</sup> so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,<sup>3</sup> and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:13; 12:1–2; 1 Pet. 2:5–10; 1 Cor. 6:20

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. 1:[6–]10; Mt. 7:17; Gal. 5:6, 22

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. 3:1–2; Rom. 14:19

**87 Q. Can those be saved who do not turn to God from their ungrateful and unrepentant ways?**

- A. By no means. Scripture tells us that no unchaste person, no idolater, adulterer, thief, no covetous person, no drunkard, slanderer, robber, or the like will inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Eph. 5:5–6; 1 Jn. 3:14

**LORD’S DAY 33**

**88 Q. What is involved in genuine repentance or conversion?**

- A. Two things: the dying-away of the old self,<sup>1</sup> and the rising-to-life of the new.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:4–6; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 3:5–10; 1 Cor. 5:7

**89 Q. What is the dying-away of the old self?**

A. To be genuinely sorry for sin and more and more to hate and run away from it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 8:13; Joel 2:13

**90 Q. What is the rising-to-life of the new self?**

A. Wholehearted joy in God through Christ<sup>1</sup> and a love and delight to live according to the will of God by doing every kind of good work.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5:1; 14:17; Isa. 57:15

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:10–11; Gal. 2:20

**91 Q. What are good works?**

A. Only those which are done out of true faith,<sup>1</sup> conform to God’s law,<sup>2</sup> and are done for God’s glory,<sup>3</sup> and not those based on our own opinion or human tradition.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 14:23

<sup>2</sup> *1 Sam. 11*; **1 Sam. [15]:22**; Eph. 2:10

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 10:31

<sup>4</sup> Deut. 12:32; Ezek. 20:18–19; Isa. 29:13; Mt. 15:9

*The Ten Commandments*

**LORD’S DAY 34**

**92 Q. What is God’s law?**

A. God spoke all these words:

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.”

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

“You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.”

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.”

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving to you.”

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not murder.”

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not commit adultery.”

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not steal.”

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20[1–17]; Deut. 5[6–21]

**93 Q. How are these commandments divided?**

**A.** Into two tables.<sup>1</sup> The first has four commandments, teaching us how we ought to live in relation to God. The second has six commandments, teaching us what we owe our neighbor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:3–4

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 22:37–39

**94 Q. What does the Lord require in the first commandment?**

**A.** That I, not wanting to endanger my own salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry,<sup>1</sup> sorcery, superstitious rites,<sup>2</sup> and prayer to saints or to other creatures.<sup>3</sup> That I rightly know the only true God,<sup>4</sup> trust him alone,<sup>5</sup> and look to God for every good thing<sup>6</sup> humbly<sup>7</sup> and patiently,<sup>8</sup> and love,<sup>9</sup> fear,<sup>10</sup> and honor<sup>11</sup> God with all my heart. In short, that I give up anything rather than go against God’s will in any way.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 6:9–10; 10:7,14

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:11

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:[8]–9

<sup>4</sup> Jn. 17:3

<sup>5</sup> Jer. 17:5

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 104: 27–30; Isa. 45:7; Jas. 1:17

<sup>7</sup> 1 Pet. 5:5–6

<sup>8</sup> Heb. 10:36; Col. 1:11; Rom. 5:3–4; 1 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14

<sup>9</sup> Deut. 6:5; Mt. 22:37

<sup>10</sup> Deut. 6:2; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Mt. 10:28

<sup>11</sup> Mt. 4:10; Deut. 10:20

<sup>12</sup> Mt. 5:29–30; 10:37; Acts 5:29

**95 Q. What is idolatry?**

**A.** Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in the Word.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 5:5; 1 Chr. 16:26; Phil. 3:19; Gal. 4:8; Eph. 2:12; 1 Jn. 2:23; 2 Jn. 9; Jn. 5:23

**LORD’S DAY 35**

**96 Q. What is God’s will for us in the second commandment?**

**A.** That we in no way make any image of God<sup>1</sup> nor worship him in any other way than has been commanded in God’s Word.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 4:15[–19]; Isa. 40:18; Rom. 1:23; Acts 17:29

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. 15:23; Deut. 12:30; Mt. 15:9

**97 Q. May we then not make any image at all?**



- A. God can not and may not be visibly portrayed in any way. Although creatures may be portrayed, yet God forbids making or having such images if one's intention is to worship them or to serve God through them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 23:24; 34:13; Num. 33:52; Deut. 7:5; 12:3; 16:22; 2 Kings 18:4

**98 Q. But may not images be permitted in churches in place of books for the unlearned?**

- A. No, we should not try to be wiser than God. God wants the Christian community instructed by the living preaching of his Word—not by idols that cannot even talk.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Pet. 1:19

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18–19

**LORD'S DAY 36**

**99 Q. What is the aim of the third commandment?**

- A. That we neither blaspheme nor misuse the name of God by cursing, perjury,<sup>1</sup> or unnecessary oaths,<sup>2</sup> nor share in such horrible sins by being silent bystanders. In summary, we should use the holy name of God only with reverence and awe,<sup>3</sup> so that we may properly confess God,<sup>4</sup> pray to God,<sup>5</sup> and glorify God in all our words and works.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 24:11[–16]; 19:12

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 5:37; Jas. 5:12

<sup>3</sup> Isa. 45:23

<sup>4</sup> Mt. 10:32

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. 2:8

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 2:24; 1 Tim. 6:1; Col. 3:16

**100 Q. Is blasphemy of God's name by swearing and cursing really such serious sin that God is angry also with those who do not do all they can to help prevent and forbid it?**

- A. Yes, indeed.<sup>1</sup> No sin is greater or provokes God's wrath more than blaspheming his name. That is why God commanded it to be punished with death.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 5:1

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 24:15–16

**LORD'S DAY 37**

**101 Q. But may we swear an oath in God's name if we do it reverently?**

- A. Yes, when the government demands it, or when necessity requires it, in order to maintain and promote truth and trustworthiness for God's glory and our neighbor's good. Such oaths are grounded in God's Word<sup>1</sup> and were rightly used by the people of God in the Old and New Testaments.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Isa. 48:1; Heb. 6:16

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 21:24; 31:53; Josh. 9:15, 19; 1 Sam.24:[21–22]; 2 Sam. 3:35; 1 Kings 1:29; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23

**102 Q. May we also swear by saints or other creatures?**

- A. No. A legitimate oath means calling upon God as the only one who knows my heart to witness to my truthfulness and to punish me if I swear falsely.<sup>1</sup> No creature is worthy of such honor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 1:23

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 5:34–36; Jas. 5:12

**LORD'S DAY 38**

**103 Q. What is God's will for you in the fourth commandment?**

- A. First, that the gospel ministry and education for it be maintained,<sup>1</sup> and that, especially on the festive day of rest, I diligently attend the assembly of God's people<sup>2</sup> to learn what God's Word teaches,<sup>3</sup> to participate in the sacraments,<sup>4</sup> to pray to God publicly,<sup>5</sup> and to bring Christian offerings for the poor.<sup>6</sup> Second, that every day of my life I rest from my evil ways, let the Lord work in me through his Spirit, and so begin in this life the eternal Sabbath.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Titus 1:5; 1 Tim. 3[:1]; 4:13; 5:17; 1 Cor. 9:11, 13–14; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:15

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 68:27; 40:10–11; Acts [2]:42, 46

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 14:19, 29, 31

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 11:33

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. 2:1–3, 8–9; 1 Cor. 14:16

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. 16:2

<sup>7</sup> Isa. 66:23

## LORD’S DAY 39

### 104 Q. What is God’s will for you in the fifth commandment?

A. That I honor, love, and be loyal to my father and mother and all those in authority over me;<sup>1</sup> that I submit myself with proper obedience to all their good teaching and discipline; and also that I be patient with their failings—<sup>2</sup>for through them God chooses to rule us.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 6:1[–9]; Col. 3:18, 20–24; Eph. 5:22; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; 15:20; 20:20; Exod. 21:17; Rom. 13:[1–5]

<sup>2</sup> Prov. 23:22; Gen. 9:25; 1 Pet. 2:18

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 6:4,9; Col. 3:19, 21; Rom. 13:[1–5]; Mt. 22:21

## LORD’S DAY 40

### 105 Q. What is God’s will for you in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor—not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds—<sup>1</sup>and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge.<sup>2</sup> I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either.<sup>3</sup> Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 5:21–22; Gen. 9:6; Mt. 26:52

<sup>2</sup> Eph. 4:26; Rom. 12:19; Mt. 5:25; 18:35

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 13:14; Col. 2:23; Sirach 3:27\*; Mt. 4:7

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 9:6; Exod. 21:14; Mt. 26:52; Rom. 13:4

\*Sirach is a deuterocanonical book, treated with respect but not as canonical by the 16th century reformers.

### 106 Q. Does this commandment refer only to murder?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy,<sup>1</sup> hatred,<sup>2</sup> anger,<sup>3</sup> vindictiveness. In God’s sight all such are disguised forms of murder.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 1:29

<sup>2</sup> 1 Jn. 2:9,11

<sup>3</sup> Jas. 2:[13]; 1:20; Gal. 5:20

<sup>4</sup> 1 Jn. 3:15

### 107 Q. Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way?

A. No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves,<sup>1</sup> to be patient, peace-loving, gentle,<sup>2</sup> merciful,<sup>3</sup> and friendly toward them,<sup>4</sup> to protect them from harm as much as we can,<sup>5</sup> and to do good even to our enemies.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 22:39; 7:12

<sup>2</sup> Eph. 4:2; Gal. 6:1–2; Mt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 5:7; Lk. 6:36

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 12:10

<sup>5</sup> Exod. 23:5

<sup>6</sup> Mt. 5:44–45; Rom. 12:20–21

## LORD’S DAY 41

### 108 Q. What does the seventh commandment teach us?

- A. That God condemns all unchastity,<sup>1</sup> and that therefore we should thoroughly detest it<sup>2</sup> and live decent and chaste lives,<sup>3</sup> within or outside of the holy state of marriage.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 18:27–28

<sup>2</sup> Jude 23

<sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. 4:3–5

<sup>4</sup> Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7

### 109 Q. Does God, in this commandment, forbid only such scandalous sins as adultery?

- A. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul, and God wants both to be kept clean and holy. That is why God forbids all unchaste actions, looks, talk,<sup>1</sup> thoughts, or desires,<sup>2</sup> and whatever may incite someone to them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 5:3–4; 1 Cor. 6:18–20

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 5:[27–28]

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:33

## LORD’S DAY 42

### 110 Q. What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

- A. God forbids not only outright theft<sup>1</sup> and robbery,<sup>2</sup> punishable by law. But in God’s sight theft also includes all scheming and swindling in order to get our neighbor’s goods for ourselves, whether by force or means that appear legitimate,<sup>3</sup> such as inaccurate measurements of weight,<sup>4</sup> size, or volume;<sup>5</sup> fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money;<sup>6</sup> excessive interest; or any other means forbidden by God. In addition God forbids all greed<sup>7</sup> and pointless squandering of his gifts.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 6:10

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 5:10

<sup>3</sup> Lk. 3:14; 1 Thess. 4:6

<sup>4</sup> Prov. 11:1; 16:11

<sup>5</sup> Ezek. 45:9[–11]; Deut. 25:13[–16]

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 15:5; Lk. 6:35

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 6:10

<sup>8</sup> Prov. 5:16

### 111 Q. What does God require of you in this commandment?

- A. That I do whatever I can for my neighbor’s good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me,<sup>1</sup> and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 7:12

<sup>2</sup> Eph. 4:28

## LORD’S DAY 43

### 112 Q. What is the aim of the ninth commandment?

- A. That I never give false testimony against anyone,<sup>1</sup> twist no one’s words,<sup>2</sup> not gossip or slander,<sup>3</sup> nor join in condemning anyone rashly or without a hearing.<sup>4</sup> Rather, in court and everywhere else, I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind,<sup>5</sup> these are the very devices the devil uses,<sup>6</sup> and they would call down on me God’s intense wrath. I should love the truth, speak it candidly, and openly acknowledge it.<sup>7</sup> And I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor’s good name.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prov. 19:5, 9; 21:28

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 15:3

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 1:29–30

<sup>4</sup> Mt. 7:1[–2]; Lk. 6:37

<sup>5</sup> Prov. 12:22; 13:5

<sup>6</sup> Jn. 8:44

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25

<sup>8</sup> 1 Pet. 4:8

## LORD’S DAY 44

### 113 Q. What is the aim of the tenth commandment?

A. That not even the slightest desire or thought contrary to any one of God’s commandments should ever arise in our hearts. Rather, with all our hearts we should always hate sin and take pleasure in whatever is right.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 7:7

### 114 Q. But can those converted to God obey these commandments perfectly?

A. No. In this life even the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, with all seriousness of purpose, they do begin to live according to all, not only some, of God’s commandments.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Jn. 1:8–10; Rom. 7:14–15; Eccl. 7:[20]

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 7:22; Jas. 2:10

### 115 Q. Since no one in this life can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly, why does God want them preached so pointedly?

A. First, so that the longer we live the more we may come to know our sinfulness<sup>1</sup> and the more eagerly look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and righteousness.<sup>2</sup> Second, so that, we may never stop striving, and never stop praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, to be renewed more and more after God’s image, until after this life we reach our goal: perfection.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Jn. 1:9; Ps. 32:5

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 7:24–25

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:11–14

## *The Lord’s Prayer*

## LORD’S DAY 45

### 116 Q. Why do Christians need to pray?

A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us.<sup>1</sup> And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking God for them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 50:14–15

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 7:7[–8]; Lk. 11:9–13; Mt. 13:12; Ps. 50:15

### 117 Q. What is the kind of prayer that pleases God and that he listens to?

A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, revealed to us in his Word,<sup>1</sup> asking for everything God has commanded us to ask for.<sup>2</sup> Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery,<sup>3</sup> so that we humble ourselves in God’s majestic presence.<sup>4</sup> Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation:<sup>5</sup> even though we do not deserve it, God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord.<sup>6</sup> That is what God promised us in his Word.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 4:22

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:26; 1 Jn. 5:14; Jn. 4:23–24; Ps. 145:18

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. 20:12

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 2:11, 34:19; Isa. 66:2

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 10:[13]; 8:15; Jas. 1:6

<sup>6</sup> Jn. 14:13–15; 15:16; 16:23; Dan 9:17–18

<sup>7</sup> Mt. 7:8; Ps 143:1

**118 Q. What did God command us to pray for?**

A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,<sup>1</sup> as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.

<sup>1</sup> Jas. 1:17; Mt. 6:33

**119 Q. What is this prayer?**

A. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 6:9[–13]; Lk. 11:2[–4]

**LORD’S DAY 46**

**120 Q. Why did Christ command us to call God “our Father”?**

A. To awaken in us at the very beginning of our prayer what should be basic to our prayer—a childlike reverence and trust that through Christ God has become our Father, and that just as our parents do not refuse us the things of this life, even less will God our Father refuse to give us what we ask in faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 7:9–11; Lk. 11:11–13

**121 Q. Why the words “in heaven”?**

A. These words teach us not to think of God’s heavenly majesty as something earthly,<sup>1</sup> and to expect everything needed for body and soul from God’s almighty power.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 23:23–24; Acts 17:24–25, 27

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 10:12

**LORD’S DAY 47**

**122 Q. What does the first petition mean?**

A. “Hallowed be your name” means: Help us to truly know you,<sup>1</sup> to honor, glorify, and praise you for all your works and for all that shines forth from them: your almighty power, wisdom, kindness, justice, mercy, and truth.<sup>2</sup> And it means, Help us to direct all our living—what we think, say, and do—so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us but always honored and praised.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 17:3; Mt. 16:17; Jas. 1:5; Ps. 119:105

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 119:137; Lk. 1:46[–55], 68[–79]; Ps. 145:8–9, 17; Ex. 34:6–7; Ps 143:1–2, 5, 10–12; Jer. 32:18–19; 33:11, 20–21; Mt. 19:17; Rom. 11:22, 33[–36]

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 115:1; 71:8

**LORD’S DAY 48**

**123 Q. What does the second petition mean?**

A. “Your kingdom come” means: Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to you.<sup>1</sup> Preserve your church and make it grow.<sup>2</sup> Destroy the devil’s work; destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your holy Word.<sup>3</sup> Do this until your kingdom fully comes,<sup>4</sup> when you will be all in all.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 6:33; Ps. 119:5; 143:10

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 51:18; 122:6

<sup>3</sup> 1 Jn. 3:8; Rom. 16:20

<sup>4</sup> Rev. 22:17, 20; Rom. 8:22–23

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 15:28

#### **LORD’S DAY 49**

##### **124 Q. What does the third petition mean?**

- A.** “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” means: Help us and all people to reject our own wills<sup>1</sup> and to obey your will without any back talk.<sup>2</sup> Your will alone is good. Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,<sup>3</sup> as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mt.16:24; Titus 2:12

<sup>2</sup> Lk. 22:42

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 7:24

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 103:20–21

#### **LORD’S DAY 50**

##### **125 Q. What does the fourth petition mean?**

- A.** “Give us this day our daily bread” means: Do take care of all our physical needs<sup>1</sup> so that we come to know that you are the only source of everything good,<sup>2</sup> and that neither our work and worry nor your gifts can do us any good without your blessing.<sup>3</sup> And so help us to give up our trust in creatures and trust in you alone.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 145:15; 104:27[–28]; Mt. 6:25[–34]

<sup>2</sup> Acts 17:27; 14:17

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 15:58; Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16–17

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 62:11; 55:23

#### **LORD’S DAY 51**

##### **126 Q. What does the fifth petition mean?**

- A.** “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” means: Because of Christ’s blood, do not hold against us, poor sinners that we are, any of the sins we do or the evil that constantly clings to us.<sup>1</sup> Forgive us just as we are fully determined, as evidence of your grace in us, to forgive our neighbors.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 51:1[–7]; 143:2; 1 Jn. 2:1–2

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 6:14–15

#### **LORD’S DAY 52**

##### **127 Q. What does the sixth petition mean?**

- A.** “And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one” means: By ourselves we are too weak to hold our own even for a moment.<sup>1</sup> And our sworn enemies—the devil,<sup>2</sup> the world,<sup>3</sup> and our own flesh—<sup>4</sup>never stop attacking us. And so, Lord, uphold us and make us strong with the strength of your Holy Spirit, so that we may not go down to defeat in this spiritual struggle,<sup>5</sup> but may firmly resist our enemies until we finally win the complete victory.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 15:5; Ps. 103:14

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:12

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 15:19

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 26:41; Mk. 13:33

<sup>6</sup> 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

##### **128 Q. What does your conclusion to this prayer mean?**

- A. “For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever” means: We have made all these petitions of you because, as our all-powerful king, you are both willing and able to give us all that is good;<sup>1</sup> and because your holy name, and not we ourselves, should receive all the praise, forever.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 10:11–12; 2 Pet. 2:9

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 14:13; Ps. 115:1; **Jer. 33:8–9**

**129 Q. What does that little word “Amen” express?**

- A. “Amen” means: This shall truly and surely be! It is even more sure that God listens to my prayer than that I really desire what I pray for.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:13





## Item 19-Info

### A. General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) Agency Summary

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone” (1 Cor. 12:4–6, NRSV)

“... let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action” (1 Jn. 3:18, NRSV)

#### 1. Introduction

By action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) and ratified by a majority of presbyteries, the *Book of Order (2009–2011)* was amended and the new language went into effect on July 10, 2011. Therefore the General Assembly Committee on Representation has the challenge of reporting to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on two articulations of their work as it appears in the *Book of Order*. The most relevant sections of the *Book of Order (2009–2011)* are G-4.0403 and G-9.0105. The most relevant sections of the *Book of Order (2011–2013)* are F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The following report takes both articulations of the mandate into account.

#### 2. Assigned Responsibilities

While the language of call for the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) has changed in the last two years, its commitment to seeking representation for the full diversity within God’s Church remains strong. In its constitutional mandate through July of 2011, the *Book of Order (2009–2011)* stated that the GACOR shall advise, advocate, resource, review, recommend, and consult with the General Assembly and its committees, councils, and entities to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness and diversity are implemented. The GACOR advocates for full participation in decision-making and representation. At the General Assembly level, its main function shall be to advise the assembly with respect to its membership and to that of the committees, boards, agencies, and other units (of the assembly and its entities) in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective decision making of the church. The committee reviews the work of committees on representation at the synod level and provides resources when appropriate for committees on representation in mid councils (presbyteries and synods). The committee advises the General Assembly and its various entities on the employment of personnel, receives and reviews implementation plans submitted to it in conformity with “The Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity,” consults, and when necessary, suggests corrective action in order to fulfill the PC(USA) commitments to inclusiveness and full participation articulated most directly in G-4.0403<sup>1</sup> and G-9.0105<sup>2</sup>. The GACOR regularly consults with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and a member observes meetings of the General Assembly Mission Council to build relationships with leaders, monitor the body’s actions, observe their processes, and advise the body.

With the renewal of the work and purpose of the GACOR outlined in the Form of Government (G-3.0103) implemented in July of 2011, GACOR continues to promote and review the PC(USA)’s commitment to inclusiveness and advocate for full representation. While the work has not changed, the approaches are being reviewed for adjustments. Under The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government, the GACOR strives to make sure the PC(USA) lives fully into its guarantee of full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership, as outlined in F-1.0403. The GACOR continues to assist the church, with particular concern at the national level, to seek new openness,<sup>3</sup> to unity in diversity<sup>4</sup>, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, striving as A Brief Statement of Faith asserts, “the Spirit gives us courage, ... to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.”<sup>5</sup> The committee is eager to explore ways in which it can be a catalyst for transformation in the church, building it up to be the beloved community, demonstrating God’s Reign, responding to and including the full abundance of God’s gifts for God’s church. The committee has expanded its efforts to connect with underrepresented groups and connect leaders to opportunities to serve. Rather than wait for reports of discriminatory practice and harm, the committee is initiating consultations with national bodies to prevent errors, to examine procedures for impact on nondominant groups, and to encourage openness and equal access.

#### 3. Accomplishments

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) helps the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to become the church that God calls us to be, a church that includes diverse persons from the abundance God provides, an inclusiveness that represents the fullness God has created. The GACOR serves as a sort of conscience within the denomination, keeping our attention on the quality of its community and always pointing us toward a new openness to voices we might not always hear, to the leaders we routinely overlook, and giving deliberate attention to observing who is involved and how inclusively decisions are made. As God calls the body of Christ, the church “to be a community of faith, ... hope, ... love, ... [and] witness.”<sup>6</sup> How we are the body of Christ is important both internally (structures, procedures, ways of interacting) and externally (social witness, mission, ministry). We seek to live into the abundance of the gifts given to the church for its mission by helping the church involve that diversity to realize our ministries together more fully—to do that most faithfully, we need to have

the widest participation. At the national level the church (the body of Christ) is equipped with the widest possible diversity of its life and it is called to select broadly from those leaders for its bodies.

The GACOR is committed to orienting and training new members to service in the committee; the executive committee and staff lead this work. Members' leadership development is a focus for ongoing training and development. We have to be fed in order to feed others—sharing our evolving understandings of the needs of the church (in this moment) demand engaging in deep conversation, spiritual discernment, and experimentation and exploration. Highlights of this work were presentations on topics such as cultural proficiency, diversity and leadership in employment, the intersections of race and gender, and “Responding to the God Who Calls from Tomorrow.”<sup>7</sup> In 2010, a guest led committee members through a simulation of “being an inclusive church;” this exercise demonstrated to committee members how easily we, who are attentive to diversity, become immersed in a task and may disregard the new people and the skills they bring. Insights abounded as the simulation was debriefed and it became clear how those on the outside of the group are not properly related to nor were fully invited to participate. Committee members valued the session and have referred back to it in subsequent meetings.

The GACOR is also committed to providing a high level of training and awareness to synod COR leaders. Biennially (in non-General Assembly years) a training event is held for synod leaders. In October 2011, the training event, titled: “Reconstructing the Table: Seeing Anew the Height and Depth and Breadth of the Love of Christ,” focused on where we as a church gather, the power of the table to call us to one another as one yet also to divide communities when we come to negotiate from unequal places. In light of the constitutional changes, the urge to start fresh, how would reconstructing our tables with an eye to making it accessible for all in our communities, making space for the rich diversity of God's people? This is the central question the conference turned over and over. Conference evaluations were glowing and most in attendance considered the event “too short.”

Analysis of synod COR reports and representation data is a regular feature of GACOR work in order to understand the context of the church's life. Synods receive annual feedback from the committee on their COR reports where information is assessed. Areas of difficulty noted in the period since we last reported: synod relationships with presbyteries, incomplete sharing of representational data especially in categories like age and disability (reasons cited included incomplete information from synod councils on persons serving), and some synod councils do not have effective presbytery committees on representation due to geographical challenges. Overall, many synod CORs are willing to ask presbyteries for time on the floor to promote the importance of the work of CORs in the life of the church. The GACOR encourages the creative thinking of some of the synods in encouraging awareness of leadership qualities in underrepresented groups and in advocating for time to bring that advice to the gathered council. The subcommittee that handles these concerns also seeks to work diligently with the GANC to advise its sister body on the diversity of each pool for vacancies on General Assembly bodies as well as the slates of leaders for those bodies. The GACOR actively encourages intentional recruiting from underrepresented groups for qualified leaders when they find a disparity. This is a regular action of the committee.

As part of its efforts to promote equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, GACOR continues to raise awareness of job postings, and circulates them to underrepresented constituencies in order to reach out to a more inclusive pool. Stimulating discussion of these topics and examining what challenges there are to living more fully into the Kingdom vision of who the Church is to be is part of the common work GACOR has. The GACOR continues to assign its members to serve as liaisons to, and attend meetings and conferences of, particular constituencies including the racial ethnic caucuses and councils and Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC).

The GACOR organizes the bulk of its work into three subcommittees: Program, Planning & Strategy, and Training.

Review of Synod COR Reports: The Program Subcommittee reported that for 2009, fifteen of the sixteen synod committees on representation submitted written reports. The only council not reporting in 2009 was Southern California and Hawaii, for a 94 percent participation rate. In 2010, the noncompliant synod was Pacific for a 94 percent participation rate in that year as well. There is still work that needs to be done by CORs to assure that the church practices its mandate to provide for inclusiveness and diversity on all levels above the local council. Mid councils continue to request information and resources to improve their representation work as well as training.

Technology: The GACOR continues to work to make the synod annual report form more user-friendly on the PC(USA) website, hoping to add interactive report submission and interpretive documents available for downloading. The website redesign for the Office of the General Assembly has delayed efforts to roll out online synod report submission. The form is available in PDF (in English and Spanish) for download and by Word format (that can be sent electronically to synods, upon request, in Spanish and English). Once online reporting is available, the synod CORs will also be able to access a summary of their report from the website, receive quicker feedback from the GACOR, present issues needing action, and recommend specific communication and action to the synod councils. Data will also be more readily available to be studied. The committee regularly uses web resources to find meeting times and dates that work for members spread from Seattle to Atlanta, and frequently uses conference calls as a way of meeting. Members are exploring options to expand the technologies (Skype, webinar, GoToMeeting, etc.) it uses to meet between face-to-face meetings. Accessibility of these technologies for persons with disabilities impacts our ability to use them. With technology, the committee continues to find both new opportunities and obstacles to full participation.

Best practices: For synod CORs, these include increasing connections with their respective presbyteries by sponsoring training opportunities and demonstrating increased representation. In the last two years, there have been modest increases of synod COR representation on synod nominating committees. We have seen increased requests for instructional materials supporting presbyteries to enhance their revitalization of the work of their own committees on representation. The GACOR produced a resource for mid councils on what the new constitutional language would mean for their committees on representation. It was distributed in three languages: Korean, Spanish, and English.

The Planning & Strategy Committee looks at the larger picture of GACOR work and charts strategies for improving inclusiveness at the national level and looks for ways to support committees on representation at the synod and presbytery levels. In anticipation of work coming out of the 220th General Assembly (2012), Planning & Strategy has been working with “Power, Privilege and Policy: The Church as Employer,” the final report from the Climate for Change Task Force. The recommendations they are sending to the General Assembly for its action would clarify work assigned to the GACOR: The work to become culturally proficient is both a response to the church’s historical call to be a prophetic witness to justice and an opportunity to develop the expertise necessary to equip leadership across the church, to transform the organizational culture of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ways that will support the denomination's goal of becoming a more diverse community of faith. The GACOR asked the task force to clarify its role regarding the “Churchwide Plan” and reviews of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, related goal setting and supplier diversity in line with their directive from the 218th General Assembly (2008). The task force has made recommendations that directly impact the work of GACOR.

The GACOR consulted on the recommendations with the task force and the advocacy committees. We appreciated the careful work the task force did, the way it listened to the wide church, and the time we had to help define GACOR work responsibilities, the assessment and reporting structure affecting GACOR and other entities. This clarification will enable us to consult, assess, and monitor the churchwide progress of the PC(USA) in meeting its stated goal of transforming the organizational culture of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The recommendations of this task force are in line with the Planning and Strategy’s Committee recommendations for GACOR’s future actions and work within the General Assembly structure.

The Training Subcommittee guides both training and continuing development opportunities for GACOR members and biennially plans a training conference for synod COR members and staff. In October 2011, GACOR sponsored the biennial training event for synod COR staff and chairpersons in Louisville, Kentucky. Sixteen synods were represented at this training event, composed of thirty leaders from around the country. The theme of the training was “Reconstructing the Table: Seeing Anew the Height and Depth and Breadth of the Love of Christ.” Plenary and workshops were designed to equip and challenge synod COR leaders to more effectively work for diversity and inclusiveness in their synods and encourage them to share those methods with their constituent presbyteries.

Leadership and programming included:

- The Reverend Dr. Ronald E. Peters, president of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, California, was the worship leader.
- The Reverend Carol Howard Merritt, associate pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., and chair of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, was the keynote speaker.
- Workshops included the following topics: “Indigenous Presbyterian Spirituality,” “New Constitutional Language and How CORs Are Affected,” “Process Observation Simulation, a new way to measure how decision-making processes effect participation,” exploring “Reframing Hope” with Carol Howard Merritt, deepening participant understanding of specific COR issues and tasks at mid councils.
- A simulation exercise of “Building an Inclusive Church” created lots of engaging conversations.
- Worship, prayer, and fellowship was a huge component of the training and woven throughout, especially appreciated was the music leadership by Debbie Dierks and Lewis Washington, of Louisville’s Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church.

Analysis of the evaluation forms from the training revealed that a significant majority of those attending valued their participation and content of the training. Three-quarters or more of those who attended the synod COR training described fourteen out of its fifteen activities as “very helpful” or “helpful.” In the overall evaluation question, 88 percent rated the training excellent or good. One participant added: “The best part of the GACOR training was gaining a better understanding of what COR is and the responsibilities. There is a lot of work involved with doing a good job for the synod, presbytery, and local church. I feel much more confident and look forward to applying what I've learned and helping others understand the work of COR.” Many commented that networking with other COR members was very important, and enhanced their experience. Another attendee appreciated the insight that the simulation of building an inclusive church provided. Through this activity, even people with the explicit goal of building an inclusive church realized “how we do not notice new people who want to be a part of us.” The need for this very kind of self-awareness of the ways that we are all capable of exclusivity affirms and propels the work and training of the GACOR.

The committee, in compliance with actions of the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010), has requested, where possible, that data sets they receive and evaluate be disaggregated. They are reviewing the first batch of data on ministers (teaching elders) from 2008, 2009, and 2010. With disaggregated data, what is recorded is not just in singular categories of age, race, or gender, but in ways that record each variable so that we can see a pool that has age, race, and gender. The snapshot provided as a result of this multiple variable reporting, gives a more accurate picture, and one that is helpful to GACOR and the wider church. For example, by looking at data this way for teaching elders (ministers) we learned that the PC(USA) only has four teaching elders who are Hispanic females between the ages 26–35. This kind of insight was rendered invisible in the ways the PC(USA) used to report this data. Simply tracking how many clergywomen the PC(USA) has between 26–35 years of age (346) would disguise the racial ethnic categories of those clergywomen. Additional statistics are available in Figures 1 and 2, which can be found at [gacor-agency-summary-charts.pdf](#) or see page 1622. The first considers two variables. The second considers three variables.

While men still considerably outnumber women in those who serve as teaching elders, the disparities are different as you look at younger age categories. The significant number of persons who do not record an age category does impact these results. The value of looking at two categories at once does provide some insights. The revelations made possible by considering three variables at the same time are dramatic.

The insights have been invaluable to GACOR and we encourage the wider church to collect and report more data in this format, as it (1) allows the church to analyze representation and participation in multiple categories at once (more realistic to the ways we live), (2) gives nominating committees a clearer picture of the categorical pools of available leaders from which they are drawing their nominations, and (3) the information creates awareness of disparities in our leadership development and evangelism and insight into missing persons and groups, with the hope of recruiting and training more leaders in these areas. If we adopt these ways of looking at the data, we will be better equipped as a church to understand who we are as a gathered community of leaders and better able to create relevant resources for mission and ministry.

By request and as resources allow, GACOR staff and members provide training content in presbyteries and synods throughout the year. Among those in 2010 were events in Denver Presbytery and the Synods of Rocky Mountains, Trinity, and Southwest. In 2011, trainings were provided in the Synod of Alaska-Northwest, Sun, and Covenant.

Committee members serve as liaisons to a variety of groups in order to facilitate relationships with constituencies, to maintain open communication with partner bodies, and to stay informed with regard to the perspectives of underrepresented constituencies. Among the bodies GACOR sends liaisons to we highlight:

- Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC), a network of PHEWA: a GACOR member annually attends one face-to-face meeting of this group, and is included in conference calls. As a liaison, she provides advice and counsel on their own organizational structures and leadership diversity as well as encouraging them to reach out to leaders who seek opportunities to serve at the national level. Connecting to this group of leaders is valuable to GACOR as well. The PDC is a busy group doing much to further the visibility of persons with disabilities and they are making a difference. Annually, they produce a wonderful packet with worship materials and teaching material to celebrate the designated Sunday in the church year dedicated to raising awareness of and including persons with disabilities. In preparation for General Assemblies, PDC is a valued partner.

- Mid Council Commission: GACOR advised the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the Moderator about the selection of persons to serve on the Middle Governing Body Commission.<sup>8</sup> In light of the anticipated actions of the commission regarding the councils of the church, GACOR determined that they would send a member to observe their meetings. Having a member in the room observing has proved important. There was a history and context presentation that omitted the history of nongeographic presbyteries and synods organized by and for African Americans. In response, the GACOR arranged for the immediate electronic publication of *All-Black Governing Bodies: The History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies*, a report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993) [OGA 96-002]. The GACOR paid for enough printed copies to be produced so that members of the MGB commission had one—it was referenced in their subsequent discussions. This action also allowed wider access for the larger church to this important history.<sup>9</sup>

- General Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures: With the 219th General Assembly (2010), the GACOR requested the assistance of Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to gather data in order to observe the processes used in committees and assess the impact they had on participation in committee meetings during the assembly. The analysis was shared with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and recommendations were acted on to encourage continued process observation at future assemblies.

The GACOR held consultations with the Climate for Change Task Force, the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century, the Biennial GA Review Committee, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA). Advice was shared with the Moderator, GAMC chair, General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), Stated Clerk, COGA chair, and mid council clerks and executives. In response to a referral of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the committee studied the intersection of race and gender and presented a workshop during the Big Tent 2 Conference in the summer of 2011.

Business before this assembly: The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is bringing two recommendations for action of the 220th General Assembly (2012) with regard to the General Assembly Committee on Representation—one Standing Rule change and one amendment of the *Organization for Mission*. Both are changes necessitated by the adjustments in *Book of Order* language to support the committee's work. This report includes two final responses to referrals of the 219th General Assembly (2010).

Through training, worship, study, consultation, developing strategies, and sharing, the GACOR equips and challenges the General Assembly, its entities, commissions, committees, and synod CORs to achieve, accomplish, realize, endorse, and preserve the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to inclusiveness and diversity.

#### 4. *Membership*

The GACOR's commitment to inclusiveness is reflected in the diversity of its membership from the sixteen synods. The following persons were serving on GACOR at the time this report:\*

Elder Alma-Jean Marion, Alaska-Northwest, African American (SA), moderator;

Elder Deborah Fair, Covenant, African American (SA), vice moderator;

Elder Cindy Ray, Lakes and Prairies, White (A) (D);

The Reverend Martha Ross-Mockaitis, Lincoln Trails, White (A) (D);

The Reverend Heather Walchar, Mid-America, White (YA), chair—Training;

Elder Angela Battle, Mid-Atlantic, African American (A);

Elder Patrick Nelson, Northeast, White (Y);

Elder Kenneth Bartlett-Preston, Pacific, African American (Y);

The Reverend Amy Mendez, Rocky Mountains, Hispanic (A), chair—Program;

Elder Issa Sayar, South Atlantic, Middle Eastern (SA);

Elder Cliff Yang, Southern California and Hawaii, Asian (A);

Elder Dora Martínez, Southwest, Hispanic (SA);

The Reverend Hector Rivera-Velez, Sun, Hispanic (A);

The Reverend Stanley Bhasker, Trinity, Asian (A), chair—Planning & Strategy.

These persons have served on the committee since the last assembly and we thank them for their service: The Reverend John A.T. Gulden, Living Waters, White (YA); Elder Eliud Serrano Arroyo, Puerto Rico (Boriquen), Hispanic (YA).

\*Legend: age groupings: (Y) = Youth (25 and under); (YA) = Young Adults (26–35); (A) = Adults (36–55); (SA) = Senior Adults (56+); (D) = Person with a Disability

#### Endnotes

1. The *Book of Order* (2009–2011), Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Louisville: 2009.
2. Ibid.
3. The *Book of Order* (2011–2013), F-1.0404.
4. Ibid, F-1.0403.
5. A Brief Statement of Faith (1983) appears in *The Book of Confessions*, a publication of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 10.4, lines 66, 69–71.
6. The *Book of Order* (2011–2013), F-1.0301.
7. A presentation by the Reverend Dr. Virstan Choy to the GACOR in March 2011, on scenario planning and other techniques for organizational structures in the midst of transition.
8. Originally called the Middle Governing Body Commission, the commission changed its name in July 2011 to be in compliance with the new constitutional language, calling itself the Mid Council Commission.
9. The report is now available on the website at: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/all-black-governing-bodies/>.

**B. Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) Agency Summary**

## I. Narrative

*Assigned Responsibilities*

The Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) is composed of six Presbyterian attorneys. Each year the General Assembly elects one member to a six-year term. Each member is eligible for reelection to an additional term, but in no case may a member serve for a period exceeding twelve consecutive years of service. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates persons for the ACL who fit the criteria for eligibility. The Advisory Committee on Litigation was established by the 200th General Assembly (1988) to advise the Stated Clerk on matters relating to litigation.

The consultations typically take place via telephone conference calls after committee members have been provided copies of all pertinent pleadings, orders, and information. The committee ordinarily meets face-to-face at least once each year. It is normally consulted whenever the Stated Clerk is asked to participate in litigation involving matters of civil and religious liberty, church and state relations, and other matters related to the mission and interests of the church.

The Advisory Committee on Litigation reviews each of the cases, amicus briefs and General Assembly policy and constitution based on seventeen criteria and advises the Stated Clerk whether or not to file an amicus brief in the particular case.

## II. Disposition of Cases Reported in 2008–2010

A. *Episcopal Church Cases*  
California Supreme Court

On May 4, 2008, the Stated Clerk joined in an amicus brief with other denominational partners to the California Supreme Court regarding a schism and property dispute with several cases involving the Episcopal Church. These cases were combined and appealed to the California Supreme Court to clarify the standards for determining which faction in a church property dispute had legal property interest.

The Appellants appealed to the California Supreme Court arguing that California should follow “neutral principles of law” and only look at secular documents to determine which faction has the legal property interest. The amicus brief filed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) argued that Federal constitutional jurisprudence allowing states to apply “neutral principles of law” does not abrogate the right of states to apply a “principle of [church] government” approach to resolve disputes over church property. The brief argued that the California courts may, under the U.S. Constitution, apply its traditional “principle of government” approach to resolving disputes over church property or it may apply a “neutral principles of law” approach. If the California Supreme Court applied the “neutral principles of law” approach, it is not limited to an analysis of only secular legal documents such as deeds or corporate charters alone but has been explicitly instructed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Jones v. Wolf* (1979) 443 U.S. 595, 602, to take into account an express trust within the denomination’s own constitution.

On January 5, 2009, the California Supreme Court issued an opinion that stated that when the court applies neutral principles of law to resolve a property dispute without reference to church doctrine, the court should consider sources such as the deeds to the property in dispute, the local church’s articles of incorporation, the general church’s constitution, canons, and rules, and relevant statutes, including statutes specifically concerning religious property, such as California Corporations Code [which provides that the governing instruments of a general church may impress a trust on property of a local church].

B. *Navaho Nation v. United States Forest Service*

On February 6, 2009, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons joined in an amicus brief with a number of religious entities as partners to Petition for Certiorari to Ninth Circuit requesting that the U.S. Supreme Court resolve a split in the U.S. Courts of Appeals regarding the interpretation of federal and state statutory balance of free exercise of religion with state interests.

The *amici*, both as religious organizations and as organizations concerned with the free exercise of religion, argued that the right of individuals to exercise a wide variety of religious belief is a central aspect of our nation’s protection of fundamental rights. Federal and state laws that protect the free exercise of religion are therefore of great and immediate significance to them.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb *et seq.*, and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000cc *et seq.*, both provide a well-established mechanism to balance the important interests of religious exercise with the interests of the state. However, that balancing takes place only after the religious practitioner establishes that the governmental action in question will “substantially burden” its religious practice. The Ninth Circuit panel held that a substantial burden is one that “prevent[s] the plaintiff from engaging in [religious] conduct or having a religious experience, ... Under RFRA, a ‘substantial burden’ is imposed only when individuals are forced to choose between following the tenets of their religion and receiving a governmental benefit (*Sherbert*) or coerced to act contrary to their religious beliefs by the threat of criminal or civil sanctions (*Yoder*).” As such, the Ninth Circuit panel shifted the issue of what constitutes a

substantial burden under RFRA from a case-by-case inquiry into the impact on the religious practice at issue to the very different question of the *nature of the governmental action* that creates the burden, limiting it to the deprivation of governmental benefits or criminal or civil coercion. The amici argued that such an interpretation of the term prevented consideration of the competing interests and thereby inappropriately limited the application of the statutes to a narrower scope than mandated by their text and by Congress' purpose in enacting them. This narrower scope had the effect of finding that the Navaho Tribe in this case was not substantially burdened by the desecration of a holy site by the creation of artificial snow. The Stated Clerk reiterated in his statement of interest that an area of abiding concern for Presbyterians is that Native Americans have full freedom to practice their religion.

The U.S. Supreme Court denied the petition on June 8, 2009.

#### C. *People of the State of Michigan v. Edward Pinkney*

On March 18, 2009, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several partners on behalf of defendant Rev. Pinkney in *People of the State of Michigan v. Edward Pinkney*. According to the Court of Appeals: "following a jury trial, Rev. Pinkney was convicted of giving valuable consideration to influence the manner of voting by a person, MCL 168.931(1)(a), influencing a person voting an absent voter ballot, MCL 168.932(h), and three counts of possessing, returning, or soliciting to return an absent voter ballot, MCL 168.932(f). The trial court sentenced defendant to five years' probation with a delayed jail sentence of 365 days. Subsequently, after finding that defendant violated the terms of his probation, the trial court revoked defendant's probation and sentenced him to 3 to 10 years' imprisonment. In Docket No. 282144, defendant appeals as of right his convictions. In Docket No. 286992, defendant appeals the trial court's order revoking his probation."

One of the reasons Rev. Pinkney's probation was revoked according to the trial court was that the trial court found that Rev. Pinkney "threatened" the trial court judge in a paragraph published in an opinion column in a newspaper. The amici argued that this paragraph was political and religious speech at the very core of the First Amendment, and not within any exception to constitutional protection. Political speech is central to the First Amendment because of its importance to self-governance. Religious speech is protected by both the Free Speech Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment.

On July 16, 2009, the Court of Appeals of Michigan affirmed defendant's convictions, but reverse the order revoking his probation on the grounds that the prohibition to not engage in defaming or demeaning behavior as a condition of parole was not directly related to defendant's rehabilitation or to the protection of the public and thus an improper condition of parole.

#### D. *Episcopal Church Cases* Virginia Supreme Court

On December 21, 2009, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with a variety of denominational religious partners to the Virginia Supreme Court challenging an old Virginia statute on U.S. Constitution 1st Amendment issues. The 1867 Virginia statute that was challenged delineates a process by which a congregation may determine which branch of a denomination to which it will belong or how an independent congregation will organize itself to own and hold property.

The amici argued that the Virginia state statute violated the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in that it displaced a church's own rules of self-governance in determining property ownership and voting rights, it required civil courts to conduct an extensive inquiry into fundamentally religious questions, and it was neither "generally applicable," "neutral," nor was it the least restrictive means to serve a compelling state interest.

On June 10, 2010, the Virginia Supreme Court issued a decision that found that the state statute did not apply to the facts in the case and thus the court did not need to rule on the constitutionality of the state statute. The Virginia Supreme Court remanded the case to determine whether declaratory judgment in favor of the Diocese was final. On January 10, 2010, the Circuit Court of Fairfax County found for the Episcopal Church and Diocese in their Declaratory Judgment actions and, among other relief, ordered that all real property conveyed by forty-one deeds, as well as all personal property acquired by nine congregations up to the filing date of the Declaratory Judgment be promptly conveyed to the Diocese. The congregations have appealed the order and the execution of the order during appeal.

### III. Cases Joined (2010–2012)

#### A. *Presbytery of Greater Atlanta v. Timberridge Presbyterian Church, Inc.*

On April 11, 2011, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of Georgia in support of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta in *Presbytery of Greater Atlanta v. Timberridge Presbyterian Church, Inc.* The amicus brief stated that the Georgia court of appeals had misapplied federal first amendment constitutional law when determining whether a congregation of PC(USA) holds property in trust for the denomination. The amicus brief described the trust inherent within the PC(USA) denomination as well as the express trust found within the constitution of the PC(USA).

On November 21, 2011, the Georgia Supreme Court issued a decision that found that there was an implication that local church property was held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) when the court applied “neutral principles of law” and when the court looked to documents ordering the relationship between the congregation and the denomination.

On March 6, 2012, Timberridge Presbyterian Church of Atlanta filed a petition for certiorari (review) in the United States Supreme Court.

**B. *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC, et al***

On June 20, 2011, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several faith partners to the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC, et al*. The amicus brief stated that the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution precludes governmental intervention into the selection by religious entities of clergy and other religiously significant employees. The amicus brief further affirmed the Courts of Appeals that had interpreted anti-discrimination laws and other laws to include a “ministerial exception” to preserve the intent of the First Amendment.

On January 11, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision that found the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment bar suits brought on behalf of ministers against their churches, claiming termination in violation of employment discrimination laws.

**C. *Health Care: Dept. of H&Hs, et al. v. Florida, et al***

On February 13, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into a faith amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of Medicaid expansions in the Affordable Care Act with many faith partners about the moral perspectives that have led the faith communities to support the Medicaid expansions and improvements in the Affordable Care Act. The brief reiterated that all of the faith partners agree that it is the calling of government to bring justice and protection to the poor and the sick and thus have been supportive of Medicaid and its expansions.

The U.S. Supreme court held oral arguments on the case on March 28, 2012.

**D. *Masterson et al v. Diocese of Northwest Texas et al.***

On February 21, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several faith partners to the Supreme Court of Texas in support of the Episcopal Church of America Diocese of Northwest Texas in *Masterson et al v. Diocese of Northwest Texas et al*. The brief stated that there are two federal constitutionally valid methods for resolving intra-church property disputes. The brief described the two approaches that can be used by state court: the neutral principles analysis to determine whether there is a trust inherent within hierarchical denominations or applying deference to any express trust found with a denominational constitution.

The Supreme Court of Texas has not yet set oral arguments (May 4, 2012).

**E. *Arizona v. U.S.A.***

On March 26, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several partners including the United Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service on behalf of the United States in *Arizona v. U.S.A.* to the U.S. Supreme Court. The amicus brief argued that the comprehensive Federal Immigration law preempts Arizona statute 1070. The brief argued that federal immigration law creates a comprehensive balance of competing interests including the interests of the churches in family unity and human dignity. The brief also argued that the state statute provided a serious threat to religious liberty in that it impedes and criminalizes the church’s moral imperative to provide help, including food and shelter, to all who persons who have need. The federal government is prohibited from enforcing immigration laws in a manner that imposes substantial burdens on religious exercise, however state and local governments are not.

The U.S. Supreme court held oral arguments on the case on April 25, 2012.

**C. *Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) Agency Summary***

**1. *Assigned Responsibilities***

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) is composed of nine voting members as established by the Book of Order, G-3.0501c and G-6.02. The nine voting members are required by the current *Manual of the General Assembly* to be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is a member ex officio without vote.



With regard to questions requiring an interpretation of the *Book of Order*, the ACC's responsibilities are set out in G-6.02 as follows:

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall communicate its report and recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly, no less than sixty days prior to the General Assembly.

With regard to proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the ACC's mandated responsibilities are set out in G-6.04b, as follows:

b. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such proposals to amend the Book of Order to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (G-6.02), which shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At least sixty days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly, the advisory committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee. The General Assembly shall not consider any amendment until it has considered the report and any recommendations from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

## 2. *Process and Procedures, Responsibilities and Relationships*

The ACC does not interpret the Constitution. The role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, as its title suggests and as its constitutional mandate clearly establishes, is to advise the General Assembly. The ACC's advice has no authority until and unless it is approved by the General Assembly. With respect to proposed amendments to the Constitution, the ACC focuses on clarity of proposed language, and consistency of the proposed amendment with the remainder of the Constitution. The ACC occasionally finds that the intent of the proposal is already inherent in other provisions of the Constitution or that it could be achieved by slight changes in language, by placing the amendment in a different section, or by different language entirely. On occasion, the ACC has suggested such changes in order to avoid inconsistencies within the Book of Order, and also to make as few changes as possible in existing paragraphs and in section numbering. At least sixty days prior to each General Assembly, the ACC is required to report its findings to the assembly, which findings may include advice for amended versions of any proposed changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the ACC.

With respect to requests for interpretation, as well as advice on overtures, the ACC seeks to provide advice that is based on constitutional issues, not on the substance of the issues at hand. In many circumstances, the question has been answered by earlier interpretations and does not require action by the General Assembly. In these cases, the inquirer is notified of the standing interpretation. In order to make clear the questions raised, the ACC has modified its past practice of reprinting the entire request received (which in some instances contained material not germane to the question itself), and has focused the presentation of the request on the question presented, together with the ACC's findings and advice. If the question was not clear from the request received, the ACC has sought clarification from the individual transmitting the request.

All overtures and reports containing proposed amendments and all requests for interpretation of the Book of Order by the General Assembly must be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly (Book of Order, G- 6.02, G-6.04a). This 120-day time period allows the ACC time to consider and research carefully each proposed amendment and request. Those requests that the ACC brings to the General Assembly are those that it believes meet this constitutional criterion.

The ACC completed its preparatory work for the 220th General Assembly (2012) in two meetings. At a two-day fall meeting, held in conjunction with the OGA Fall Polity Conference, the ACC began work on the task of preparing for the 220th General Assembly (2012). At its spring five-day meeting, the ACC concluded its work of preparing responses to constitutional issues to be considered by the 220th General Assembly (2012). In addition, the ACC made use of several conference calls and electronic meetings in November 2011, and January and March 2012 to address business pending before the committee.

After it has received and considered the advice of the ACC, the General Assembly is free to take whatever action it deems wise on proposed amendments, requests for interpretations, and referrals.

The primary focus for the ACC is to fulfill its constitutional function to provide advice to the General Assembly concerning overtures that seek to amend the Constitution, and concerning requests for interpretation of the Constitution.

## 3. *Consultations*

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), the ACC has consulted with two significant General Assembly groups as those groups worked on their assigned responsibilities. The ACC provided feedback to the Special Committee on Existing Authoritative Interpretations of the *Book of Order* on their proposed review and recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) regarding authoritative interpretations attached to previous editions of the *Book of Order*.

The ACC also provided constitutional advice to the General Assembly Mid-Council Commission created by the 219th General Assembly (2010) to examine and make recommendations concerning various aspects of the work of synods and presbyteries.

#### 4. *Editorial Corrections*

The *Organization for Mission* provides, at Section IV.B.2.c., that the Stated Clerk shall prepare editorial changes in the *Book of Order*, which should be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, provided the changes do not alter the substance of the text approved by the presbyteries. The following changes have been made by the Stated Clerk and approved by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

a. *Editorial Change 001*—Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, had asked the ACC to authorize an editorial change on the 219th General Assembly (2010)’s proposed amendment 10-A (2010) as well as on the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline [of the *Book of Order*] due to the anticipated ratification of the revised Form of Government (Amendment 10-1).

Amendment 10-1, the revised Form of Government [of the *Book of Order*], uses new terminology that would replace the terminology in the (2009–2011) Form of Government (i.e., governing body to council, minister of the Word and Sacrament to teaching elder, etc.). However, these new terminologies were not adopted in the Amendment 10-A (amending G-6.0106b in the 2009–2011 *Book of Order*) nor were they used in the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline [of the 2009–2011 *Book of Order*].

With anticipation of both Amendments 10-1 and 10-A being ratified by presbyteries, the Stated Clerk asked that the following terminologies in Amendment 10-A (G-6.0106b) and in the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline be considered for the same replacements as they are used in the Revised Form of Government in order to have consistency of the language used throughout the *Book of Order*. They are:

- “Minister” or “Minister of the Word and Sacrament”
- “Governing body”
- “Elder”
- “Commissioned Lay Pastor”
- “Office” or “Ordained Office”
- “Officer” or Church Officer” or “Ordained Officer”

The Stated Clerk asked that the Advisory Committee on the Constitution consider such places where such terms appear in Amendment 10-A and the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline, and edit the texts with appropriate replacements, including any new cross-references as the Advisory Committee on the Constitution sees as editorial change.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s careful review and edit for these editorial changes would allow the Office of the General Assembly to publish a new *Book of Order* that uses consistent language throughout the *Book of Order* with the new terminology adopted in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the revised Form of Government.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution approved the list [see (1) below] of locations in the Directory for Worship and Rules of Discipline in which terms used in these documents should be replaced with equivalent terminology used in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the revised Form of Government. The ACC found that these changes were editorial in nature and appropriate for inclusion into the next edition of the *Book of Order*.

As part of our review of the suggested editorial changes in the Directory for Worship, the ACC discovered several places in which the present text of the Directory for Worship is inconsistent with provisions of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the revised Form of Government. A list of these places is below [see (2) below]. In the main, these inconsistencies occur in places where the Directory for Worship appears to limit a function (e.g. administration of the Sacraments) to the “minister,” while the Form of Government permits ruling elders or others to perform this function. In these places, a simple one-for-one replacement of the terms “minister” or “minister of the Word and Sacrament” with “teaching elder” continues the inconsistency rather than resolving it.

In responding to the Stated Clerk, it is the judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that remedying these inconsistencies goes beyond the editorial privilege strictly defined, and may cause some in the church to be concerned that the ACC is exceeding its authority and depriving the church of an opportunity for due consideration.

It is our hope that a revision of the text of the Directory for Worship may be soon forthcoming, and that this revision will consider making the appropriate changes to bring the Directory for Worship into conformity. In the meantime, we suggest that the next edition of the *Book of Order* contain the following footnotes:

(1) (To be placed as Footnote 2 at the title of the Preface): “In light of the addition of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the revision of the Form of Government (2011), the following terms in use in the Directory for Worship have been replaced with terms employed in the new and revised documents:

- “• ‘minister’ or ‘minister of the Word and Sacrament’ = ‘teaching elder’
- “• ‘elder’ = ‘ruling elder’
- “• ‘governing body’ = ‘council’
- “• ‘commissioned lay pastor’ = ‘ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service’ or ‘ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service’
- “• ‘office’ or ‘ordained office’ = ‘ordered ministry’
- “• ‘officer/s,’ ‘church officer/s,’ or ‘ordained officer/s’ = ‘[person/those in] ordered ministry’”

(2) (To be placed as Footnote 3 at the title of the Preface, and a “†” at each of the locations on the list below in italics): “In the Form of Government, the functions described in the following provisions may be performed by ruling elders in certain circumstances as well as by teaching elders: List of passages in the Directory for Worship to which explanatory Footnote 2 should be attached (See below for list of passages):

“W-1.4005, W-2.3011a(4), W-2.3011b, W-2.4012 b, W-3.3401b,d, W-3.3604, W-3.3606, W-3.5403, W-4.4001b, W-4.9002, W-4.9003, W-4.9004, W-4.9006”

b. *Editorial Change 002*—The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Gradye Parsons, alerted the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to a scribal error in G-3.0109. Currently the second paragraph of G-3.0109 reads: “A committee shall study and recommend action or carry out decisions already made by a council. It shall make a full report to the council that created it, and its recommendations shall require action by that body. Committees of councils higher than the session shall consist of both teaching elders and members of congregations, with at least one half being members of the congregation.”

The clause “with at least one half being members of the congregation” is incongruous with the beginning of the sentence, “Committees of councils higher than the session ...”

The Stated Clerk asked the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to consider this matter as an editorial correction so that the last sentence of the second paragraph of G-3.0109 reads “Committees of councils higher than the session shall consist of both teaching elders and members of congregations, with at least one half being members of ~~the~~ congregations.” [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

In response to Editorial Change 002, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the correction suggested by the Stated Clerk regarding an editorial correction so that the last sentence of the second paragraph of G-3.0109 reads: “Committees of councils higher than the session shall consist of both teaching elders and members of congregations, with at least one half being members of ~~the~~ congregations.” [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

c. *Editorial Change 003*—Manager of Judicial Process and Social Witness, Laurie Griffith, noted typographical errors in D-10.0202i(5) and D-10.0401b:

At D-10.0202i(5) In the citation D-10.0202j the j should be stricken and replaced by the letter k. so the sentence reads: “If a settlement satisfactory to both the investigating committee and the accused in the alternative form of resolution is not reached, the investigating committee shall designate a prosecuting committee per D-10.0202jk, and the case shall proceed on the charges filed.” [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

At D-10.0401b: In the citation D-10.0401b the word “three” should be stricken and replaced by the word “five” so the sentence reads: For instances of sexual abuse of another person, the ~~three~~-five year time limit shall not apply. Charges may be brought regardless of the date on which an offense is alleged to have occurred. [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the corrections suggested by the manager of Judicial Process and Social Witness.

d. *Editorial Change 004*—Manager of Polity Guidance and Training, Joyce Lieberman, noted editorial corrections at G-2.0902 and G-2.0904.

In the second sentence of G-2.0902 the term minister should be stricken and replaced with the term “teaching elder” so that it reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

“A pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor may request the presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. The ~~minister~~ teaching elder must also state her or his intention to the session. The session shall call a congregational meeting to act upon the request and to make recommendations to the presbytery.” [The rest of the paragraph remains unchanged.]

In G-2.0904 the term “minister” should be stricken and replaced with the term “teaching elder” so that it reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike through; text to be added is shown in italics.]

“The presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the ~~minister~~ teaching elder, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the corrections suggested by the manager of Polity Guidance and Training.

e. *Editorial Change 005*—Manager of Polity Guidance and Training, Joyce Lieberman, noted editorial corrections in Chapter 3 of the *Book of Order*.

In order to be consistent in all the council responsibility and power sections of Form of Government, Chapter 3:

At G-3.0201b remove the semicolon between the phrases “pastoral care among the congregations” and “in order that the Sacraments” and in G-3.0401b remove the semicolon between the phrases “pastoral care among its presbyteries” and “in order that the Sacraments.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the corrections suggested by the manager of Polity Guidance and Training.

f. *Editorial Change 006*—Manager of Polity Guidance and Training, Joyce Lieberman, noted the following update of *Book of Order* references in the Directory for Worship:

Location	States	Correction
W-1.4002	G-11.0502c	G-3.0301
W-1.4004j	G-10.0102d	Delete
W-1.4005	G-6.0202	G-2.0504
W-1.4008	G-11.0502c	G-3.0307
W-2.2009	G-2.0100	F-2.01
W-2.03012e	G-10.0102b,d,e G-10.0302	G-3.0201 G-3.0204
W-3.1003	G-6.0202 G-10.0102d	G-2.0504 G-3.0201
W-3.3502	G-5.0000 G-10.0102b	G-1.03 G-3.0201c
W-3.5504	G-5.0601	G-1.0304
W-4.2003	G-10.0102b	G-3.0201c
W-6.1001	G-3.0300 G-4.0200 G-4.0400	F-1.0301 F-1.0302a F-1.0403
W-7.1001	G-3.0000	F-1.01
W-7.1002	G-1.0200	F-1.0304
W-7.2001	G-1.0200 G-3.0300	F-1.0304 F-1.03
W-7.3003	G-3.0300	F-1.03
W-7.3004	G-3.0400	F-1.02

W-7.4001	G-3.0300	F-1.02
W-7.5003	W-5.5005–5006	Delete

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution approves the corrections suggested by the manager of Polity Guidance and Training.

#### 5. *Special Thanks*

On behalf of the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution expresses its thanks and appreciation to Teaching Elders Paul Hooker, Catherine McDonald, and Daniel Saperstein for their dedicated service to the church through membership on the ACC. Each of them has brought profound gifts and deep dedication to the work of the ACC. In addition, the ACC wishes to thank Ruling Elder Linda Therien, who found it necessary to resign her position in early 2012 due to personal reasons. Linda's contribution was important and valued and she is missed.

The ACC is grateful for the staff assistance of the Reverend Mark Tammen, until May 2011 the Associate Stated Clerk and director for the Department of Constitutional Services; the Reverend Andrew Black, director for the Department of Constitutional Services since September 2011; and Joanne Green, administrative assistant for the Department of Constitutional Services.

Finally, the ACC is deeply grateful for the insightful leadership Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, who serves as an ex officio member of the ACC. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve with him.

## 19-Self-Study GACOR

### *General Assembly Committee on Representation Self-Study Report 2012*

#### Introduction

In the last six months of the review period, the constitutional language that detailed committees on representation changed. This self-study seeks to show the transition that is still being worked out as well as the committee's faithfulness to the former mandate. In this transition time, a verse that has spoken to us comes from 1 John, "let us love ... in truth and action" (1 Jn. 3:18). We joyfully submit this truth-telling self-study as witness to how we have answered God's call from January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2011. The General Assembly Committee on Representation serves at the national level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is not to be confused with committees on representation that exist at other council levels. The committee found the review process in 2006 helpful and has implemented insights from the review into its common practices. As the church structures at the General Assembly level make the transition to the new Constitution, the committee looks for adaptable ways to assist in the transition while keeping the church mindful of its commitments to maintaining the diversity of the body, access and full participation in decision-making as well as communal life.

#### I. WHO WE ARE

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. (1 Cor. 12:4–6, NRSV)

... let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. (1 Jn. 3:18, NRSV)

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,

everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,  
and binds us together with all believers  
in the one body of Christ, the Church. ...

In a broken and fearful world

the Spirit gives us courage

to pray without ceasing,

to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,

to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,

to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,

and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. (*The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 52–57, 65–71)

The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, reminded the worshipping community that he was writing that it, the church, is the Body of Christ: hands and feet, eyes and ears, intestines and skin, hair and all. Each part essential to the wholeness and functioning of the body: each part gifted by the Spirit to fulfill its appointed role, with Christ serving as the Head to love and lead us as we work together, responding to God's call.

To this end, the General Assembly is the widest council of Presbyterians who gather for worship and witness, mission and ministry, coming from across the various spectrums of geography, race, ethnicity, sex, culture, theological conviction,

marital status, ability, age, and socioeconomic condition to discuss issues and make decisions that affect Presbyterians across the country.<sup>1</sup> Each council has its own committee on representation that must provide for the functions described in G-3.0103 (and previously in G-9.0105 in the former Form of Government, revised in July 2011). The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) serves the council of the General Assembly level and has an important role as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) lives into what it means to be the Body of Christ in the 21st century. Committees on representation (CORs) came into being through the contractual commitments of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) recorded in the “Articles of Agreement” (Attachment A—Articles 8 and 9) adopted at reunion<sup>2</sup> in 1983 to address the concerns of racial ethnic groups and women that voices too long excluded from leadership would continue to not be heard, included, and honored. The founding purpose of committees on representation is to help us as a denomination be intentional at every council level about its commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, bringing attention to the behaviors and biases, the policies and procedures, the operating systems that continue to resist the full participation of underrepresented groups in power-sharing and leadership roles. For example, rigid compliance with inflexible models and patterns of how leaders participate in elected service that resist adapting to the needs of elected persons, their conditions of life, and the church. Three examples of barriers to national service are for those who (1) work for an hourly wage, (2) persons in school, and (3) persons who are employed but who do not receive generous vacation and/or other leave. The committee examines and attempts to make visible the patterns of leadership selection that continue to privilege persons from some groups over others. The committee examines the system for signals of resistance to particular groups of persons (from communities acknowledged to suffer systemic discriminatory practices) and works to keep the denominational councils informed of their progress with both volunteer leadership and employed personnel. The church proclaims in The Confession of 1967,

**9.53**

God’s redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of man’s life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate. ...<sup>3</sup>

**9.55**

With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God. (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.53, 9.55)

For most of the period of this review, GACOR operated under G-9.0105 (see Attachment B, Former *Book of Order* References Regarding GACOR) of the *Book of Order*, which described the make-up of committees on representation and described some of its functions as: “advis[ing] the governing bodies with respect to membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies and other units in implementing principles of participation and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church.” The CORs also were responsible for advocacy for diversity within the leadership of the denomination, review and consultation, and providing resources related to ensuring that the diversity of the PC(USA)’s membership and the denomination’s commitment to inclusiveness and diversity were reflected in all that the council and the church does.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved *Book of Order* language that set in place significant revisions and replaced the former language with two sections: “The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” and the “Form of Government.” The assembly acted to retain the denomination’s historic commitment to diversity and inclusiveness and retention of committees on representation. These recommendations were ratified by a majority of presbyteries, becoming effective on July 10, 2011, (see Attachment C—Current *Book of Order* Reference Regarding GACOR). This was the culmination of years of careful work. The GACOR had provided feedback on drafts of the report and had engaged in consultation with members of the new Form of Government Task Force who brought their report to the assemblies in 2008 and 2010. The assembly asserted that now is still the time for committees on representation and that the commitment we make as a church must be shared in our structures in order for us to transcend our human weaknesses that default to division and disturbance in the unity of Christ’s body. The GACOR took up the task of helping interpret what passage of the revision would mean for committees on representation at other council levels of the church and distributed a frequently asked questions resource to all councils (in English, Spanish, and Korean) in 2011.

So, who are we? We are Presbyterians committed to Christ, grace-filled receivers of God’s abundant life, called to serve Christ in assisting the church to care for and affirm the blessed variety within our unity. We are women and men; teaching and ruling elders, baptized members; people from north, south, east, and west; persons who are racially and ethnically diverse speaking in voices informed by different languages, different cultures, different experiences; persons who worship in small, medium, and large congregations and communities; varying in age; demonstrating a wide spectrum of theological convictions within the Reformed tradition; with abilities and disabilities, each of us a child of God, each a cherished part of the Body of Christ, contributing to its wholeness, and each seeking to help the PC(USA) exhibit the Kingdom of God to the world in all its glorious differences, even as we “be[come] one, as we [Jesus and the Father] are one” (Jn. 17:11, NRSV).

## II. WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT

Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet. 2: 10)

A profound demographic shift is happening throughout the United States of America made noticeable by the increase in the numbers and proportion of many ethnic peoples and groups from places around the world including our overseas mission fields, creating a more multiethnic, multiracial, and multicultural society. By 2042, there is projected to be no majority racial group in the United States.<sup>4</sup> The population is also seeing more people with disabilities. One in six Americans is a person with disability. According to the 2000 Census, that group has nearly 54 million people. As veterans return from Iraq and Afghanistan and survivor rates from substantial war injuries increase, war casualties are adding many more people with disability into our communities. The church must respond with open arms, hearts and when necessary work to provide access to these children of God.

By rooting the commitment to diversity and unity in the Foundations and under the exposition of what God's mission is through this church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) demonstrates that it is an essential function and fundamental commitment in all its expressions (congregations and councils). Following the great commission of Jesus Christ: "... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:18-20), the church has committed to grow the church "deep and wide." That commitment is described by the 219th General Assembly (2010) as to be achieved by efforts to grow: in evangelism, in discipleship, in servanthood, and in diversity.

As we seek to be an effective witness, our denomination is building into its basic structures, policies, practices, and developing appropriate tools to create faithful organizational life where everyone is treated with dignity, is respected, and is provided an equal opportunity for serving in leadership and employment, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction.

Setting high goals does not mean achievement follows. The PC(USA) failed to attain the goal of 20 percent racial ethnic (other than white) membership by 2010. The denomination fell short of this target by more than half,<sup>5</sup> which indicates there are more challenges a predominantly white denomination has in diversifying its membership and leadership. At the same time there is tremendous activity and vitality in ministries of racial ethnic Presbyterians and multicultural communities. The following table describes a positive outlook of the increasing multiethnic, multiracial, and multicultural worshipping communities (including congregations). For a signal of the emerging communities already being nurtured in our midst, one only has to look at the new church developments (NCDs) and Fellowships (or Bible Studies) recognized by the denomination. Figure 1 shows the distribution of these worshipping communities by primary racial ethnic constituencies.

Figure 1: Racial Ethnic Congregations, New Church Developments, Fellowships, and Bible Study Groups in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as reported to the GAMC in February 2012

	Congregations	NCDs	Bible Study/Fellowships	Total
African American	463	3	2	468
Korean	368	20	15	403
Latino/a	235	39	66	340
Asian (not Korean)	154	2	2	158
Native American	108	1	1	110
New Immigrant	9	16	58	83
Middle Eastern	10	1	28	39
Multicultural	427	0	0	427
Total	1,774	82	172	2,028

These figures show that there are considerable resources for connecting leaders to successful racial ethnic ministries. The GACOR wants to help the council consider reformations in structural confines so that the church may adapt to welcome leaders from these ministries into the shared-power relations within councils and the responsibilities for the wider community that it carries. Questions the data raises for GACOR are: (1) how do leaders (in communities not yet defined as congregations) participate in the life of the council?; (2) where can nominating committees be encouraged to consider leaders from these communities for service in the council? on committees?; and (3) how might GACOR support committees on representation to be a structure that may assist their councils to make the adaptive changes necessary to involve these leaders in its decision-making and life? As each council may design the structures of CORs "by their own rule,"<sup>6</sup> the opportunity GACOR has is as catalyst not enforcer. If the 220th General Assembly (2012) approves the action regarding the "1,001 new worship-

ping communities,”<sup>7</sup> these questions will become more important in shaping the life of the PC(USA). How new worshipping communities become participants who have impact on the communal life of the councils is an important nexus for the church at this time in its life and ministry. If these worshipping communities (often vibrant and vital in communities of color) remain outside, and therefore merely decorative, to the larger normative body, then continuing PC(USA) retreat/decline seems assured.

A. *The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR):*

With the church, the committee proclaims:

...God has created the peoples of the earth to be one universal family. In his reconciling love, he overcomes the barriers between brothers and breaks down every form of discrimination based on racial or ethnic difference, real or imaginary. The church is called to bring all men to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, marriage, family, church, and the exercise of political rights. Therefore, the church labors for the abolition of all racial discrimination and ministers to those injured by it. Congregations, individuals, or groups of Christians who exclude, dominate, or patronize their fellowmen, however subtly, resist the Spirit of God and bring contempt on the faith which they profess. (*The Book of Confessions*, The Confession of 1967, 9.44)

With a strong history of combating racism, the Presbyterian church has been equally committed to include all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, theological conviction, or worldly condition. The commitment is enshrined in statements but it must also be followed up with renewed efforts in an ongoing process to achieve equity. Differences (that are a matter of essence or condition not elective and) on which disparities prevail, one being preferred and favored with insider status while “others” designated outsiders and disadvantaged. The advantage is procured by group identification (systematically), not based on individual traits or behaviors.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s witness against racism and other –isms<sup>8</sup> is long standing and is evidenced in several policies and papers, such as: “On Affirming Civil Rights and Nondiscrimination for All Person, Regardless of Sexual Orientation” (2004); “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community” (1999); participation in partnership with Project Equality (1998); revision of Affirmative Action (1995); “On Developing and Strengthening Churchwide Affirmative Action (1991); *A Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action*, (1985 and 1994); *A Joint Report of the Councils on Church and Race*; and “A Statement on Racial Ethnic” (1987), set the table for the denomination’s commitment to full representation and equal employment opportunity.

Regardless of the PC(USA)’s claims about fostering equity and equality in elected leadership and employment, at times, we find our human selves ill-at-ease with people who are different from us. Ultimately, our devotion to the gospel compels us to see everyone created in the image of God (including ourselves). The public witness, made visible, of sharing power across differences and choosing diverse leaders to participate in the decision making bodies to discern the Spirit’s will for the body hasn’t completely been realized.

Understanding the church’s humanness and thus limitedness in living out the principles of participation and inclusiveness in its decision-making bodies, the 219th General Assembly (2010) chose to require committees on representation (including the GACOR) as an important structure for the witness of the church. This action amended the action to replace the former Form of Government with a new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and a new Form of Government. The assembly acted to recognize and strengthen accountability of the councils to the mission of Christ and to maintain a structure and foundational principle that would support and perhaps assist the body in attaining greater diversity. The GACOR, with resolute commitment, will challenge with inconvenient truth about equality in leadership and employment. The GACOR is committed to continue to serve the denomination to be an effective witness in diversity.

1. *Membership*

Until July 10, 2011, GACOR membership was determined by the number of synods and was determined by the formula contained in G-9.0105. In the transition, GACOR suggests maintaining membership tied to the number of synods as it guarantees geographic diversity in its membership and allows for enough persons to accomplish the tasks of the committee and to reach out to the whole church when each member’s networks may be called upon to find new leaders for the church.

Membership of the GACOR must comply with the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The commitment to inclusiveness is reflected in the diversity of the GACOR’s membership. At this time the persons serving are described as:

5 Senior Adults (over 56)  
6 Adults (36–55)  
1 Young Adult (26–35) and  
2 Youth (25 and under)  
with 2 vacancies on December 31, 2011

Current members are from these racial ethnic categories:



- 4 African American/Black
- 3 Hispanic/Latino/a
- 4 White/Caucasian
- 2 Asian (no Korean persons at this time)
- 1 Middle Eastern
- 0 Native American

There have been thirty-five persons who have served on the GACOR since January 2006.<sup>9</sup> Most have fulfilled their elected terms. Due to life transitions, some members have had to resign their positions.

## 2. *Staff Transition:*

Elder Joan Richardson was staff for the GACOR for seventeen years. She retired in spring 2009. The committee expresses thanksgiving for her faithful leadership and support. The Reverend Molly Casteel came in July 2009, just as the committee turned its attention to preparations for the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the next round of work with the Form of Government Task Force. There were a few months (in 2009) where there was not dedicated staff support for GACOR. The adjustment did cause a slow down for the committee (March to July 2009) that was quickly overcome in the latter part of the year. After the 2010 assembly, support staff support was strengthened and continues to the writing of this report.

## B. *Responsibilities of General Assembly Committee on Representation*

With a great prophetic vision and commitment, the leaders of the reunion in 1983 established Committee on Representation for a strong commitment to diversity and full participation and inclusiveness thereof in its decision making bodies. Constitutionally mandated to advise, advocate, resource, review, recommend, and consult with the General Assembly, and with its committees, councils, and ministries divisions, the General Assembly Committee on Representation (as other committees on representation do at their councils) works to ensure that the principles of diversity in unity and the commitments regarding decision-making bodies and employment are implemented. The committee shall advise the General Assembly on the employment of personnel in conformity with the *Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity*.<sup>10</sup>

The current *Book of Order* mandates,

### G-3.0103 *Participation and Representation*

The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church's membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403). In fulfilling this commitment, councils shall give due consideration to both the gifts and requirements for ministry (G-2.0104) and the right of people in congregations and councils to elect their officers (F-3.0106).

Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body's implementation of the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation. Councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403. A committee on representation should not be merged with another committee or made a subcommittee of another committee. (*Book of Order*, G-3.0103)

Any part of the *Book of Order* must be read through The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity but also in light of the whole. References to other places within the Constitution (such as appear in the first paragraph of G-3.0103) are meant to point to the larger expression and connect them. The commitment to having diversity in leadership does not come at the expense of finding appropriate leaders or to bind the body. They do provide impulse to look for leaders outside the usual suspects. The importance of capable and qualified leaders being selected is the starting point. Within that caveat, GACOR advocates for leaders from underrepresented groups within the assembly level (council) who are appropriate to the body for which leadership is sought. There is a common (discriminatory and often unconscious) bias in any body that leaders who are not from the dominant ("normative"—always white males and often white females) cultures and constituencies are not as qualified. In reality persons from nondominant (often marginalized) cultures and locations are fluent in the ways of the dominant culture yet have a different perspective since they are "in but not of" that dominant culture. They have gifts for ministry that are missing if they are not included. The GACOR is an active search partner to the General Assembly Nominating Committee as it recruits pools of candidates for its leadership consideration and on its slates once they are selected.

In a denomination that is 91 percent Caucasian (white),<sup>11</sup> the privilege of persons from one race above others is always an advantage for persons from that dominant group. Despite there being more than seventy-five years of history within the PC(USA) of ordaining women to be ruling elders and fifty years of ordaining women as teaching elders, the default leader model in the PC(USA) (and the larger social context) is still the white male. While traditionally, the PC(USA) considers and presents these aspects of identity separately, in recent years the GACOR has considered the intersections of these advantaged and disadvantaged identities and tried to report to the church from the complexity of its lived realities. The term for this data is disaggregated (combined variables) so that data is reported out showing the intersections. So far, this is only possible with data tied to individuals so GACOR has experimented with the data on teaching elders.<sup>12</sup> Looking at intersecting data points

toward communities that are absent, where there is need for leadership development, as well as where groups are healthy. Knowing before you go recruiting that there are no “under thirty Asian female teaching elders” available (no matter what the entity’s wish list has on it) prevents wasted efforts and highlights needed leadership development and support areas. This insight was hidden when data was reported by race, or gender, or age separately. If councils embrace these kinds of methods, it will equip them to find the diverse leaders available but also witness to the needed intentional effort to encourage, disciple, mentor, and support leaders from groups that are missing. The health of the body is at stake.

C. *Social Justice and Equality within the Leadership of the Church:*

Paul, in his letter to the church in Galatia, writes, “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3: 28). Several biblical passages affirm equality for every person in diverse communities, but this principle given to us as a value of Christ and essential to his body (the Church) has been challenging to put into daily practice. This Galatians text is quoted in G-3.0103 before committees on representation are described. The mission of committees on representation (including GACOR), in this biblical context, is set as an instrument that assists the Great Physician regarding the body to move it toward social justice and toward equity and equality within the leadership of the council (and the denomination). It may be an unrelenting mission, but as partners with God and the councils, committee actions make possible necessary changes to (to habits and hearts) have the Body of Christ reflect its full diversity and its unity in Christ.

D. *Representation...*

- *Brings Fruitfulness*

Jesus Christ commands those who believe to love one another and all others. In a multicultural society and church, we are called to serve faithfully with open minds and hearts and work for the Kingdom of God. As we profess in The Confession of 1967, we provide faithful witness to Jesus Christ when we participate in God’s reconciling work in church, in society and in the wider world. The differences bridged at the Pentecost, in the church’s birthing moments, in Acts are emblematic of the communities we are called to create. United by God’s Spirit, speaking in multiple languages but not divided in understanding, the church is most faithful when it is most broadly constituted. As the *Book of Order* states, “... the congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. These congregations are bound together in communion with one another, united in relationships of accountability and responsibility, contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole, and are called, collectively, the church” ( G-1.0101). The Constitution further declares, “[t]he mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. ... This call to bear witness is the work of all believers. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those [whose] witness ... strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God” (G-3.0101).

The witness of Christ’s church through councils must “nurture a covenant community of disciples of Christ” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0101). The covenant testified to in Scripture and made flesh with the birth, life, and death of Jesus, expanded the promises to all of God’s family. The councils “nurture [sic] covenant community” when they pay particular attention to encourage and support diverse constituencies who are united for ministry and mission reflecting the unity of God (who also lives in the mysterious community of the Trinity). Assisting the church to make efforts to include all the heirs of the promise united in baptism, the GACOR helps the council of the assembly be faithful in this work, points to areas needing nurture, and assists the council to lean into wholeness by drawing from all parts of the Body of Christ.

- *Brings New Relationships/Connections:*

In our faith journeys we believers meet people from different walks of life, we connect (as we are claimed), we belong to one another, and develop deep friendships and relationships that do not erase our differences but create unity and connection through Christ. Committees on representation seek to provide opportunities for relationships by bringing people at council levels together across differences (that divide and feed discrimination and oppression) from multicultural communities. Consciously working, worshipping, and praying together, sharing from unique cultures and wisdom of experiences, councils also create relationships and build bridges to connect, encouraging greater understanding of one another while also encouraging diversity and inclusiveness (instead of diminishing difference in ways that erase/silence some). New connections create more faithful witness and wider expression of God’s amazing action in the world: they expand God’s reign and bring reconciliation. Healing the family and the body God has claimed in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

- *Respects Individuals and Communities:*

Paraphrasing Scripture, we are individually different (as are communities of similarity and difference within the body), but it is the same Spirit which works in all and unites all. We are all called into the Church of Jesus Christ, marked through baptism, as Christ’s own children by the Holy Spirit. Some are called to ordained leadership but all are called to Christ’s ministry. Faith teaches humility and service. Jesus Christ’s life and ministry have set an example for us to follow. When the church looks for leaders, it is called to remember the One it follows who went to the outcast and the outsider and who chided

the haughty. Representation work emulates the Christ who went to where the outsiders were and brought them into community with believers.

With mutual respect for one another and in seeking wholeness for the council, the GACOR advocates for and invites “others” (those who are different including differently abled) with respect, love, and justice to build our church and thereby challenge its members and others to enter into the Kingdom of God. With great admiration of our calling, we meet God’s children as they are in their struggle, identification, hope, ideas, joys, and traditions, and invite them to participate and share the vision of the Church as one body of Jesus Christ. This journey involves risk, but our willingness to serve will bear fruits and in so doing illustrate unity in diversity in the Kingdom of God.

- *Serves Jesus Christ and His Church:*

Jesus Christ came into this world, not to be served, but to serve. As believers in Christ, we are called to serve one another. In doing so, we bring people together to serve one another. So too the GACOR serves. Our love and teaching help others to gain momentum for understanding and create an environment to serve in the church. Through the serving model, the church truly represents Christ and demonstrates Christ’s love in service to the world.

Inclusive practices and wider participation benefits the whole church that functions best when all parts are working together. The General Assembly Committee on Representation is called to seek and assist the council in supporting the widest representation of persons for participation and leadership at the assembly level of the PC(USA), living into the church’s call to affirm the equality of all God’s children, created in God’s image, and to affirm those who are chosen for particular service.

### III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2006–2011

Abbreviated lists of accomplishments for the review period include:

#### A. *At the 217th General Assembly (2006)*

- Submitted a self-study report, resourced and presented it to the review committee during the assembly.
- Resource persons were made available to three committees: Mission Coordination, Health Issues, and Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees.
- Advised the General Assembly as it reviewed changes to the structure of the GAMC in regards to their membership so that they might better implement the principles of participation and allow for greater representation within their committee.
- Gathered data on the various ways presbyteries selected their General Assembly commissioners and collected five years of data on assembly commissioners to study the representational characteristics per presbytery and synod.

#### B. *At the 218th General Assembly (2008)*

- Commented on an item of business sent to the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets impacting the make-up of the GAMC.
- Participated in the orientation of commissioners on the opening day of the assembly.
- Studied the Articles of Agreement and their impact on actions being considered by the assembly as well as providing educational content to the wider church about its commitment to representation and full participation.
- Commented on two items of business recommended by the Form of Government Task Force.

#### C. *At the 219th General Assembly (2010)*

- Assisted in commissioner orientation. Provided support for the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures committee members doing process observation and trained other process observers.
- Counseled the nFOG task force (from 2007 to 2010), advised and consulted with the director for Constitutional Services (Associate Stated Clerk, the Reverend Mark Tammen) to discuss nFOG task force’s recommendations, and commented on items before the assembly regarding necessary language concerning representation, diversity, and inclusiveness.
- Asked a question of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that was referred as an item of business to the assembly (regarding authoritative interpretations).
- Provided resource persons to the assembly committee (regarding their comment) and, in so doing, participated in shaping the assembly’s recommendation to presbyteries regarding the new Form of Government as it passed at the 219th General Assembly (2010). There was a recommendation that committees on representation (and GACOR) would be elimi-

nated with the nFOG revision. Committee members serving as resource persons worked to interpret the importance of committees on representation in the proposed more flexible polity, and the continuing relevancy of the commitments made in the Articles of Agreement, at Reunion. Committee members participated in several conference call consultations with nFOG task force members, observed an nFOG task force meeting, and in all ways supported the assembly's consideration of the role of the committee and its usefulness serving the church going forward. These efforts were rewarded by the assembly committee's action to require committees on representation at councils above the session.

- Commented and served as resource persons on sixteen items of business considered by the assembly in six assembly committees: Church Growth, Christian Education and Presbyterian Loan and Development Program, Social Justice and Promotion of Social Righteousness, Form of Government, Polity, Middle Governing Bodies, and General Assembly Procedures.

- Recommended, with the GANC, a change to the *Book of Order* adjusting the one-third (male elders), one-third (female elders), one-third (ministers) formula for the elected leadership of certain bodies (GACOR, GANC, and GAMC) to one-half elders, one half ministers with near as equal gender representation in both groups. The change was approved and sent to presbyteries for their vote where it was ratified, but since the new Form of Government was also ratified it became void since the related section of the *Book of Order* was removed in the new language.

#### D. *Review of Annual Synod COR Reports*

Each year, the GACOR receives written forms from synod committees on representation<sup>13</sup>. The analysis of these synod forms and the interpretation of their representation data is a regular feature of GACOR work. These forms serve the purpose of allowing the GACOR to review the synod CORs, to receive limited information on the presence and health of the committees on representation at other council levels, and to assess the representational context of each geographic region's leadership. Synods receive feedback from the committee with attention given to the quality and content of their relationships with their constituent presbyteries (lower councils) and to the goals the synod sets for itself affecting full participation. Synods find it a challenge to complete the representational data grids in some categories, especially age and disability because incomplete information is shared from synod councils and their nominating committees on persons serving. Other challenges show that not all presbyteries have effective committees on representation and that may affect the synod's ability to assess participation, support their CORs, and/or effectively reach their full geographical diversity (which would impact other categories). Many synod COR leaders are willing to ask presbyteries for time on the floor to promote the importance of the work of CORs in the life of the church, diversity concerns, and related issues. These leaders request training and resources from GACOR.

Each synod is responsible to reflect the diversity in its context. The GACOR considers feedback from synods in these forms when it designs new resources. The GACOR continues to be an advocate for underrepresented communities and advises the synods of their responsibilities to make a conscious effort to ensure that their staff, committees, boards, and councils implement the principles of participation and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church in their council.

As of the writing of this report, all sixteen synods have submitted reports from their committees on representation. From the synod forms, out of 173 presbyteries 6 percent do not have CORs. Synod leadership, in all committees and bodies, is about 29 percent racial ethnic (other than white), 5 percent persons with disabilities, and 7 percent youth. By contrast, the membership of synod committees on representation was described as about 58 percent racial ethnic, 10 percent persons with disabilities, and 8 percent youth. Clearly, diversity and inclusiveness is intentionally sought out in the membership of synod CORs while the other leadership of the synod is less diverse. There is work to do. Councils do not always have leadership in the pool, or look for diverse leadership, to meet their needs.

The information gathered and interpreted from these reports assists GACOR when it provides counsel to the GANC. The subcommittee of GACOR that receives and reviews the synod COR reports also provides the connection between GACOR and the GANC. The committee works diligently and requests data annually from the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) in order to advise them on the pools available for each body it nominates for, as well as meeting biennially to advise and consult on the slate of nominees presented to the assembly for action.

#### E. *Resources and Activities*

- Distributed the DVD, *Motivated by Gospel, Not by Law* (in English, Spanish, and Korean) to synod and presbytery CORs.

- Distributed brochures and other resources (in English, Korean, and Spanish) including the title, "How to Revive or Start a Presbytery COR."

- When finances and conditions allow, GACOR planned its meetings throughout the regions of the denomination in order to engage more mid council CORs in dialogue about the work and its contexts.

- Created new resources to explore what inclusiveness and diversity mean at all levels of the denomination, including a FAQ sheet on the impact of new constitutional language on committees on representation and councils (distributed in Spanish, English, and Korean).
- Distributed the “Fixings” newsletter through 2007, when it was decided that fiscal resources were better allocated to electronically distributed resources (the website and email became the means to distribute rather than bulk mailing).
- Provided dynamic and relevant content in the biennial training event for synod COR members, reflective of the context of CORs at the time. An example would be allowing formative questions to guide training planning like, “How do we come to the table as a diverse group, in light of the changes to the BOO language?” This question eventually resulted in a workshop provided during the training.
- Studied and developed a workshop on the intersections of race and gender that was presented for mid council leaders at the Big Tent 2 conference in June/July 2011 by committee members and staff, as well as another workshop on the effects of the new *Book of Order* language on CORs, and provided an exhibit booth for GACOR where we promoted the new resources and hosted book signings by authors speaking at the Fall 2011 Training Event.
- Committee members serve as resource persons to assembly committees and distribute resources during assemblies about GACOR, by request, or available in the exhibit hall.

#### F. *Biennial Synod COR Training Events—2007, 2009, 2011*

The GACOR holds a training event every two years and invites synod leaders. Two members from each synod are invited to receive this training. Resources, including worship resources, were posted online to allow COR members to use these resources in training within their synods.

- *2007 Training, Florida.* Event hosted forty-three people from fourteen synods with workshops covering topics like: Disability Concerns; Youth/Young Adult Issues; Exploring 10 Commandments of Communicating with Persons with Disabilities; the GA Nominations Process; Strengthening COR; and doing representation work in new ways. Participants were given an opportunity to meet within their synod group to brainstorm ways to incorporate training experience into their own synods. Evaluation summaries from this training included these comments: “Broadened my vision of inclusivity” and “Increased awareness of exclusiveness.”

- *2009 Training, Louisville.* Topics: “Bridging the Gap Between Diversity and Future,” “Joining Hands,” “Children’s Ministry and Youth and Young Adult Education,” “Understanding Our Differences,” “Different ‘Languages’ of Diversity,” and cultural proficiency. The GACOR contracted Research Services to analyze the evaluation data and provide a summary. The response rate was very high and feedback was most all “very helpful” or “helpful.”

- *2011 Training, Louisville.* The event was centered on the change in constitutional language and its impact on the councils and their committees on representation as well as having content about serving the church in transition. Online evaluations were used for this event in order to provide better accessibility for participants. Among the evaluations we received the following feedback:

—Three-quarters or more of those who attended the 2011 Synod COR Training described fourteen out of its fifteen activities as “very helpful” or “helpful.”

—In the overall evaluation question, 88 percent rated the training excellent or good.

—One participant added: “The best part of the GACOR training was gaining a better understanding of what COR is and the responsibilities. There is a lot of work involved with doing a good job for the synod, presbytery and local church. I feel much more confident and look forward to applying what I’ve learned and helping others understand the work of COR.”

#### G. *Interaction with Related Groups and Partners*

- Middle Governing Bodies Commission (MGBC):

—The GACOR sent a member to observe all the MGBC meetings. The committee member had the privilege of educating, supporting, and encouraging commission members as they fulfilled their charge. One consequence of the GACOR member’s presence came after listening to a presentation to the commission, which omitted the history of African American Presbyterians. The GACOR arranged for the electronic publication of an older report of the General Assembly, *All Black Governing Bodies: The History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies*.<sup>14</sup> The GACOR printed enough copies to distribute to members of the MGB commission<sup>15</sup> and the document was referenced in their discussions.

—The GACOR participated in a conference call to consult on proposed language the commission would consider and how it would affect council functions, their work and full participation.

- Members of GACOR, involved in an internal FOG task group, were indispensable in advising the 219th General Assembly (2010) as to the importance of the work of committees on representation and GACOR in particular. In the four years of deliberations of the task force, there was talk that committees on representation would be eliminated as a mandated structure when the FOG revision was presented to the assembly. The GACOR sent several comments and responses regarding: the importance of COR, the commitments made in the Articles of Agreement, and participated in several conference calls with nFOG Task Force members. The GACOR observed several FOG and nFOG Task Force meetings, explained the importance of COR in their deliberations from 2006 to 2010, and rejoiced when the task force sent their recommendation with mandated committees on representation functions described.

- Encounters with the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC):

—After experiencing accessibility issues with materials posted for the GAMC meetings in 2009 and 2010, the GACOR advocated for those materials in appropriate formats so a GACOR member (who is blind) could follow their meeting. Staff persons (of all the involved bodies) were very helpful in getting these issues resolved.

—In 2009, the GACOR attempted to send a letter to the council members with advice regarding proposed changes to the Employee Manual consistent with their function to advise and review with regard to employment of personnel. The letter never was shared with elected leadership beyond the chair. When other comments from other entities (who are corresponding members) were raised and referred for more discussion, GACOR comments were not included and the committee was not consulted in the subsequent discussions.

—In observing meetings of the General Assembly Mission Council (the elected body), concerns were raised about the nearly singular nature of representation in the executive committee after an election in 2010. The member present raised concern with the GAMC elected leadership and the GAMC nominating committee. Correspondence followed to express concern, offer assistance, and suggest an evaluation of their procedures. In 2011, this pattern was nearly exactly repeated and the GACOR wrote another letter advising the council of its excluding practices and suggesting they look for remedies.

- The GACOR consulted with the General Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures in its participation in process observation of participation in committee meetings during the assembly and collected their observation forms.

- Advised the Stated Clerk, and shared their report on process observation at the 219th General Assembly (2010) with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

- In February 2007, a special joint session was held between members of GACOR and GANC to create awareness about and discuss barriers that might keep people from serving at the General Assembly level, inhibiting full representation and participation. Discussion also touched on the difficulties to assess and consider theological conviction. This meeting was held in addition to the regular consultation practices of the two committees.

- A sampling of regular constituencies/partners:

—Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC), is a valued partner in the work of the GACOR. These advocates create resources for congregations, and the wider denomination, around the celebration of Disability Concerns Sunday and connect to the disability consultants who serve on staff. They work with GACOR to hold the assembly accountable to its commitments to maintain access to the meeting and body for all persons regardless of their abilities and disabilities. The GACOR learns from its relationship with this group—and brings their insights and questions into the regular deliberations of the committee in its work.

—Racial Ethnic Caucuses, Councils and Committees. To the extent possible, GACOR members are assigned to serve as liaisons to each of the recognized caucuses of racial ethnic Presbyterians. The liaison role is to share information from the constituency with GACOR and to share information from the committee to the constituency group. These relationships are relied upon when deficits in nomination pools are identified and targeted recruiting efforts begin. Insights inform the committee's resources and communications.

—Advocacy Committees. When the GACOR has special concern with representation and participation of women or racial ethnic persons, or when their work may affect these constituencies, they take care to communicate with the advocacy committees. From time to time they ask that the advocacy committees share what they are working on—especially as they prepare for the assembly meetings. The GACOR shares its comments on items of business and in doing so adjust its actions (when partners are covering the concerns already adequately, for instance). Due to the action of the 218th General Assembly (2008) forming the Climate for Change Task Force, special attention was paid to cooperate with the task force and in response to their questions and draft recommendations, with the advocacy committees to confirm roles and responsibilities that the 220th General Assembly (2012) may approve and that will affect the tasks of GACOR as well as its partner advocacy committees.

#### H. *GACOR Meetings*

The GACOR meets with its full membership two times a year. It used to meet three times a year and adjustments were made for fiscal savings. The executive committee may meet face-to-face (or via electronic means) one additional time a year

to conduct business and/or for training and orientation of new members. The committee conducts most of its business through the work of subcommittees who meet regularly via conference call and occasionally other means. The committee gives and receives reports, monitors employment related materials, and participates in education and training on subjects relevant to the assembly, committees on representation, and issues that affect diverse leadership and full participation.

Training sessions for the review period have included: Cultural Proficiency, The Intersection of Race and Gender, How to Write Advice and Counsel Memorandums and Comments, Effective Church Transformation, How to Work with Advocacy Groups, Consideration of “Rebuilding the Presbyterian Establishment,” Multicultural Ministries, Scenario Planning, and heard from church members, council leaders, and denominational staff. In 2009 and 2010, as they evaluated their work, they read and discussed *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference*, by theologian Letty Russell. Sometimes these sessions drew on the tremendous capacities and gifts of the GACOR members themselves, who are a diverse group of individuals with a variety of talents, education, and career experiences.

### *The Mandate*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation mandate may be traced directly to the Articles of Agreement, specifically Article 8—Racial Ethnic Representation, Participation and Organizations and Article 9—Women’s Representation, Participation and Organizations. These articles were transcribed and enforced in the former *Book of Order* in G-4.0403 and G-9.0105. There were some adjustments by addition over time, namely the inclusion of persons with disabilities in 1992. These commitments ensured that persons of various backgrounds shall be represented in the decision-making bodies of the church. The work of the GACOR is expected to be available in an advisory capacity to leadership and bodies of the council, serving as advocate for underrepresented groups and reviewer and resource concerning the membership of the General Assembly’s decision-making bodies. In July 2011, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the *Book of Order*, was revised to replace one section with two sections, The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government. Within The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Section F-1.0403 Unity in Diversity, emphatically states,

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

The Form of Government connects this founding principle with the structures and functions of committees on representation at G-3.0103, where it states that “... councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403. A committee on representation should not be merged with another committee or made a subcommittee of another committee.”<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the *Book of Order*, the GACOR has as its guide its *Manual of Operations*<sup>17</sup> (revised over the 2011 year and adopted in early 2012), the *Manual of the General Assembly*<sup>18</sup> (which includes the *Organization for Mission* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly), and the *Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity*.<sup>19</sup>

In the *Manual of the General Assembly*, according to Standing Rule C.1.c, the GACOR shall assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee. In the same way, GACOR negotiates with each Moderator to provide advice regarding the appointment of persons to serve on special committees and task forces. There is a recommendation from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to the 220th General Assembly (2012) to amend Standing Rule K.1.c. to make this relationship between the Moderator and GACOR an automatic one. The GACOR was one of only two committees of the Office of the General Assembly who were not described in the *Organization for Mission*. Like the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, GACOR was described by the *Book of Order* until July 10, 2011. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is recommending to the 220th General Assembly (2012) that this change and a brief description be included in the *Organization for Mission*. These are part of the changes necessitated by the new constitutional language and do not reflect new tasks or responsibilities.

The GACOR provides advice and consults with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) on a regular basis to review the pools of candidates and slates of nominations with special regard to the race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, and theological conviction of persons in the various pools for consideration for nomination as well as the slates they produce. Other characteristics that may factor into a deliberation may include socioeconomic class, language, marital status, national origin (ancestry), and other conditions of life as were previously outlined in G-4.0403 in the former *Book of Order*. The GACOR assists in recruiting of persons from specific recognized underrepresented groups outlined in the *Book of*

*Order* and advocates for these persons and groups if there are barriers or obstacles for access to service (with exception for conditions expressly allowed to be barred by the Constitution).

The GACOR reviews the assembly and its entities to assess participation and representation and advises the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity in diversity (*Book of Order*, F-1.0403), advocates for diversity in leadership, as well as consults with the council on the employment of personnel. The committee advocates for diversity in both elected and/or appointed and employed leadership for bodies that report to the General Assembly or for those given duties by the assembly. This applies to the corporate entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their elected boards: the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP), the Board of Pensions (BOP), and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC).

The GACOR consults with the council and advises the body when it concludes that the body is not living out the letter or spirit of the principles of participation and inclusiveness. In accordance with the Churchwide Plan, the GACOR shall participate in any review or revision of the *Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity*.<sup>20</sup>

Like all permanent standing committees of the General Assembly, GACOR submits to regular review of the body, advises the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council, and the Moderator of the General Assembly. As a part of its work to advocate for diversity in leadership, the GACOR connects with and consults racial ethnic caucuses, councils, and consulting committees, programmatic offices in the national staff structure that connect with assigned communities (like Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries, Youth Ministries, and others) to resource issues regarding equitable representation, and recommends corrective actions designed to accelerate progress toward full representation and participation.

The GACOR reviews each assembly and provides feedback to the Stated Clerk regarding issues impacting full participation, and delivers a report to the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Areas of concern that are reviewed may include: General Assembly elections; procedures and policies that impact the inclusiveness of the assembly, access and participation; the work of the committee on local arrangements; any discriminatory experiences reported to them, business before the assembly that impacts participation and representation; and the characteristics (size, timing, duration, location, room, and committees, etc.) of assemblies and the impacts they have on participants' access to decision-making (appropriate to their role) as well as representation.

The work of the committee includes critically analyzing the PC(USA) system and assisting the body in eliminating disparities, encouraging equity, ensuring access, empowering once silent voices, and transforming structures that serve to keep captive the majority and separate them from the marginalized. The committee looks forward to exploring ways it can help the assembly's (and through its sister committee other councils') centered powers reduce their own resistance to sharing power more broadly. The committee works with excluded communities to connect, heal (and encourage reconciliation), empower, and express value for their gifts, underutilized and integrated in the church as a whole. In these ways it seeks to help the church be that community of faith, hope, love, and witness that we are called to be.

#### IV. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

During the review period and in reflection on its own assessments, the General Assembly Committee on Representation came across several areas where improvement would assist the council to more faithfully apply its commitment to "give full expression to the rich diversity of the church's membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices."

##### A. *Relationship with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC)*

The nomination process is very important in the effective witness of diversity and representation. Full participation is empowered in decision-making bodies by nominating necessary leaders (the right people) rather than simply nominating someone for the sake of affecting the diversity of the body. The work of the committees is enhanced because both staff are in the same department within the Office of the General Assembly, which helps with them remaining in direct contact with one another on a regular basis.

The GANC does an admirable job of considering representational issues as it seeks the best qualified candidates for positions within the General Assembly. They must consider many variables and balance multiple demands. A thorough review of representational concerns may take time away from their other tasks. The GACOR would provide more recruiting support to GANC if they provided more regular and timely information on the pools for the nominated bodies. This shift would allow the GANC to spend more time in considering the candidates themselves.

While GACOR and GANC have worked steadily to strengthen their partnership, there are still gaps existing in the partnership that, if addressed, would help support greater diversity. The General Assembly Nominating Committee is conscientious and private in its work. They do not often share enough information in a timely manner in order for the GACOR to provide its comments and advice. The hardest of the areas in F-1.0403 to provide counsel on is theological conviction. In 2007



the two committees had a conversation about this difficulty. There have been items of business at recent assemblies raising the concern of theological diversity.<sup>21</sup> The GANC revised its application form for the pool closing in January 2012. The new form now includes a question aimed at helping candidates reveal their theological commitments by describing their theological perspective. As yet, GACOR has not had access to this information. It has not been shared in data on the pools. The GACOR is not equipped to provide advice to its partner committee regarding the representation of theological conviction of persons in the nomination process. The GANC considers application forms private, so GACOR only has access very limited access to see application forms. They are shared in excerpted form only during the consultation meeting itself, which is usually limited (by availability and timing) to only a few hours on one day. Only in that meeting do GANC members provide the proposed slate (for each entity it nominates for) and abbreviated application forms for the persons proposed to fill the vacant slots. The stack is usually seventy-to-ninety persons high for nomination. In the limited time available for the consultation, GACOR has found it impossible to get a read on theological conviction and to include it in the advice offered. That said, GACOR always lifts up the importance of theological diversity on decision-making bodies and raises it as a concern. The GACOR is interested in having an improved consultation process by GANC allowing more access to information on candidates (while protecting their privacy) and looks forward to see what help the new question may provide to those efforts.

By constantly developing networking relationships with underrepresented constituencies, GACOR has deep resources for recruiting. Having a better understanding of GANC's needs, would help GACOR improve effective recruiting in support of their ministry to discern who is called for leadership in the PC(USA).

In its role as advocate, advisor, resource, and consultant, the GACOR is able to express its full commitment, as a valuable partner, to maximize the full participation and rich diversity in decision-making bodies at the national level. Instead the committee often feels as if it is hastily being presented with a final list of nominations for a rubberstamp approval. While the GACOR frequently invites representatives from the GANC to its meetings, the invitation in 2007 was the only invitation offered to GACOR from the GANC within the review period.

#### B. *Employment of Personnel*

The staff capacities and church structures have changed drastically since the inception of GACOR at reunion, and the writing of the Churchwide Plan shortly thereafter. Where there used to be an affirmative action officer on staff, there hasn't been an office let alone staff designated as such for at least ten years. In 2010, the GAMC acted to create a referral network for racial ethnic leaders interested in employment opportunities in national staff positions. It came to be after several years of discussion about losses to the search and retention capacity for the organization, particularly related to managed databases that used to exist in programmatic offices and the staff who maintained them. The GACOR staff person served on the internal table (encompassing representatives from all the corporate entities in the PC(USA)) designing the "Diversity in Leadership" project in 2009 and 2010.

For several years, whenever staff positions were posted, GACOR members were often asked to distribute the announcements and assist in the search for diverse, qualified candidates for employment by the PC(USA). They did so but it is a poor use of their networks and time, and rarely garnered results. They provided that feedback to the bodies.

The tasks outlined in the *Churchwide Plan*, especially the lodging of implementation plans with GACOR, has not been done by GAMC or other corporate entities of the PC(USA) in the time under this review. Requests were not answered, eventually requests stopped. Among the factors for this failure may be the fact that the plan was created at a time with a larger staffing structure and resources. When it was simply a matter of receiving and reviewing reports from staff with these responsibilities, elected leaders had the support they needed to provide the accountability function for the assembly. When that structure shifted, there was no examination of the plan and consideration for adaptations. Instead more layers were applied. Responding to the confusion, the 218th General Assembly (2008) created the Climate for Change Task Force and charged them to bring back recommendations that would untangle the multiple and contradicting requirements imposed by assemblies on PC(USA) corporations regarding affirmative action and equal employment opportunity assessments, cultural proficiency reviews, and supplier diversity programs. As directed, the task force brings its report and recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012) for action. The GACOR has been responding to their inquiries since the beginning and has cooperated with their deliberations. The confusion of who's who and what roles each party has will be resolved by the actions they suggest. The GACOR looks forward to having the assembly once again make its expectations of GACOR's role clear with regard to how it works with the employment of personnel and the church as employer. With the *Book of Order* change in July 2011 that crystallized GACOR functions to three, one being as an advisor on the employment of personnel, this action will provide clarity where there was once little. *The Churchwide Plan for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity* needs revision and GACOR looks forward to having a role in that process. As the document refers directly to GACOR on four occasions and locates the advising and reviewing role with the committee, this is one area where the committee could work more collaboratively with the church in fulfilling its task and continue to support our commitment to inclusiveness within our denomination.

The committee has experienced resistance to sharing employment data and AA/EEO reports from the agencies of the church. The agencies of the General Assembly include the Board of Pensions, the General Assembly Mission Council, the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Pro-

gram, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Items before this assembly should provide more clarity with regard to these tasks.

### C. *Process Observation at the General Assembly*

As the committee looked at its mandate and asked how it was fulfilling the tasks, they considered how they assess the quality of participation in decision-making bodies. Realizing their evaluations often had stopped with who was at the table, they became curious with how the folks at the table were included in the process of decision-making: what the results of representation work had on the inclusiveness of the decisions. This discussion was particularly interesting in light of the action of the 217th General Assembly (2006) and the approval of the peace, unity, and purity report. That action of the assembly declared that different decision-making processes should be explored. The question then was considered, does anyone know what affect different decision-making processes has on participation? Do they have different patterns of participation? In 2010, the GACOR decided to experiment with process observation in General Assembly committees. This is a method that looks at what happened, who participated, and how the decisions were made in committee meetings. In their first attempt they recruited volunteers from the Churchwide Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women who were familiar with process observation and who were planning on attending to observe General Assembly committees in action, as well as approaching the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures who spent some of their time during the assembly observing other committees to gauge how to advise the Stated Clerk on the assignment of reports and actions for the business meeting. The observers were enthusiastic about the process and reported new insights of what actually happened by paying close attention. The GACOR will be doing process observation again at this assembly and has been encouraged to do so by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Stated Clerk. The GACOR looks forward to having more processes other than the default, *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, and learning how that variety may influence who participates, when, and how it impacts the decisions made. The GACOR would like to assist the assembly in exploring decision-making processes and hopes to be a partner to all efforts to this end.

Encouraging and advocating for diverse meeting styles openly invites insights from many communities and widens the wisdom allowed to find expression in the body. The current dominant means of decision-making, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, privileges those who are most familiar and comfortable with its conventions. Becoming more inviting in our meeting styles, whenever that is possible, would encourage new persons, emphasize other leaders who will bring valuable gifts to the table, and widen participation in the decision-making processes of the church. Expanding the means of decision-making also opens leadership to new leaders with different skills, enriching the tradition and witness we have inherited. How limited we are when we only have one way, one measure of a “good leader,” and one expression of being Presbyterian. It is in the spirit of all that committees on representation bring to the councils that they serve, that we hope our efforts at process observation bear fruit for the assembly.

### D. *Receiving and Reporting Disaggregated Data*

Responding to General Assembly actions of 2008 and 2010, the committee began asking for data from the Office of the General Assembly in disaggregated data sets. The best example has been the data on ministers for 2008, 2009, and 2010. The request was for the data sets of two variables (gender and age) and then variables with three in the same set (race, gender, and age). The GACOR has learned a tremendous amount from its first efforts to look at data in disaggregated form. Since data sets, rather than having one variable, have multiple variables they are able to express more realistically a complexity that is more accurate to lived reality. Rather than only being able to say how many ministers are women, or young, or people of color, now we can, for example, see how many young female teaching elders are of Native American ancestry in any year. This equips us to identify potential untapped leaders, communities that have disparities, areas where support and discernment may be of assistance. We can also share valuable information with our partners. Not all data is collected in ways that can be reported in a disaggregated fashion. The GACOR hopes more entities will collect data in ways that support disaggregated measures—that will take changing institutional practices.

### E. *Transparent Reporting for Synod Data*

With the 2012 conversion to the new website, GACOR wants to explore ways it can use the website to equip advocates for diversity in their councils. Online report submission is one wished for capacity. Delays caused by hardware and technical staff availability required this to still be a dream. Online reporting will allow data to be collected already in spreadsheet formats so it can be analyzed more easily. Interpreting the data, GACOR can then turn around and post abbreviated content from the synod forms for all to access. Over time, we would be able to show trend data on each synod—comparing its performance on its goals to itself. We have explored linking general demographic data from the synods to the website with their reports, further providing context for the data. We are excited about the possibilities and continue to work to make them realities.

### F. *Utilizing New Technologies*

With the diminishing financial resources, the committee has had to reduce the number of its face-to-face meetings from three to two per year. Expanding costs will continue to challenge our budgets. The GACOR recognizes it needs to explore using more technological solutions for its meetings, whether its “skyping” a presenter into the meeting, using webinars to

conduct trainings remotely, using the website to embed video resources, or designing new communications vehicles to re-source mid council leaders. The committee is aware not all technology is accessible. The needs of people with disabilities often point out weaknesses in technological means, but we commit to learning how we might maximize our human and technological capital to encourage the work of committees on representation and to serve Christ's church.

## V. NEW GOALS

Most of the areas of improvement are connected to new or emerging work the GACOR is exploring. Here are goals the committee has set for itself in light of what it has learned.

1. The GACOR proposes that the assembly support its "process observation" and that evaluations be expanded to be conducted in all the assembly committee meetings

*Connecting the representational make up of any committee and its room setting, with the processes used for decisions and the impact of those factors on participation is a valuable exercise. It provides valuable feedback for leaders of future assembly committees as they plan for how they will do the work that is assigned to them. This process would enhance the equity, fairness, and opportunity for all commissioners and advisory delegates to participate in decision-making. It is valuable to continue coordinating this observation with the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.*

2. Recommend the assembly designate GACOR to be a corresponding member to the General Assembly Mission Council.

*This would improve the working relationship while removing barriers between the bodies. Corresponding members have access to communicate advice, counsel, and concerns more effectively. Regardless, GACOR will continue to seek ways to improve its relationship with the GAMC and will continue to send a member to observe its meetings.*

3. Recommend that the way be made clear in the PC(USA) to report more data in disaggregated means. Direct GACOR to participate in any review of statistical data reporting and collection.

*This may involve reviewing what barriers prevent past assembly actions from being enacted The assembly may again direct entities that report representational data, to do so in disaggregated ways to equip the church to foster better self-understanding and to make persons from underrepresented groups more visible so that adaptive responses may be developed to support their leadership and full participation. The GACOR will consider how it may interpret its experience with disaggregated data so as to encourage others to explore its use.*

4. Explore ways the GACOR can continue to love into the more flexible Constitution while continuing to fulfill its functions. Study the emerging structures and changes in the PC(USA) and recommend means for councils to remain connected and accountable to one another.

*There are several actions before this assembly that if approved by the body, sent to presbyteries for their vote, and if ratified would radically change the structures of church life. An example would be removing synods as councils of the church (proposed in the Mid Council Commission report). Doing so would change the councils that GACOR directly relates to and would have profound impact on the ways it can do its work. This will take imaginative leaders, committed to diversity and full participation.*

## VI. PROCESS OF SELF-STUDY

The Executive Committee used the recommendations from the previous study as a guide in its deliberations and planning. In 2011, the GACOR appointed a subgroup to oversee the process of self-study. Considering the majority of the persons serving in 2010 (9 of 16) had been elected at the 219th General Assembly (2010), the committee recruited a former member to assist with the self-study. The subgroup implemented a number of strategies to review the work of the GACOR and to gather feedback for this report. The subcommittee:

1. Reviewed the minutes of the GACOR for the review period, along with all other public documents and reports that the committee produced;
2. Reviewed synod and caucus reports, statistics;
3. Reviewed the evaluations of all meetings and training events;
4. Reviewed the materials from the previous General Assembly review of GACOR (in 2006);
5. Reviewed General Assembly-approved actions related to GACOR's work; and
6. Developed survey instruments, in collaboration with Research Services.

The process of self-study for GACOR has been a productive experience for the committee, helping it celebrate both its considerable accomplishments over the last six years as well as identify areas for future work.

The following persons served on the review subgroup:

The Reverend Dr. Stanley Bhasker, Class of 2012, Synod of the Trinity, Asian, Adult;

The Reverend Heather Walchar, Class of 2014, Synod of the Mid-America, White, Young Adult;

Elder Angela Battle, Class of 2012, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, African-American, Adult;

The Reverend Carol Tompkins, Former GACOR Member (2002-2008), Synod of the Sun, White, Adult.

The GACOR received updates from the review subgroup and adopted their report at its February 2012 meeting.

#### Endnotes

1. The witness of councils is currently described in G-3.0101 and following in the *Book of Order* (2011–2013) and the General Assembly was specifically described at G-13.0100 and following in the former *Book of Order*.
2. Reunion in 1983 was of two denominations—the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS)—to create the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Articles of Agreement may be found in the *Book of Order (2011–2013)* as Appendix B.
3. The use of male language in this confession was intended to be a general reference to humanity and not exclusively describing male experiences. The exclusive use of masculine language shows how even when the church sought to confront idolatries in race and ethnicity present in the moment, it remained blind to other discriminatory practice. There is an inclusive language version of this confession provided by the Theology, Worship and Education office of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC)—it can be downloaded here: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/inclusive-language-version-confession-1967/>
4. U.S. Census data projections: 50 percent of total U.S. population will be people of color in 2042, for children, 50 percent will be people of color in 2023. The percentage of the population in the “working ages” (from 18 to 64) is expected to decline from 63 percent in 2008 to 57 percent in 2050, <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb08-123.html>.
5. Percentage of persons of color in the PC(USA) membership is 9 percent as taken from the 2009 Comparative Statistics available here: [http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2009\\_table\\_14.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/2009_table_14.pdf).
6. Often cited phrase throughout the Form of Government, quoted in reference to committees on representation (including the GACOR) at G-3.0103.
7. See Item 16-02 which is a recommended action from the General Assembly Mission Council. There is also a website highlighting this initiative available here: <http://gamic.pcusa.org/ministries/1001/>.
8. Isms refer in this usage to the artificial limits imposed to privilege some over others in society that are delineated on aspects of identity. Examples may be on sex, race, age, etc.
9. See Attachment D for a full list of persons who have served on GACOR in the review period.
10. A copy of the *Churchwide Plan* will be available by request during the 220th General Assembly (2012).
11. See Footnote 4 for the link to the data.
12. See the agency summary submitted to the 220th General Assembly (2012) by GACOR. The report has examples of this data and the insights it provides.
13. See <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/synod-committee-representation-annual-report-form/> for the synod report form due in 2011. It is also available in Spanish here: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/synod-committee-representation-annual-report-span/>.
14. Governing bodies was language used under the *Book of Order* until the adoption of the 2011–2013 edition, in which these levels of church organization are referred to as mid councils. The document was “A Report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993).” It documents the histories of all-Black synods and presbyteries that ended with reunion in 1983. It can be accessed here: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/all-black-governing-bodies/>.
15. The Middle Governing Bodies Commission (MGBC) was created by action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) and with constitutional reform is now called the Mid Council Commission (MCC).
16. Excerpted here, G-3.0103 is quoted in its entirety on page 5 of this report.
17. A copy of the GACOR *Manual of Operations* will be available by request during the 220th General Assembly (2012).
18. This resource is available on the website here: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/manual-general-assembly-ga220/>
19. As mentioned in a previous footnote, a copy of the *Churchwide Plan* will be available by request during the 220th General Assembly (2012).
20. The COGA has sent a recommendation to the 220th General Assembly (2012) to have the *Organization for Mission* reflect this task of the GACOR. See Item 03-06.

21. There is some concern when this aspect of diversity is raised as most important. Often privileged persons (persons who receive significant unearned advantage) and who do not share many intersecting identities that disadvantage them in church and society, latch on to the rare instances when they feel marginalized. With this limited and self-interested sight, they then use their significant privilege to enter the debate and demand their (perceived and/or real) disadvantage be taken more seriously than others' intersecting disadvantage. When this happens it threatens to overshadow truly marginalized persons and characteristics that are the chief cause of disparities in access and leadership within the body. The GACOR holds that theological conviction is one of several factors that should be considered when a candidate is examined for fitness to be nominated to a particular body and is seeking the information it needs to more fully include it as a factor in its advice.

### Attachment A

#### Articles 8 and 9 of the Articles of Agreement

*The Articles of Agreement appear in Appendix B of the Book of Order (2011–2013)*

#### ARTICLE 8. RACIAL ETHNIC REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

8.1 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall provide for a Committee on Representation for each governing body above the Session. Its membership shall consist of equal numbers of men and women. A majority of the members shall be selected from the racial ethnic groups within the governing body and the total membership shall include persons from each of the following categories:

- a. majority male membership
- b. majority female membership
- c. racial ethnic male membership
- d. racial ethnic female membership
- e. youth male and female membership

Its main function shall be to guide the governing bodies with respect to their membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies and other units, in implementation of the principles of participation and inclusiveness, to ensure effective representation in the decision making of the church.

8.2 Governing bodies of the Church shall be responsible for implementing the Church's commitment to inclusiveness and participation which provides for the full expression of the rich diversity within its membership. All governing bodies shall work to become more open and inclusive and to correct past patterns of discrimination on the basis of racial ethnic background.

Racial ethnic members in the United States (Presbyterians of African, Hispanic and Asian descent and Native Americans) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the Church, and shall be able to form caucuses.

Participation and representation of racial ethnic membership shall be assured by the Committees on Representation (8.1).

8.3 Consistent with the principles of diversity and inclusiveness as set forth in 8.2, the General Assembly Council shall consult with and receive input from the racial caucuses of the Church, and shall make provision for the expenses necessary to such consultations.

The purposes of such consultations shall include:

determining the priorities for assisting racial ethnic churches and ministries,

developing a denominational strategy for racial ethnic church development,

finding ways to assure the funding and operational needs of schools and other institutions which historically have served Black Americans and other racial ethnic groups.

8.4 Racial ethnic educational institutions have been the primary source from which racial ethnic church leadership has developed. Consistent with the dire need for racial ethnic church leadership, the General Assembly Council shall propose to the General Assembly ways whereby the General Assembly shall be able to fulfill its responsibility for education through colleges and secondary schools and for meeting the operational and developmental needs of those Presbyterian schools that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups.

#### ARTICLE 9. WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

9.1 The Committees on Representation required by G-9.0105 for each governing body above the Session shall guide those bodies, with respect to their membership and that of their committees, boards, agencies and other units, in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness, to ensure the fair representation of women, both of the majority race and of racial ethnic groups, in the decision making of the Church.

9.2 The General Assembly Council in consultation with elected representatives from each recognized women's group of both Churches shall make provision for the continuation of the women's programs and organizations of the two Churches at all levels, until such time as programs are formulated as described in 9.3.

9.3 A group of representatives elected by each recognized women's group from the two Churches shall meet to develop programs and organizations, these proposals to be approved by the constituent groups. Such approval shall be reported to the General Assembly Council by the Executive Committees of each of the women's groups. The group shall report to the General Assembly annually and is expected to complete its work in six years.

## Attachment B

Former *Book of Order* References Regarding GACOR*Book of Order (2009–2011), Form of Government*

## G-9.0105 Committee on Representation

## G-9.0105a. Governing Body Shall Elect

Each governing body above the session shall elect a committee on representation, whose membership shall consist of equal numbers of men and women. A majority of the members shall be selected from the racial ethnic groups (such as Presbyterians of African, Hispanic, and Asian descent and Native Americans) within the governing body, and the total membership shall include persons from each of the following categories:

- (1) majority male membership
- (2) majority female membership
- (3) racial ethnic male membership
- (4) racial ethnic female membership
- (5) youth male and female membership
- (6) persons with disabilities.

## G-9.0105b. Advise Regarding Membership

Its main function shall be to advise the governing bodies with respect to their membership and to that of their committees, boards, agencies, and other units in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church.

## G-9.0105c. Advocate and Resource

The committee on representation shall serve both as an advocate for the representation of racial ethnic members, women, different age groups, and persons with disabilities, and as a continuing resource to the particular governing body in these areas. The committee on representation shall review the performance of its own governing body in these matters and shall report annually to it and to the next higher governing body with recommendations for any needed corrective action. The committee on representation shall consult with the nominating committee of its own governing body.

## G-9.0105d. Consult with Racial Ethnic Membership

Prior to nomination or appointment of racial ethnic members to committees, boards, agencies, or other units, the committee on representation shall consult with the appropriate racial ethnic membership through a person or persons designated by that racial ethnic membership. In situations where racial ethnic membership is low, the committee on representation of each governing body shall consult with racial ethnic members, sessions, nominating committees, and persons designated by national racial ethnic membership to discover potential racial ethnic members of such body and to determine achievable representation. Prior to nomination or appointment of women to the above agencies, the committee on representation shall consult with the appropriate constituencies of women through a person or persons designated by those constituencies.

## G-9.0105e. Employment of Personnel

The committee on representation shall advise the governing body on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of participation and representation (G-4.0403), and in conformity with a churchwide plan for equal employment opportunity. (G-13.0201b)

## G-9.0105f. Stands Alone

The committee on representation shall not, in any governing body, be merged with any other committee or designated as a subcommittee of any other committee.

## G-9.0106 Exceptions

## G-9.0106a. Exception to G-9.0105a

Exceptions to the provisions of G-9.0105a requiring a majority of the members to be selected from racial ethnic groups shall be allowed by a governing or electing body only if it is unable to secure the participation or representation of the necessary persons, and this fact shall be made a part of the official record of the governing, electing, or appointing body. No exception is permitted to the requirement that each governing body above the session elect a committee on representation.

## G-9.0106b. Approval for Up to One Year

An exception under G-9.0106a may be allowed for up to one year by governing body action at a meeting. The approval of such exception shall be promptly reported by the stated clerk to the next higher governing body through its stated clerk and committee on representation, which committee shall monitor the lower governing body and its committee on representation during the period of the exception.

## G-12.0301 Committee on Representation

Each synod shall establish a committee on representation, as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise synod's nominating committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The committee on representation shall report at least biennially to synod progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403.

## 19 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

### G-13.0108 Committee on Representation

The General Assembly shall establish a permanent Committee on Representation as required by G-9.0105, which shall advise the General Assembly Nominating Committee of any need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation shall report to each meeting of the General Assembly (other than special or adjourned meetings) regarding progress toward fair representation of the categories of persons listed in G-4.0403. The committee shall consist of members equal in number to the synods of the church, each member resident in a different synod, and members distributed so that there are one third ministers (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen.

### G-13.0202b. Nominating Committee of the General Assembly

In the nominating process, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall consult with the General Assembly Mission Council to identify needed skills, and shall provide for diversity and inclusiveness in accordance with G-4.0403. It will maintain a goal of at least twenty percent racial ethnic membership for the General Assembly Mission Council. It will also follow the provisions of G-9.0104, G-9.0105, and G-13.0111 and shall ensure that, exclusive of the Moderator and predecessor Moderators, one third of the members are ministers of the Word and Sacrament (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen. The committee will also provide that members be nominated in such a manner as to provide three classes of approximately equal size. Any vacancy occurring during a term shall be filled pursuant to General Assembly policies.

## Attachment C

### Current *Book of Order* Reference Regarding GACOR

#### *Book of Order (2011–2013), Form of Government*

### G-3.0103 *Participation and Representation*

The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church's membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403). In fulfilling this commitment, councils shall give due consideration to both the gifts and requirements for ministry (G-2.0104) and the right of people in congregations and councils to elect their officers (F-3.0106).

Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body's implementation of the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation. Councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403. A committee on representation should not be merged with another committee or made a subcommittee of another committee.

### G-3.0111 *Nominating Process*

All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the council. The process shall ensure that nominations are made by an entity broadly representative of the constituency of the council, and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity (F-1.0403).

## Attachment D

### Members Who Served on the General Assembly Committee on Representation Between 2006 and 2012

[For text of this attachment, see [gacor-self-study-attachment-d.pdf](#) or see page 1623.]

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## Item 19-Self-Study ACC

### *Advisory Committee on the Constitution Self-Study Prepared for the 220th General Assembly (2012)*

#### A SELF STUDY OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION YEARS January 1, 2005–December 31, 2011 *LOOKING BACK TO LEAP FORWARD*

### Introduction

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) presents the following report as a measurement of performance for the six-year review period of January 1, 2005, through December 31, 2011. The previous self-study of the ACC occurred in 2006.

The ACC welcomes the opportunity to undergo its six year self-study. The commencement of this self-evaluation coincides with the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to replace the Form of Government with a new Foundations of

Presbyterian Polity and a new Form of Government, a pivotal time in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The ACC's interaction around the adoption of the new Form of Government in many ways reflects how the ACC effectively serves and supports the church's mission by providing advice, without advocacy, in matters of interpretation and amendment of the Constitution. In the instance of the new Form of Government, the ACC first worked with the Form of Government Task Force to give appropriate feedback in the drafting of the new Constitution, then provided advice to the 219th General Assembly Committee (2010) concerning the Form of Government proposal, and finally was present in support of that advice with the standing committee of the assembly appointed to deal with the proposed revision.

The ACC joins the entire denomination as we collectively approach a paradigm shift in constitutional structure and as we perform a self evaluation that looks back to leap forward.

## CHAPTER I: THE TASK

The task of self-study is a process of the General Assembly that occurs every six years. The ACC looks inward and evaluates its work based on review standards covering the previous six years and is required to file its report 120 days prior to the 220th General Assembly (2012). Simultaneously the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), in consultation with the ACC, develops a survey instrument by the Office of Research Services. Finally the review responsibilities are vested in a designated assembly committee. The standards that are under review are covered under two broad headings: (1) Fidelity to Mission and Purpose; and (2) Effectiveness of Services. As presented this report provides a description of the ACC's work and performance, as requested in the "*Manual - Assembly Committee on Review*" (Appendix 11) and addresses the self-study criteria indicated in the "Standards for Review of General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committee and Commissions" (Appendix 12). Thus, the study provides two things: (1) a firm and focused sense of the ACC's mission in the life of church, and (2) clear and specific ways to improve the performance and effectiveness of the ACC.

The ACC moderator, Paul K. Hooker, appointed Susan B. Evans to conduct the self-study project, and he assisted her as needed. They were supported by Joanne Green, senior administrative assistant with the Office of the General Assembly Constitutional Services, who is more than an equal partner. Paul says it best when he, in a survey response, wrote: "*Joanne Green (Mark Tammen often said) is what we in the South call a Steel Magnolia—sweet spirited, pleasant, loving, and beneath it a will of iron and a readiness to use it. Joanne never says "no" to a task to be done, and always more than delivers on expectations.*" Finally we thank the ACC predecessor self-study committee chaired by Kim Leech. We used its report as the foundation for this report and have freely borrowed from its research and its scholarship. We also stand on the good will that its good work has engendered for the ACC. We thank these generous scholars for providing such inspired and inspiring leadership in the work that we do and that we love.

### A. *A Brief History*

The ACC was created with the reunion of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1983. Prior to that, the predecessor denominations had relied upon the respective General Assembly stated clerks to do several of the functions now assigned to the ACC. In The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, it was the General Assembly's Stated Clerk—who was charged with interpreting the denomination's Constitution—who would draft the opinions and polity advice pertaining to any overture that sought to amend the Constitution. This overture counsel from the Stated Clerk was summarily presented to the General Assembly's polity committee for assembly action at the time of the annual General Assembly meeting.<sup>1</sup> The Presbyterian Church in the United States utilized a different mechanism in regard to proposed overtures that sought to change the Constitution. Predictably, the Stated Clerk was the primary ecclesiastical officer; however, any overtures submitted to the Office of the Stated Clerk were duly presented to the Permanent Judicial Commission for action.<sup>2</sup>

The original 1983 formula for ACC membership, previously G-13.0112a, set the number of members at six; but this did not last long, undoubtedly because the number of overtures to the assembly was more than six persons could reasonably handle, and an amendment to the *Book of Order*, setting the number of members at nine, was approved by the assembly in 1985. The ACC, throughout its history, has had a commitment to remain within the parameters of its constitutional mandate and has not expressed a need to expand or alter its fundamental responsibilities to the General Assembly and the church.

### B. *Organization and Responsibilities*

The ACC is established by the *Book of Order* G-6.02 (previously G-13.0112):

The General Assembly shall elect an Advisory Committee on the Constitution composed of nine persons, teaching elders and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be a member *ex officio* without vote. No person who has served on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for a full term of six years shall be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six-year term. The General Assembly shall provide by its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. (G-6.02) (See Appendix 1 for the *Book of Order* citations that outline the constitutional mandate for the ACC.)

The description of committee and member responsibilities is in the *Manual of Procedures for the Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. (See Appendix 2) The life-center of the ACC



revolves around the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its role in the life of the church. For instance, any questions requiring an interpretation of the *Book of Order* are referred to the ACC by the Stated Clerk (G-6.02, previously G-13.0112c, d). It is the role of the Stated Clerk routinely to make decisions about referring matters that arrive at the Office of the Stated Clerk.<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix 3 for the Standing Rules that describe the role of the Stated Clerk.) In many respects, the ACC is directly related to the Stated Clerk and the Office of the General Assembly, but is an independent entity of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk is an ex-officio member of the ACC, but the actions of the ACC are not subservient to the Stated Clerk. The ACC does not have the authority to interpret the Constitution regarding requests for interpretation of the Constitution, but rather it makes recommendations (advice) to the General Assembly for action, which may be to approve, disapprove, or modify the counsel of the ACC:

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall communicate its report and recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly, no less than sixty days prior to the General Assembly. (G-6.02)

Preceding the meeting of the General Assembly, the bulk of the ACC's work involves overtures to the General Assembly, which chiefly are proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* (G-6.04b, previously G-18.0301b), and requests for interpretation of the Constitution. The ACC's advice to the General Assembly on the typical flurry of overtures and requests to the General Assembly, many of them controversial, have only the authority of being recommendations from a special General Assembly entity.

### C. *The ACC's Call to Mission*

The ACC serves and supports the church's mission by providing the General Assembly advice in matters of interpretation and amendment of the Constitution of the PC(USA). In this work, the ACC serves and supports the church's mission by assisting the General Assembly to make choices about the interpretation and amendment of the Constitution, and more particularly, the *Book of Order*, with an understanding of the context of their choices and the consequences of proposed actions. To perform this function, the ACC prepares advice to commissioners at each assembly as to each item of business seeking an interpretation or amendment of the *Book of Order*. In light of this charge, exhibiting "a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role" has several aspects: (1) faithfully providing advice on each item sent to an assembly that suggest a constitutional interpretation or amendment; (2) providing such advice in a manner that is clear and understandable to its audience (i.e., General Assembly commissioners); and (3) providing such advice without becoming advocates for particular factions of the PC(USA). (See Appendix 4 for a full description of the duties of the ACC at the meetings of the General Assembly.)

Prior to the General Assembly meeting, the ACC expresses its partnership role by consulting with various entities that will be making significant reports to the General Assembly. For example at the 218th General Assembly (2008) one important item of business had to do with reaffirming the authority of the General Assembly to guide and set mission priorities for other entities related to the Assembly. The ACC advice set the stage for the General Assembly to form a restricted funds resolution committee and significantly supported the mission of the church. The ACC expresses partnership in mission by regularly consulting with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC). Upon request and need, the ACC continues its servant function by working with various other entities, including governing bodies of the PC(USA).

Another example of partnership and collaboration in the fulfillment of its mission was at the 219th General Assembly (2010) when the ACC and PJC worked together to seek resolution to the issue of the continuing status of authoritative interpretations of the *Book of Order* (AIs) in light of the passage of the new Form of Government. The fruit of that cooperation was the Special Committee on Authoritative Interpretations, whose work will be reviewed by the 220th General Assembly (2012). During the assembly, the primary arena for the ACC's advice is with the various General Assembly committees (assembly committees) that have business related to some aspect of the Constitution. Members of the ACC are assigned to the assembly committees that have business with constitutional implications. The role of the ACC members who staff assembly committees is very carefully sculpted: the ACC counsel should faithfully provide information on those items being designated for the assembly that require a constitutional interpretation or amendment. That advice is to be expressed in a manner that is clear and understandable to the General Assembly commissioners and any audience present at the assembly committee meeting. Most importantly, the ACC's recommendations, because of its focus upon its understanding of the Constitution, shall be neutral in political tone and shall not advocate a position of any entity or group of the PC(USA).

The ACC's role is constitutional, and supports the mission of the church by guiding the assembly in the authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order* to provide for order and justice in the common life of the church, "For God is a God not of disorder, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33a). In this way, we help shelter the children of God from injustice and abuse arising out of confusion and disorder, and help exhibit the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (*Book of Order*, F-1.0304). The ACC consistently attempts neutrally to evaluate constitutional matters before the assembly. It takes great pains to give careful, constructive, critique to proposals. The ACC endeavors to be particularly sensitive to the sometimes volatile sentiments and beliefs expressed in our theologically diverse denomination. The ACC views these realities as an opportunity for further educat-

ing and reminding the church of the principles and beliefs expressed in our Constitution. The fundamentals of our polity continue to guide and inspire the church when they are applied in the decision-making process.

#### D. *The ACC's Faithfulness in Its Servant Role*

The ACC's faithfulness to and fulfillment of its servant role is vividly shown in its commitment to neutrality on difficult issues before the church. While sometimes goaded to be partisan, the committee has maintained and enforced within itself high standards of objectivity and neutrality, in order that its service to the church might be trusted (Catherine MacDonald, ACC 2012). Further, the ACC has strengthened its service by increasingly seeing its role as educational and instructive. Most commissioners to an assembly do not come with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the inter-workings of different sections of the Form of Government or the Rules of Discipline. Former ACC moderator, Jim Wilson, states in his survey response that "the advice the ACC gave during my tenure on the committee generally did a good job of helping commissioners understand those inter-workings, and thus make well-informed judgments about the alternatives offered them." In preparing this advice, the ACC must be, and generally has been, sensitive to the distinction between advocacy and advice, while still offering its wisdom as to the unintended or less than obvious consequences of particular options being considered. The ACC's advice given the past few assemblies regarding the options available with respect to the ordination of gay and lesbian Presbyterians, and its advice regarding adoption of the new Form of Government are examples in which the ACC has done a good job of presenting the assembly with options and consequences, without stepping over the line into an advocacy position.

It should be noted that on two occasions since the last self-study the ACC has been named as a party in a remedial case submitted to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. *Remedial Case 218-03, Session of Palos Park Presbyterian Community Church v. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* involved a complaint alleging that the ACC had not adequately responded to questions submitted to it by individuals prior to the 217th General Assembly (2006). Both parties submitted to mediation, and a consent agreement was developed that clarified how the ACC should respond to multiple requests on similar topics. The second, *Remedial Case 218-21, Robert E. Leech, as President and CEO of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation v. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, complained about advice given by the ACC to the 218th General Assembly (2008), and was dismissed on multiple jurisdictional grounds prior to being heard.

While the above cases consumed significant energy and time of the ACC, they demonstrate the very public nature of the work of the ACC and the inevitable consequence that even in the desire to maintain neutrality in matters referred to us, those who disagree with our advice may perceive our neutrality as advocacy against their position. We believe the outcomes of both cases should be regarded as an affirmation both of our work and of our willingness to find ways to become better servants of the whole church.

In sum, the ACC primarily acts in a servant capacity: it does not initiate its own agenda; rather it responds to requests from the church for interpretation of existing provisions of the *Book of Order* and provides counsel to the assembly regarding amendments to the *Book of Order*. In addition, the ACC serves the assembly in an advisory capacity when required. Members of the ACC often contribute hundreds of hours of volunteer service in preparation for a particular meeting of the General Assembly, and in service while the assembly is in session. Members of the ACC much like the members of other committees and commissions, boards and ministries in church councils large and small throughout our denomination, are grateful to the presbytery and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for affording us the privilege to serve.

#### E. *The Interface Between the ACC's Constitutional Mandate and Being Equipped to Respond to the Needs of the Church*

Honoring the ACC's historic charge does not easily lend itself to the notion of being a visionary entity. The ACC's primary function is to be reactive and responsive to the business that is routinely placed before the committee. The *Book of Order* places some rather stringent parameters on what the committee can and cannot do. The committee has learned that one of the key components to being visionary in its work is to cherish the past and use it to reflect upon the future. Frequently, when the ACC has crafted its written response to an overture to the General Assembly (GA), the recommendation will cite (and remind the assembly) of historic events that shaped the denomination as well as drawing attention to past assembly actions and judicial decisions that are still relevant and helpful.

The ACC is keenly aware and concerned about emerging issues in the church—especially the issues that have a polemical and divisive nature. Ordinarily, the ACC addresses these issues in the context of an ACC response to an overture or a concern that arises in the assembly's plenary session. And, the ACC continues to discipline itself not to take an advocacy position on any matter before the assembly.

At appropriate times, the ACC authors a "trend paper" or research paper that endeavors to be "ahead of the curve" on matters that are underway in the church. These papers are for internal use only. Some of the topics that have been researched over the last six years include: Essential Beliefs and Essential Behaviors; Christian Educators; G-2.0500a(2)—Faith of the Reformed Tradition; Ecumenical Issues; Diversity and Inclusion; Per Capita Apportionment; Ordination Standards; and Property Clause.

## CHAPTER II: SELF-STUDY STRATEGIES AND PROCESSES

A primary principle for this self-study is that there be a conspicuous alignment between the self-study strategy and processes if consistent results are to be obtained. Largely, there are two parties in this study: (1) ACC members and former members, and (2) persons who are “consumers” of the ACC’s advice. Because the intent is not only to provide a self-study, but also to solicit perceptions of the ACC from important others, several survey instruments were designed that would generate the information in an honest, objective, and fair manner. In addition, two sets of surveys were prepared and distributed. The first set was designed/modified and distributed by the ACC subcommittee based on a previous self-study of the ACC (2006) and a second survey instrument designed and distributed by the General Assembly Office of Research Services (GAORS). Gathering clear candid data was the goal of both of the survey instruments. The following survey instruments were utilized:

*ACC Instruments*

Survey #1 Fidelity to Mission and Partnership (Appendix 5)

Survey #2 Effectiveness of Services (Appendix 6)

Survey #3 The Work of the Committee (Appendix 7)

*Recipients of the surveys were:*

Surveys #1, #2, #3 went to ACC members; ACC alumni, years 2004–2010; Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk and member of the ACC, ex-officio; Thomas Hay, interim director of the Office of Constitutional Services (ConServ), Office of the General Assembly; Joanne Green, ConServ senior administrative assistant to the ACC.

Joanne Green was designated the recipient of the completed ACC surveys. She created compilations of each category of survey. The final compilations were sent to Susan Evans and Paul Hooker for study, evaluation, and reflection. The initial draft was presented at the ACC’s fall meeting, which commenced October 15, 2011. At that meeting, the self-study draft was discussed and changes were implemented.

*GAORS Instruments*

Survey #4 Evaluating the ACC (Appendices 8 and 9)

Survey #5 Evaluating the ACC (Appendices 8 and 9)

Survey #4 went to mid council executives and stated clerks

Survey #5 went to 219th General Assembly (2010) commissioners

The staff of the General Assembly Office of Research Services worked tirelessly and efficiently to design and disseminate survey invitations to mid council executives and stated clerks, and to 219th General Assembly (2010) commissioners. It was no small feat as the terminology in the constitution was in flux as the church transitioned from the old Form of Government to the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government in the midst of the survey process. The efforts of Perry Chang, associate for Survey Research, who kept us informed and stayed at the cutting edge of technology, were greatly appreciated. The General Assembly Office of Research Services also compiled the responses, prepared a report, and submitted its findings both to the ACC and the assembly.

## CHAPTER III: EFFECTIVENESS

*Webster’s Dictionary* defines *effective* as, “...producing the intended or expected result.”

This self-study will explore the performance and role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) within the context of the larger institutional environment of the General Assembly (GA) and the spiritual lives of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In a stringent effort to derive objective and honest information, the surveys targeted several levels and arenas of persons that have felt the impact of the ACC’s work. The harvest of the survey information provides a keen portrait of the ACC’s worth, precisely because the ACC is uniquely effective the manifestation of its constitutional mandate. According to the description of the functions of the ACC in the *Book of Order* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the primary orientation of the ACC is to the meetings of the General Assembly. However, the data are clear that the impact and effectiveness of the ACC is felt throughout the church in numerous ways, on multiple levels of governance and in the daily lives of Presbyterians.

A. *On the General Assembly Level*

In preparation for a meeting of the General Assembly, the most conspicuous and common tasks before the committee are the preparation of the written responses to requests for interpretation of the *Book of Order* (G-6.02 previously G-13.0112c)

and the committee's recommendations to the assembly regarding overtures that seek to change the Constitution (G-6.04 previously G-13.0112d). The *Book of Order* requires that the ACC meet prior to each session of the General Assembly and submit its recommendations to the Stated Clerk no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the assembly (G-6.04b previously G-13.0112b). The ACC performs its work by initially assigning each item of business coming to an assembly (or in the more unusual case, items referred by an assembly to the ACC) to a drafting team. Each member of the drafting team prepares a draft comment or response to each item of business assigned it. Once the drafting team agrees on a proposed response, that draft is presented to the entire committee for discussion and revision. Only after several redrafts does an item generally receive approval from the entire committee for submission to an assembly. This process is effective in creating consensus among committee members as to the appropriate reasoning and conclusions to be submitted to the assembly, and forces discipline and rigorous writing and analysis. Fortunately, this work all occurs within an atmosphere of community and common mission that places the integrity of our responsibilities to the church above any personal interests, an approach that should be a model to the rest of the PC(USA) (James Wilson, ACC alumnus 2010). When the ACC's recommendations are submitted to the Stated Clerk, they are the result of arduous toil, both by individual members of the ACC as well as the full committee. Some overtures, in particular, require extensive research and study that is labor intensive. These recommendations soon enter the public domain, initially as Reports to the General Assembly, and are distributed to elected commissioners prior to the General Assembly meeting. The ACC recommendations become part of the printed record of the General Assembly in the *Minutes of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part I*, which are available to every stated clerk and council in the PC(USA).

By the time the General Assembly convenes, the ACC has made extensive and thorough preparations for each item of business that requires ACC presence and assistance in General Assembly committees, such as the Church Polity Committee. Because the General Assembly committee structure is set months before the assembly convenes, each ACC member has been given his/her GA committee assignments, which may include several different committees. It is the responsibility of the ACC member to be fully prepared to interpret in full to the GA committee the rationale for the ACC's recommendations. Members of the ACC are not authorized to deviate from the ACC recommendations to offer personal opinions. It is the responsibility of any ACC member assigned to a General Assembly committee to introduce oneself to the committee's leadership team prior to the convening of that committee for business. At that time, ACC members will request a moment of time on the committee's agenda to state briefly the role of the ACC. Comments from the survey underscore the importance of an early working relationship between the leadership team and the ACC member(s). In those committees with controversial business items, it is not uncommon for the ACC representatives to be called upon multiple times by the committee leadership, as well as by individual members of the committee. Members of the ACC, in preparation for the General Assembly, are trained to utilize those times in GA committees when questions arise for the ACC as "teaching moments" about our polity and Constitution. However there is a minority opinion amongst commissioners that "the committee has a disproportionate amount of influence in the GA and its committees. This influence is used to intimidate commissioners and direct discussions to promote desired outcomes." The greater response from commissioners of the 219th General Assembly (2010) can be summed up in the following response: "I was extraordinarily impressed with the Advisory Committee. Their impartial and factual information helped me immensely to understand much of what I was hearing in the committee meeting. This committee is most important to new commissioners which many of us may be." Another view point from leadership: "I was the Moderator of the Polity Committee for the 219th GA. We relied on the ACC's guidance and expertise and they did not disappoint. They were thorough, attentive, and objective."

Perhaps the best indicator of ACC effectiveness at the General Assembly meetings, whether it is regarding the written recommendations on business items or the oral interpretations in GA committees, is the relative absence of complaints or criticisms of the ACC. One of the most meaningful experiences for ACC members is to hear, during the GA plenary discussion, a commissioner echoing verbatim written recommendations of the ACC. Surely the most important indicator of GA effectiveness is the esteem and appreciation of the ACC by the GA commissioners, and at each assembly there is considerable praise for the ACC.

#### B. *The ACC as Communicator*

The ACC's constitutional responsibilities require it to be primarily reactive, not proactive in its communications. It is an advisory committee and should not initiate discussion of issues before the PC(USA). The constraints of the *Book of Order* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly have successfully prevented the ACC from becoming tainted by or accused of having any political agenda. The ACC, therefore, is not charged with or expected to communicate to the church at large directly, and it has scrupulously avoided doing so.

Although the opportunities for communications are limited, the ACC's primary communications with the church-at-large is through its comments to proposed actions of each assembly, which are posted on the denomination's website prior to the assembly. The ACC has sought to bring its reports earlier each year to the assembly, and to structure them when they were posted to make them as clear as possible to anyone reviewing an assembly's business online.

In addition, the ACC is literally on the record regarding constitutional issues that have come to the General Assembly for action. Not only do the *Minutes* contain the ACC recommendations but also the electronic version of each GA's *Annotated Book of Order* contains ACC advice on overtures that sought to amend the *Book of Order*. At each meeting of the General Assembly, the ACC makes a formal entity report that is also included in the *Minutes*. Typically, the ACC report provides

general information about the nature of the ACC and its constitutional mandate of service to the General Assembly and the church; and it also renders specific comments on the nature of the business before the Assembly that has constitutional implications.

The ACC occasionally communicates in unseen and yet important ways typically within the context of General Assembly entities. “When directed by the General Assembly or when requested by an agency or committee of the General Assembly, the committee may consult with said agencies or committees on constitutional matters.”<sup>4</sup>The ACC sees itself as having a small, yet significant role as being servant to the General Assembly and the church as well as being in partnership with various key GA entities. An example of this consultation is the ACC’s conversation with the Form of Government Task Force on issues arising from their early drafts of the revised Foundations and Form of Government; another is the work the ACC has done in offering constitutional guidance to the Mid Council Commission over the past two years. There is a strong “comfort zone” for the ACC members in its role as communicator because of the power and wisdom of the Constitution and the Scriptures, “Your decrees are my delight; they are my counselors” (Ps. 119:24).

### C. *Fidelity to Mission*

The ACC has always completed its work in a timely, but thorough and comprehensive manner. Of more significance is the ACC’s awareness of its responsibility in providing a high-quality of performance in every venue. Individually and corporately, the ACC has a strong sense of call and faithfulness to Jesus Christ in the fulfillment of its required work.

Conscious of its mission the ACC is careful to function within the limits of the powers granted to it by the Constitution and the processes outlined in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly. The ACC often works closely with task forces and commissions of the assembly that have been charged with addressing matters impinging on the Constitution to provide timely advice in matters that require constitutional interpretation. While ACC advice to the assembly on proposed amendments is transmitted through the Office of the General Assembly, the ACC on occasion has requested that some of its advice be released sooner than planned to provide increased understanding and transparency of its work.

In addition, the ACC’s work often attracts observers from interested parties or groups in the church. Provision for their observation is facilitated during both face-to-face meetings and on conference calls, except on the rare occasion when it is necessary for the ACC to meet in executive session. Lastly, while the newly adopted revision to the Form of Government no longer specifies that ACC members must be present whenever the assembly is in session, it has been the practice of the ACC that the full complement of ACC members is ordinarily present, rather than only the three whose presence was previously required.

## CHAPTER IV: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

### A. *Strengths*

The primary source for information about the strengths of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) was from current and former members of the ACC, using Surveys #1, #2, and #3. As mentioned earlier in Chapter II, Gradye Parsons, Thomas Hay, and Joanne Green also provided answers to Surveys 1, 2, and 3. Key information was also obtained from the mid council executives and stated clerks, and commissioners who attended the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Surveys 4 and 5.

High praise and an extremely large number of survey respondents mentioned the people that populate the ACC as an enormous strength. Specifically, the caliber and wide diversity of persons was a key factor; the knowledge, skills, and unique credentials create a powerful dynamic when the committee is in action together, in particular. Another major strength is in the ability of the ACC to provide informed helpful advice without advocacy for a particular cause.

The following represent other survey comments by members of the ACC:

“The ACC loves the church, that is, its members are grounded in profoundly valuing the PC(USA) and its mission as it exists faithfully within the Body of Christ. This isn’t to say that the committee or its members are blindly institutionalist, but it is fair to note that we accept and love our very fallibly human institutional expression of the Body. The ACC’s strengths related to that love include at least its diverse and deep levels of experience in mid-council ministries in particular, the strong intellectual gifts and skills of its members, its self-discipline in maintaining neutrality on issues, its institutional memory, its enjoyment of puzzles of order and vitality in the church, and a helplessly Calvinist willingness and ability to work very, very hard.” (Catherine MacDonald, ACC 2012)

“The strength of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution lies in its commitment to educate assembly commissioners in matters of interpretation and amendment of the Constitution of the PC(USA) without becoming an advocate for any particular segment of the denomination. It inevitably was at the center of controversial issues within the church, and functions effectively only when it preserves its reputation as a neutral advisor to the commissioners. Its written work was consistently of high quality. Its work in Assembly committees in my experience has been very helpful to those committees. Its ability to reach consensus on difficult issues, and to speak with one voice, give it strong credibility.” (James Wilson, ACC Alumnus 2010)

“The ACC has historically had the best constitutional minds in the church. It has worked tirelessly and without ego to produce sound advice to the General Assembly.” (Paul Hooker, ACC 2012)

“ACC’s strengths are its commitment and diligent work of the members.” (Heahwan Rim, ACC 2014)

“The strength of the ACC is in its membership—a dedicated group of bright, articulate teaching elders and ruling elders, called to this service to the PC(USA).” (Therese Howell, ACC 2016)

“Very qualified and dedicated members committed to the importance of providing objective advice to the denomination. Any piece of advice has been attacked by the smartest minds of the denomination—and whatever has emerged has been tested under fire.” (Keith Geckeler, ACC 2014)

“The members of the committee have an amazing breadth and depth of knowledge about our church’s polity. It is a joy to work with them.” (Stewart Pollock, ACC 2016)

“The ACC is a strong committee with members who bring experience, knowledge and very good advice to the General Assembly. The committee members have good speaking skills and work with each other and the GA committees in such a way as to bring the best advice to the General Assembly.” (Joanne Green, OGA, Senior. Administrative Assistant)

“The committee has a very passionate and informed core of leadership. Their commitment to constitutional practices and understanding of our polity is key to their success. They are also willing to share their wisdom broadly to the church. This creates a tension sometimes between being an advisor and being an expert, and as sometimes can happen, their work bleeds over into the broader mission of the church.” (Thomas Hay, Interim Director of Constitutional Services)

“The committee has benefitted from capable leadership during my time of service. Both Jim Wilson and Paul Hooker have brought gifts of administrative leadership that have enabled the committee to serve the assembly well. I believe the quality of our work as constitutional interpreters is higher than it has ever been.” (Dan Saperstein, ACC 2012)

“One strength of the committee is the willingness of members to prepare for meetings (especially the biennial spring meeting) and then to have the ability to express themselves freely as they support their positions and debate the positions of others. The unique aspect of these discussions is that there is an opportunity to be convinced out of your position by the persuasiveness of the debate and/or the movement of the Lord Jesus Christ through the *Book of Order*, Scripture, prayer or the moving of the Spirit.” (Susan Evans, ACC 2014)

Standards of performance for the ACC, especially in regard to the written recommendations of the ACC to the General Assembly, are both a daunting and challenging dimension of the scholarship expected and tacitly required. The history and continuity of ACC achievements are unquestionably of major significance. Whereas many would expect the ACC to perform in a rather orthodox, even wooden, manner because laws are perceived as rigid and conventional, in many situations the ACC purposely has endeavored to pursue creative solutions to complex issues. On every overture or issue that the ACC addresses, it is the ACC’s practice to point out the “upside” and “downside” for approving an amendment to the Constitution, for instance. It is the responsibility of the ACC to educate and elucidate the General Assembly with its recommendations.

The following responses represent comments by mid council executives and stated clerks as well as commissioners who attended the 219th General Assembly (2010), as to the strengths of the ACC:

“My GA 219 experience was made better by the diligent work of the ACC. Its guidance on review of overtures helped me better understand the possible ramifications and determine my point of view. In my committee work (middle governing bodies), the ACC was invaluable in clarifying the constitutional impact of the overtures we considered, which was crucial given the important issues this committee faced.”

“I found input from the Advisory Committee extremely helpful in prepping for GA. Their work highlighted issues -- often carefully stating each side of a consideration—without tilting the results.”

“This committee is critically important at all times, but especially as it serves several of the GA committees. I am grateful for the knowledge, wisdom, and reliable assistance we received during the last GA.”

“The comm. provides a good historical and constitutional context for review and decision-making”

“This is one of the most important, vital committees, especially for GA commissioners.”

“Due to the complete revision of the Form of Government more proposed changes to the Form of Government can be expected over the next few GA’s. The advisory committee will be critical in keeping the Form of Government coherent.”

“I worked on the FOG committee and the input of the ACC was fabulous.”

“The Advisory Committee on the Constitution was, on the whole, very impressive.”

“The nFOG committee could not have completed their work without the help of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.”

“As a member of the middle governing bodies committee, I appreciate the availability and depth of knowledge these folks had—either on hand or as resources they could tap into fairly quickly.”

“As a first time commissioner, having the insights of the Advisory Committee on the overtures was very helpful. The Advisory Committee was crucial for clarification of confusing issues and in helping our committee determine how our votes would impact the *Book of Order*.”

“The 220th General Assembly will benefit greatly from the expertise of this committee. It will take some time for most commissioners to become familiar with the nFOG just approved and instituted.”

“The ACC members supporting our GA committee were very professional and provided very thorough information without choosing ‘sides’ in the discussions before the committee.”

“I can’t imagine trying to proceed without their insights and wisdom. As GA meetings deal significantly with issues of legislation, it is critical to have a body of people experienced and versed in this area providing unbiased and carefully considered advice on how each action would impact our constitution and our life as a church. My kudos to them for their hard work and commitment to fairness.”

Perchance it is the invisible, unseen character of the ACC that is its strength. The committee is deeply cognizant that undergirding its work is the commitment to “seek the Lord and his strength” (Ps. 105:4a). Unspoken norms prevail, such as one’s personal political views are not appropriate for the arena of the ACC. Most members have no idea of the personal opinions of other members on issues such as ordination standards. Intriguingly, the glue that holds the committee together is the ACC’s constitutional mandate coupled with a personal respect and regard for each other and a commitment to committee harmony and unity. Deep friendships have been forged among members; and it is precisely these friendships that foster keen commitment to the ideals of the committee. All of this leads to a high quality of dialogue—even healthy, exciting, argument—when the committee is in full session, working on the overtures and other matters that come before the committee. The caliber of work that is dispensed from the ACC is not a convenient quirk of luck. Rather, it is the product of the wisdom of our faith, polity, and commitment to the church.

The nature of the work and mission of the ACC has deeply affected and strengthened the faith and commitment of its members to the mission of the PC(USA).

Some sample comments from members of the ACC:

“Serving on the ACC, and through it on the Form of Government Task Force, have been the most meaningful forms of service to the church I have been privileged to render. They have immeasurably deepened my appreciation for the theological grounding of our polity, and thus have made me a far better theologian.” (Paul Hooker, ACC 2012)

“The Constitution reflects the basic Reformed understanding that no one person makes decisions on behalf of the whole. My faith has been deepened because I have had the joy of working with good people like the members of the ACC.” (Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the GA)

“Again, with very limited experience I can only say that whatever question is presented to the ACC it challenges me personally in new ways. I can’t say that serving as a member of the ACC that it has significantly deepened my faith in Christ but it certainly has confirmed my faith.” (Linda Therien, ACC, 2016)

“Of course, ACC work helped me to broaden my understanding of the mission of the church. At the same time, it gave me a frustration when ACC is politically motivated rather than faith basis of work.” (Heahwan Rim, ACC 2014)

“As a new member of the ACC, and at the risk of sinfulness—I was honored to be nominated and elected to serve on this committee. My understanding of the mission and ministry of the PC(USA), as well as my faith, has been strengthened by years of volunteering at the General Assembly and seeing the Church at work, and I believe serving on the ACC will continue to educate me about the Church as well as deepen my faith. I appreciate the camaraderie of the ACC, and the strong work ethic of its members, and believe the ACC models the behavior so desired (and often missing) in the Church today – people working together, despite differing views on potentially volatile issues. And I believe the ACC models the behavior Jesus calls us to model—servant leadership.” (Therese Howell, ACC 2016)

“It is yet another ‘behind the scenes’ effort to make the denomination as healthy as possible. Knowing there are dozens of such groups operating selflessly for the good of the whole makes me much more comfortable with the outcomes.” (Keith Geckeler, ACC 2014)

“The process of doing background research on the matters referred to the ACC has frequently led to rereading of historical sources that bring me back to original principles, refreshing my understanding of how the Presbyterian Church has fol-

lowed Jesus Christ and helping me to remember the principles of mutual forbearance that Christ taught.” (Stewart Pollock, ACC 2016)

“I don’t help interpret the Constitution, but it has been an amazing experience to watch the ACC fine tune their work and prepare excellent advice to the General Assembly on issues that are many times so complex. Jim Wilson was an excellent moderator of the ACC and Paul Hooker is also an excellent moderator. The ACC depends heavily on their leadership. My faith in Jesus Christ has been deepened by watching these dedicated volunteer members of the ACC give of their time and talents to the church they love. What a gift they are to the PC(USA). It’s a privilege to work for them” (Joanne Green, OGA, Sr. Admin Asst).

“What a high honor to serve in this capacity ... my faith has grown, my understanding has grown, my JOY has grown and my appreciation of both the order and patience of our denomination has grown leaps and bounds! To God be the Glory!” (Susan Evans, ACC 2014)

“The transition to the new Form of Government has focused all of us on the foundations of our polity and the place of the constitution in providing a platform for mission and ministry. By remembering that Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Church (F-1.0205) I’ve come to see and experience the presence of Jesus in new places. In the relationships with others who interpret the Constitution, I have seen the ‘covenant community of disciples of Christ living in the strength of God’s promise’” (F-1.0303). (Thomas Hay, Interim Director of Constitutional Services)

“I often tell people that Presbyterianism began with a lawyer, which is both a curse and a blessing. To have a constitutional polity that is so closely identified with our ethos inspires confidence in the legitimacy of the church’s witness to Christ. In a time in the life of our church in which the rule of law and voluntary submission to shared processes seem to be increasingly questioned, I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in shaping the constitution by which our church is ordered. The more deeply I have studied the history and theology of our polity, the more I have appreciated the gifts that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) brings to Christ’s work in the world.” (Dan Saperstein, ACC 2012)

The surveys noted a few singular strengths that deserve mention:

The staff of the Department of Constitutional Services deserves high praise and kudos.

ACC Moderator Paul Hooker (ACC 2012) perhaps said it best: “I cannot let this moment pass without offering a commendation to two individuals: Mark Tammen and Joanne Green. Mark’s intense, insightful manner illumined many questions for me. His insistence on the best, and not merely good enough, was a constant challenge to me to reach for a higher standard. His ability to bring creative, if different, minds together in the same room around a common task, was a model for the church at its best. He will be missed by me, by the ACC, and by the General Assembly.

“Joanne Green (Mark often said) is what we in the South call a Steel Magnolia—sweet spirited, pleasant, loving, and beneath it a will of iron and a readiness to use it. Joanne never says ‘no’ to a task to be done, and always more than delivers on expectations. I cannot imagine serving on either the ACC or the FoG TF without her aid, comfort, instigation, and nagging. She is a great blessing, and a wonder, and a dear friend.”

## B. *Weaknesses*

There was no clear consensus amongst active committee members as to actual or perceived weaknesses in the work of the committee. Everyone would likely agree that time devoted to discussing issues and ability to staff all of the General Assembly (GA) committees effectively were challenges that the committee struggles with. The occasional failure of members of the ACC to prepare drafts of advice in a sufficiently timely manner to allow adequate review was also noted as a weakness. Representation on the committee that balances diversity of the church as to racial minorities, women, theology, age, and constitutional underpinnings through attention in the nominating process was another issue raised. The following represent other survey comments by members of the ACC:

“If it suffers from a weakness, it is that we have probably underrepresented the racial/ethnic minorities of the church. This, however, is much better at present; two of the nine members of the committee are racial/ethnic.” (Paul Hooker, ACC 2012)

“A weakness is not enough time allocated to do its work.” (Heahwan Rim, ACC 2014)

“The only weakness I have observed, in my short time with the ACC, is that a very shy person might be hesitant to speak up in discussions. I am not shy, but it is intimidating, early on, when trying to make or raise a point. Like everything else in the life of the Church, you must become comfortable in discussions with strong-willed people!” (Therese Howell, ACC 2016)

“The ACC does not have enough members to serve the Assembly effectively if business requiring advice from the ACC continues to be spread across too many assembly committees.” (Stewart Pollock, ACC 2014)



“The ACC has a lot a business coming to them to write responses and send on to the General Assembly. It helps if assignments are completed before each meeting so that it doesn’t put extra burden on the members when they arrive for the ACC meeting. I think the ACC has been doing well in this area and will continue to improve.” (Joanne Green, OGA, Sr. Admin Asst)

“Of course, the committee is diverse in composition and perspective, and is not immune from the political storms that rage in the larger church. There are times where I have felt that the advice of the committee has been overly influenced by political outcomes rather than the text of the Constitution itself. There is a certain inevitability to this, although it can be mitigated by attention in the nominating process to secure proven constitutional interpreters representing the diversity of the church.” (Dan Saperstein, ACC 2012)

“The other ‘weakness’ I would identify in the work of the ACC is inherent in the nature of the terms of office in a time of biennial assemblies. The first assembly at which an ACC member serves is a particular challenge—issues move quickly and it is important that the ACC honor its role but be responsive to the needs of the assembly. As a practical matter, this means the first assembly for an ACC member is something of a training exercise. Thus, members really only have two assemblies in which they have sufficient experience to offer their gifts fully. I do not have a ready solution to this problem, but it does mean that approximately a third of the ACC at each assembly is in a training mode.

“The ACC could also improve its performance when it is asked to speak to a question on the floor of the assembly. Such occasions often present difficult questions to answer. However, too often, the ACC has been overly concise in its answers without laying out for the assembly the full context of issues and options available” (Jim Wilson, ACC 2010)

Weaknesses perceived and articulated by mid council executives and stated clerks as well as by commissioners who attended the 219th General Assembly (2010) focused primarily on the perception that members of the ACC were ecclesiastically politically motivated to a given result. The following are representative statements of weaknesses are:

“In the committee on which I served, the ACC had enormous floor time and even went as far as to suggest a number of amendments. This seemed to give undue influence to the ACC when commissioners were unable to offer only a small percentage of the comments and amendments they themselves wanted to contribute in committee.”

“While at GA I would have liked to ask questions of clarification regarding the Constitution. I do not recall a way that I could have connected with someone on the Advisory Committee while on the floor of Plenary or in committee on my computer. It might be worthwhile to have a live link to the Constitution with the opportunity to get quick feedback to questions.”

“Needs to be more visible, but am not sure how to do that.”

“It often seems that the Advisory Committee is not aware of the problems and contexts that the church struggles with and against. The Committee should work towards recommendations of compromise and unity for all theological perspectives.”

“The ACC since 2006 seems to have become more of an advocacy group than an interpretive body—seeming to advocate on behalf of office of stated clerk.”

“Given the politicization of the Constitution in recent years, and its use as a club to affirm or deny varying theological (Christian Educator and homosexual ordination) and cultural (gay marriage) positions, the committee has to do as much as humanly possible to offer ‘just the facts, ma’am’ advice. As the committee is able to do so, the greater church will benefit in its decision-making.”

“The Stated Clerk and his office fulfill this function, in my opinion.”

“Again, the work must be shared, interpreted, rewritten as required, by all sorts of ‘mediated opportunities.’ Failure to do this in a digital world is inadequate.”

“Among evangelicals (of which I include myself), the general feel from those with whom I spoke is that the Advisory Com is an agent of the left-wing of the PCUSA, that it is more of a Political Action Committee than an unbiased, nonpartisan agent.”

“Neutrality is not helpful in our context. Focusing on polity rather than theology and Scripture is not helpful. Focusing on process over content is not helpful. The value of this committee evaporates if it does not tell the truth, the whole truth, and give great balance to all which is done.”

“My sense of the ACC is that they take a rather conservative judicial approach to their work. If something is not specifically mentioned, they seem to take a dim view of it. However, in a missional era the ACC has become an impediment. It seems to me a more faithful approach would be to say, ‘If it is not specifically disallowed, let it rock and roll!’ The church needs entrepreneurs and the ACC, I am afraid, discourages such.”

“The Advisory Committee on the Constitution should be in the business of informing not interpretation. They should be tasked with alerting the GA to possible conflicts when changes to the constitution are considered. They should report the PJC’s previous rulings when relevant and leave all interpretation to the GA.”

“I think the ACC is good at interpreting questions that have to do with our current Constitution, but are less helpful when it comes to envisioning changes to the constitution. I think the ACC has a tendency to advocate for the inertia of the status quo.”

## CHAPTER V: SURVEY LEARNINGS

### A. *Scope of the Surveys*

The surveys utilized were intentionally designed to meet the criteria suggested in the self-study survey guide published by the Office of the General Assembly. Therefore the scope was broad and yet specific. In the spirit of the criteria, the surveys endeavored to provoke in-depth, thoughtful and candid responses. The scope of the surveys pinpointed key aspects of our life together as Presbyterians:

PC(USA) Constitution

Faith

Polity

Mission

Theology

Dedication to the PC(USA)

Meetings of the General Assembly

Welfare of the church

The intent of the surveys was more than to glean simple statements. Rather, the desire was to measure the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) against the above hallmarks in a very personal and inspiring manner. The ACC is at its best when its Christian humanness shines through when writing, presenting, and meeting; and the surveys tried to establish this with a somewhat clinical means. The subtitles of the three surveys reveal categories of inquiry that are specific and probing:

Survey #1, “Fidelity to Mission”

Survey #2, “Effectiveness of Services”

Survey #3, “The Work of the Committee”

### B. *Participation*

For the first three surveys, which sought responses by the ACC, former ACC members, the Stated Clerk, the Director of Constitutional Services, and the ACC’s senior administrative assistant, the response was unanimous.

The General Assembly Office of Research Services surveyed 219th General Assembly (2010) commissioners and mid council leaders (presbytery and synod executives and stated clerks) about the work of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. On October 18, 711 commissioners and 382 mid council leaders were invited by email to participate in the survey on the web. Non-respondents received three subsequent e-mail reminders. Three-quarters of General Assembly commissioners (73 percent) and three in five presbytery and synod leaders (62 percent) responded. Half of the General Assembly commissioners who responded (50 percent) were elders and half (50 percent) were ministers. Three in five presbytery and synod leaders who responded were stated clerks (61 percent) and half (48 percent) were executives (some served in both roles). Given the voluntary nature of the survey the response was excellent and significantly greater than in the previous self study.

Responses to Surveys 1, 2, and 3, generally expressed enthusiasm and furnished high-quality comments. All of the questions in these surveys received a large quantitative response. Question one in Survey #1 asked: “Does the committee as it was created by the church serve and support the church’s mission in a particular area? Does the committee exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA)?” From the responses to this question, it is clear that this committee of church law/polity wonks sees itself as an deeply missional unit of the church. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, it was Survey 3, which centered on the work of the ACC, that prompted several responses. Members of the ACC and ACC alumni, in particular, wanted to express considerable feedback as well as constructive criticism. Easily the most evocative question in Survey 3 was the final question, “As you have worked to interpret the Constitution of the PC(USA) to the General Assembly and the church, how has it affected your understanding of the mission of the PC(USA) and deepened your faith in Jesus Christ?” The answers provide a powerful testament to the Spirit at work in each member and the ACC.

### C. *Portrait of the Committee*

Perhaps the most significant characterization of the ACC is its integrity. “The word *integrity* comes from the same Latin root as the word *integer* and historically has been understood to carry much more the same sense, the sense of *wholeness*: a person of integrity, like a whole number, is a whole person, a person somehow undivided.”<sup>5</sup> There is not the slightest inkling in the surveys that the ACC has violated the trust of the General Assembly and the church. In a sense, the respect, health and wholeness of the ACC is a mirror image of the Constitution itself. This is the result of an almost mantra-like theme within the committee: of respect for the constitutional boundaries and the refusal to yield to the temptation of taking a position on any matter or issue before the church. There is frequent mention within the committee of the political boundaries on any piece of business before the committee. The importance of ACC integrity was a heritage bestowed upon its current members by predecessors. It is therefore a norm that must be continually earned and upheld by successor committee members.

A study of the individual answers of the members (and alumni) of the ACC reveals a rather predictable result. Whereas a glimmer of each person’s personality shines through, the corporate image of this assortment of persons yields images of strong personalities with strong convictions about the work of the ACC and its mission to and with the church.

Surveys 4 and 5 are extremely important because the portrait revealed therein is not tainted by any notion of bias or being self-serving. The surveys were quite candid and expressive of both strengths and weaknesses of the ACC. The perception of the ACC provided in the surveys is overwhelmingly positive; however, these surveys do establish that the public perception of the ACC can be a bit uneven. While affirming the theology of gifts (Rom. 12:3–8), the ACC loses some of its luster when a member speaking to a committee seems to advocate rather than inform and educate. Oftentimes, however, if an ACC member expresses an ACC position contrary to an assembly committee member or overture advocate, the position is seen as “political”. The strength of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and each of its members lies in its commitment to educate assembly commissioners in matters of interpretation and amendment of the Constitution of the PC(USA) without becoming an advocate for any particular segment of the denomination. Its neutrality is central to its effectiveness as an advisor to the commissioners.

## CHAPTER VI: RECOMMENDATIONS: ON IMPROVING THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION

The role of the ACC is ever evolving as we face the challenges of interpreting a new Constitution, employing new technologies, and working faithfully and effectively with other General Assembly committees and commissioners. The following recommendations are issues that the committee is addressing as “we look backwards to leap forward” to enable the ACC to serve as a more valuable instrument of the Presbytery and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

*Recommendation 1.* Meet at least annually so as to foster personal relationships; do any pertinent necessary business; discuss any trend papers or projects underway.

*Rationale:* Members of the ACC have identified, both in their responses to the surveys and in meetings of the committee, that it requires time and concerted effort to “get up to speed” with the volume and quality of required work, and to feel comfortable in entering committee discussions conducted at a high level. Perhaps most significantly, the committee needs to be aware of its own advice history, particularly around recurrent issues.

*Recommendation 2.* Design a formal/informal orientation for new members including training on the use of certain technology used by the ACC (e.g., Basecamp) as well as emerging technologies. It would help the new and old members of the committee to have some training and to discuss ways in which ever changing technology can best be used in the work of the ACC.

*Rationale:* In recent years, the committee has made increasing use of GoToMeeting and Basecamp technologies, both of which may be intimidating to persons not accustomed to them. Some time in orientation devoted to these technologies and their application would ameliorate this concern.

*Recommendation 3.* Design a process to allow the ACC to recruit former ACC members to sit as “second chair” in assembly committees. They would not be allowed to speak for the ACC, but having been briefed in the issues and the ACC advice on them, they might serve as counsel to the ACC member sitting on the committee.

*Rationale:* A recurring concern on the part of ACC members and moderators is that, as the volume of constitutionally related business has increased, and especially as the number of standing committees of the assembly has increased, members of the ACC are spread thin in an attempt to provide constitutional advice where needed. Having additional resources in the form of individuals already broadly experienced in the committee’s work style could alleviate some of the pressure on the committee.

*Recommendation 4.* Review the ACC’s *Manual of Procedures* to determine if changes need to be made in conformance with the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and new Form of Government.

*Recommendation 5.* Empower the ACC to provide interim advice to requests from General Assembly entities and their subgroups.

*Rationale:* It is clear from recent experience that when commissions, special committees, or task forces are created by the Assembly and charged with proposing sweeping changes to the structure of our polity, interim advice from the ACC has been helpful in enabling the entity so created to bring recommendations that meet with fewer constitutional barriers. Both the Form of Government Task Force and the work of the Mid-Council Commission have benefitted from consultations with the ACC during the preparation of their work.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our profound appreciation to Joanne Green, senior administrative assistant for the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, Department of Constitutional Services in the Office of the General Assembly. Joanne kept us on task and provided a multitude of supports during this process and did it in such an unassuming but deliberate way that she almost made us think we were in charge. She is indeed the “wind beneath our wings”... she keeps us flying. Joanne’s continuing standard of excellence and efficient pleasant demeanor helped to make this a labor of love.

#### Appendix 1 Excerpts—*Book of Order* (Chapter Six)

##### G-6.02 INTERPRETING THE CONSTITUTION

The General Assembly may provide authoritative interpretation of the *Book of Order*, which shall be binding on the councils of the church when rendered in the manner described in this section or through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case.

The General Assembly shall elect an Advisory Committee on the Constitution composed of nine persons, teaching elders and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be a member *ex officio* without vote. No person who has served on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for a full term of six years shall be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six-year term. The General Assembly shall provide by its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall communicate its report and recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly, no less than sixty days prior to the General Assembly.

##### G-6.04 AMENDING THE *BOOK OF ORDER*

Amendments to the *Book of Order* shall be made only if all the following steps are completed:

- a. All proposals requesting amendment of the *Book of Order* are communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.
- b. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such proposals to amend the *Book of Order* to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (G-6.02), which shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At least sixty days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly, the advisory committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee. The General Assembly shall not consider any amendment until it has considered the report and any recommendations from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.
- c. The same General Assembly approves the proposal to amend and transmits the proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their vote.
- d. Presbyteries shall transmit their votes to the Stated Clerk no later than one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendments.
- e. The Stated Clerk receives written advice that a proposed amendment to the *Book of Order* has received the affirmative votes of a majority of all the presbyteries. The proposed amendment so approved shall become effective one year following the adjournment of the assembly transmitting the proposed amendment.

#### Appendix 2 Manual of Procedures for the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

*This manual was last updated in 2006 except for the roster, which is current. The appendices have been removed because they are out of date and do not adequately represent the current procedures. This document will be updated in 2012.*

19 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

MANUAL OF PROCEDURES  
FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

This Manual has been prepared for use by members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly and those persons of the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly assigned as staff liaison to the committee in the carrying on of the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Any use of this Manual for purposes other than as stated above without prior permission from the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is prohibited.

UPDATED: 10/06/06

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2011–2012

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COMMITTEE RULES

## I. MEETING

The committee shall ordinarily meet once a year at a date to be established by the moderator, vice moderator, secretary and the Office of the Stated Clerk following the 120 day deadline for the submission of Overtures to amend, or request to interpret, the Constitution. The committee shall also meet in time to submit its report and recommendations no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.

Additional meetings may be scheduled when the works require it at a time to be established by the moderator, vice moderator, secretary and the Office of the Stated Clerk.

The scheduling of meetings shall be done in such a manner as to insure maximum participation by the members of the committee.

The quorum for a meeting of the committee is a majority of the voting members.

## II. OFFICERS

A. Officers of the committee shall be the moderator, vice moderator, and secretary. They shall be elected for one year terms to take effect upon the adjournment of the next General Assembly. They shall be eligible for re-election for as many terms as may be consistent with their membership on the committee.

## III. RESPONSIBILITIES

## A. The Moderator

1. The moderator shall preside at all meetings of the committee. If the moderator is incapacitated or absent, the vice moderator will carry out his or her responsibilities or the committee may elect a Moderator Pro Tem.
2. The moderator, vice moderator, secretary, and liaison staff person from the Office of the Stated Clerk shall determine prior to each of the committee meetings the work which will be considered by the committee and make assignments for preliminary study and recommendations by other members.
3. The moderator shall be responsible for the agenda of each meeting, while advance arrangements for the meeting include the sending of papers and assignments to the committee members shall be the responsibility of the Office of the General Assembly.
4. The moderator, secretary and liaison staff person from the Office of the Stated Clerk shall prepare the report of the committee to the General Assembly.
5. The moderator, or a member designated by him or her, shall be available to represent the committee at any orientation of the General Assembly Leaders and of General Assembly Commissioners upon invitation from the committee and the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of the Stated Clerk.
6. The moderator shall be responsible for presenting the report of the committee to the General Assembly. The moderator may request any member of the committee to speak on a particular item of business.

## B. The Vice Moderator

1. In the absence of the moderator, or his or her incapacitation, shall call to order the meetings of the committee and preside until the arrival of the moderator.
2. In the event of the death, incapacitation or resignation of the moderator, shall become the acting moderator.

## C. The Secretary

1. Shall be responsible for recording the proceedings of the committee.
2. Shall, in cooperation with the moderator and liaison staff person perform the duties outlined in Section III A-2-4.
3. Shall be responsible for maintaining this Manual.
4. Shall assist the moderator in the conduct of meetings so as to insure the completion in a timely manner of all the work of the committee.

## D. Liaison Staff persons

1. Shall receive and assemble for transmission to the committee all papers requiring review and comment from the committee.
2. Shall make logistical arrangements for any and all meetings of the committee.
3. Shall assist the moderator and secretary in the preparation for and conduct of all meetings of the committee.

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4. Shall serve as archivist for the committee.
  5. Shall serve as the corresponding secretary of the committee in matters referred to the committee by governing bodies of the Church.
  6. Shall in cooperation with the secretary develop forms and procedures to facilitate the work of the committee.
  7. Shall perform such other services for the committee as may be assigned by the Office of the Stated Clerk or at the request of the committee.
- E. Procedures for Handling Requests for Interpretation
1. The Office of the General Assembly receives a request for an authoritative interpretation.
  2. The Office of Constitutional Services makes an initial judgment as to whether the request “requires an interpretation” by the General Assembly.
    - a. If Constitutional Services believes that the provision is adequately interpreted by other provisions of the Constitution or past authoritative interpretations, it will respond to the request, with a copy to the moderator, vice moderator and secretary of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.
      - (1) If the moderator, vice moderator and secretary agree that the request needs no further response, they will recommend to ACC that the reply of Constitutional Services be affirmed. When ACC agrees, this is an ACC determination that the provision does not “require interpretation.” The requesting entity is informed of this action and the request does not appear in the record of the General Assembly. If ACC does not agree, the request will be assigned to a writing team.
      - (2) If the moderator, vice moderator, and secretary do not agree with the judgment of Constitutional Services or its response, the request will be assigned to a writing team for the development of a recommended response for the General Assembly’s consideration.
    - b. If Constitutional Services believes that the request requires an ACC response, the moderator and secretary will assign it to a writing team for the development of a recommended response for the General Assembly’s consideration.
  3. Once ACC approves a recommended response, it is included in its report to the General Assembly. Upon action by the General Assembly the provision will have been authoritatively interpreted.

### GENERAL RULES FOR MEMBERS

1. All members are expected to be in attendance throughout each and every meeting of the committee.
2. All members of the committee shall be in attendance at the session of the General Assembly.
3. To insure their availability for the work of the Committee at the General Assembly meeting, members of the committee should be free of any other responsibilities at the General Assembly.
4. At the General Assembly the members of the committee will be expected to serve as resource persons to Assembly committees and especially those committees to which recommendations from the Advisory Committee have been assigned by the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.
5. Members of the committee are not authorized to speak for the committee and thus are expected to show restraint in responding to any request for constitutional interpretation.
6. The actions of the committee have no authority until acted upon by the General Assembly. It is therefore improper for any committee member to disseminate any actions taken by the committee before they have been made public by the Office of the General Assembly.
7. In preparing responses to communications to the committee, those members assigned responsibility for review and recommendations should use the document identification number assigned to that document.
8. When directed by the General Assembly or when requested by an agency or committee of the General Assembly, the committee may consult with said agencies or committees on constitutional matters. The only authoritative interpretations of the Constitution are those recommended by the committee as a whole and approved by the General Assembly.

### GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS OF TERMS

Overture (O)	A formal action by a presbytery, synod, or agency of the General Assembly seeking an amendment to the Constitution. (See G-18.0300 for requirements.) There is no required style. The signature of the stated clerk of the presbytery or synod certifying the action of the governing body makes a communication an overture from one governing body to another. The numbering of overtures shall be done by the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.
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## 19 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

Request (R)	Any request for an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution submitted to the Stated Clerk by a governing body or an individual. Those requiring an interpretation are submitted to ACC.
Reports (RGA)	Material submitted to the General Assembly by its entities or Special Committees.
Referral (REF)	An action referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution by the General Assembly for report to a subsequent General Assembly.
Commissioners' Resolution (CR)	A written resolution introduced by any two commissioners to the General Assembly in accordance with the Manual of the General Assembly.

### NUMBERING OF PAPERS

Each of the above referenced papers shall carry an ACC Document Identification Number for easy reference by committee members. The Office of General Assembly staff shall maintain a summary chart of all business before the ACC.

### Appendix 3

#### EXCERPT—Standing Rules of the General Assembly

(From the Manual of the General Assembly, 2012)  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

#### Titles/Functions—

##### a. Title and Functions of the Stated Clerk at the General Assembly

(1) The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office. (SR H.2.a.(1))

(2) The Stated Clerk is accountable, through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, to the General Assembly for the performance of the duties of the office, and shall present to each meeting of the General Assembly a report on the state of the church. (SR H.2.a.(2))

(3) The Stated Clerk is responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly for which no other assignment has been made. (SR H.2.a.(3))

(4) The Stated Clerk shall also be responsible for guidance of the procedures for candidates seeking the office of moderator, and for supervision of the election of each moderator. (SR H.2.a.(4))

(5) In accordance with directives from previous General Assemblies and in consultations with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, and other General Assembly agencies, the Stated Clerk is authorized to decide on matters pertaining to facilities and special events that must be established before the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. SR H.2.a.(5)

(6) The Stated Clerk shall receive all reports, communications, overtures, and any other materials appropriate for General Assembly consideration. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for presentation to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, a referral of such items of business coming before the General Assembly (SR H.2.a.(6))

(7) The Stated Clerk shall prepare for consideration of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a proposed docket for the General Assembly’s consideration of its business (Standing Rule C.4.a.). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall present the proposed docket to the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures so that it may recommend a docket to the commissioners at the first business session. The docket presented to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall provide a time early in the General Assembly for a report by the Stated Clerk on the state of the church, and for a report by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. (SR H.2.a.(7))

(8) The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly the number of assembly committees and a name for each committee after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities (Standing Rule C.1.). The Stated Clerk shall present the committee structure to the General Assembly for ratification at the first business session. Each commissioner and advisory delegate shall be assigned by random selection to one assembly committee at least forty-five days before the opening date of the General Assembly. (SR H.2.a.(8))

(9) The Stated Clerk shall provide opportunity for orienting the commissioners, advisory delegates, and others taking part in the session of the General Assembly. The use of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, sources of parliamentary advice, and the availability of resource persons and materials to facilitate their work should be part of the orientation. (SR H.2.a.(9))

(10) The Stated Clerk shall be the parliamentarian for the meetings of the General Assembly, or arrange for the service of a professional parliamentarian. (SR H.2.a.(10))



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(11) The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the councils and agencies of the assembly, persons who presented business to the assembly, and others affected by the assembly's actions, a report on actions of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to their concerns. The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the presbyteries all assembly actions on which the presbyteries are requested to take action. (SR H.2.a.(11))

(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly's proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk. (SR H.2.a.(12))

### Appendix 4

#### EXCERPT—Standing Rules of the General Assembly (From the Manual of the General Assembly, 2012) Advisory Committee on the Constitution

a. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report to the General Assembly its findings along with its recommendations on all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order*, including proposals for constitutional change. "The General Assembly shall vote on the recommendations, and may amend or decline to approve them" (*Book of Order*, G-6.02). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report any editorial changes made to the *Book of Order* since its last report to the General Assembly. (SR A.5.a.)

b. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-6.04b and G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. (SR E.3.b.)

c. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112e) shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter so referred and report its findings and recommendations, which may include proposals for constitutional change, to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The assembly committee shall vote on the recommendations and may amend or decline to approve them. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee. (SR E.3.c.)

d. Recommendations and reports to the assembly regarding such new business must be approved in assembly committees by three-fourths of the committee members voting on the matter. (SR E.3.d.)

e. New business, other than that described in this standing rule, must be presented in accordance with Standing Rule A.8. (SR E.3.e.)

f. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution (*Book of Order*, G-6.04) or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters (*Book of Order*, G-13.0112e) shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter referred and report its findings and recommendations (which may include proposals for constitutional change) to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee. (SR E.3.f.)

Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee. (SR E.3.f.)

### Appendix 5 Self-Study Survey #1

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION  
Office of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

#### SELF-STUDY SURVEY #1

It is absolutely essential that the members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) respond to the survey questions in a very thoughtful and comprehensive manner. It is extremely important that your responses include examples and detailed evidence. It is also appropriate to answer with suggestions of improving ACC performance in regard to the issues being addressed. Please respond on this document, taking as much space as needed; then, e-mail the completed survey to Joanne Green (joanne.green@pcusa.org) Thanks!

#### Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

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

2. Do the basic processes of the committee demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly?

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3. Does the committee exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?
4. Does the committee provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

### Appendix 6 Self-Study #2

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION

Office of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

#### SELF-STUDY SURVEY #2

It is absolutely essential that the members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) respond to the survey questions in a very thoughtful and comprehensive manner. It is extremely important that your responses include examples and detailed evidence. It is also appropriate to answer with suggestions of improving ACC performance in regard to the issues being addressed. Please respond on this document, taking as much space as needed; then, e-mail the completed survey to [Joanne Green \(joanne.green@pcusa.org\)](mailto:Joanne.Green@pcusa.org) Thanks!

#### Effectiveness of Services

The services of the committee are consistent with its assembly constitutional mandate.

Does the committee have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?

Does the committee have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?

Does the committee employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?

Does the committee utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?

Does the committee have a developed vision and plan for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC(U.S.A.)?

### Appendix 7 Self-Study #3

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION

Office of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

#### SELF-STUDY #3

It is absolutely essential that the members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) respond to the survey questions in a very thoughtful and comprehensive manner. It is extremely important that your responses include examples and detailed evidence. It is also appropriate to answer with suggestions of improving ACC performance in regard to the issues being addressed. Please respond on this document, taking as much space as needed; then, e-mail the completed survey to [Joanne Green \(joanne.green@pcusa.org\)](mailto:Joanne.Green@pcusa.org) Thanks!

#### The Work of the Committee

Please comment on the committee's strengths and weaknesses. Be specific.

Suggest ways to improve the quality and quantity of communication:

within and among the ACC members.  
from the ConServ staff

Should the ACC be pro-active on emerging issues in the PC(U.S.A.)? (i.e. COGA, ICI, etc.)

Do you have any suggestions about how the ACC structures its work:

at the ACC's biennial spring conference  
at the General Assembly  
"homework", when assigned

As you have worked to interpret the Constitution of the PC(USA) to the General Assembly and the church, how has it affected your understanding of the mission of the PC(USA) and deepened your faith in Jesus Christ?

## Appendix 8

Research Services, A Ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
December 2011 Survey Research (Excerpts From Report)

During fall 2011 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services office conducted survey research for the review the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

Research Services surveyed 219th General Assembly commissioners and mid-council leaders (presbytery and synod executives and stated clerks) about the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. On October 18, 2011, 711 commissioners and 382 mid-council leaders were invited by email to participate in the survey on the web. Non-respondents received three subsequent e-mail reminders. Three-quarters of General Assembly commissioners (73%) and three in five presbytery and synod leaders (62%) responded. Half of the General Assembly commissioners who responded (50%) were elders and half (50%) were ministers. Three in five presbytery and synod leaders who responded were stated clerks (61%) and half (48%) were executives. (Some served in both roles.)

A brief summary of findings is provided here. The complete report and summary of the Research Services report will go to the 220th General Assembly committee that will review the work of the ACC. More details are available in four appendices: Appendix A provides a numerical summary of percentage responses to each question in the survey of presbytery and synod leaders. Appendix B provides the text of all comments made in response to open-ended questions in that same survey. Appendix C provides a numerical summary of percentage responses to each question in the survey of 219th General Assembly commissioners. Appendix D provides the text of all comments made in response to open-ended questions in that survey. (*Excerpts from Appendix A and C are included in Appendix 9*)

## Results

About nine in ten General Assembly commissioners (92 percent) and almost all mid council leaders (99 percent) are *very familiar, familiar, or slightly familiar* with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. Among General Assembly commissioners and mid-council leaders with at least some familiarity with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, more than four in five believe that the committee accomplished *very well* or *well* a variety of tasks associated with General Assembly meetings between 2006 and the survey period.

## Perceived Advisory Committee on the Constitution Accomplishments

Four in five commissioners with at least some familiarity with the Advisory Committee on the

Constitution (83 percent) served on a committee at the 219th General Assembly that was resourced by a member of the advisory committee. More than four in five such commissioners believe the advisory committee member who resourced their GA committee presented a professional demeanor, demonstrated competence, clearly articulated constitutional principles, and helped the committee interpret Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommendations *quite a bit* or *a fair amount*.

## Performance of Advisory Committee Members Who Resourced General Assembly Committees (Commissioners' Responses)

Nine in ten mid-council leaders with at least some familiarity with the advisory committee (92%) found to be *very helpful* or *helpful* the advice about proposed constitutional changes that the advisory committee gave to presbyteries in 2010 in the booklet titled *Proposed Amendments to the 'Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Nine in ten mid-council leaders with at least some familiarity with the advisory committee (92 percent) found to be *very helpful* or *helpful* the advice about proposed constitutional changes that the advisory committee gave to presbyteries in 2010 in the booklet titled *Proposed Amendments to the 'Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*.

About half of mid council leaders who have some familiarity with the committee (53 percent) report that their presbytery or synod submitted an overture proposing a change to the *Book of Order* between 2006 and the survey period. Three-quarters of mid-council leaders with some familiarity with the committee whose presbytery or synod proposed a change to the *Book of Order* (76 percent) rate the quality of the advice the advisory committee gave about constitutional issues raised by overtures their mid-council submitted as *very good* or *good*.

Presented with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's mission, almost all of the mid-council leaders with at least some familiarity with the committee (96 percent) believe that between 2006 and the survey period it was *very faithful* or *faithful* in carrying out its mission.

## Fidelity of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to Its Mission (Mid Council Leaders' Responses)

Nine in ten commissioners (89 percent) and mid council leaders (89 percent) believe the work of the committee is *very important* or *important* to the PC(USA).

## Importance of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's Work

In response to open-ended questions, some respondents argue that the work of the committee is indispensable. Others maintain the committee intervenes too assertively and is too liberal.

## Conclusion

Commissioners and mid-council leaders generally believe the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's work is important and well done, although a few believe the committee is too assertive.

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Appendix #9

Review of General Assembly Permanent Committees  
Research Surveys (Excerpts from Appendixes A and C)

Appendix A:

Presbytery and Synod Leader Survey Questions and Responses

Number of e-mail invitations sent .....	382
Number of e-mails undeliverable/ineligible .....	55
Number of responses returned .....	205
Response rate .....	62%

Evaluating the Advisory Committee on the Constitution I

Q-10. How would you rate your overall familiarity with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution?

Very familiar .....	30%
Familiar .....	47%
Slightly familiar .....	22%
Not familiar (Skip to the description of the committee after Q-21) .....	1%

Q-11. Did you attend . . .

n=187

a. The 217th General Assembly in Birmingham, Alabama?

Yes .....	62%
No .....	38%

b. The 218th General Assembly in San Jose, California?

Yes .....	74%
No .....	26%

c. The 219th General Assembly in Minneapolis?

Yes .....	79%
No .....	21%

If you *did not* attend any of the last three General Assemblies, please skip to alternate Q-12.

Q-12. Between 2006 and the present, how well has the committee . . .

n=168

a. Evaluated proposals to amend the *Book of Order*?

Very well .....	45%
Well .....	42%
Not so well.....	6%
Poorly .....	1%
Not sure .....	7%

b. Exhibited fairness in its findings and recommendations?

Very well .....	38%
Well .....	42%
Not so well.....	9%
Poorly .....	2%
Not sure .....	8%

c. Responded to questions from the Stated Clerk during General Assembly plenaries requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*?

Very well .....	42%
Well .....	41%
Not so well.....	5%
Poorly .....	1%
Not sure .....	12%

d. Responded to questions from leaders of General Assembly committees during General Assembly plenaries?

Very well .....	39%
Well .....	39%
Not so well.....	7%
Poorly .....	%
Not sure .....	14%

Q-13. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the responses of Advisory Committee on the Constitution members to questions that General Assembly commissioners asked them during General Assembly plenaries, when you attended?

n=168

Excellent (Skip to Q-14) .....	44%
Good (Skip to Q-14) .....	39%
Fair (Skip to Q-14) .....	8%
Poor (Skip to Q-14) .....	2%

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Not sure (Skip to Q-14) ..... 6%

Alternate Q-12. Between 2006 and the present, how well has the committee . . .

n=19

a. Evaluated proposals to amend the *Book of Order*?

Very well ..... 22%  
 Well ..... 50%  
 Not so well..... 6%  
 Poorly ..... —  
 Not sure ..... 22%

b. Exhibited fairness in its findings and recommendations?

Very well ..... 28%  
 Well ..... 39%  
 Not so well..... 6%  
 Poorly ..... —  
 Not sure ..... 28%

If you are a synod leader, please skip to Q-15.

Q-14. Every two years the Office the General Assembly supplies presbyteries with a booklet titled *Proposed Amendments to the 'Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'* that contains advice from the committee on proposed amendments. How helpful to your presbytery was the booklet produced and distributed in 2010?

n=16

Very helpful ..... 75%  
 Helpful ..... 6%  
 Slightly helpful ..... 6%  
 Not helpful ..... —  
 Not sure ..... 12%  
 Don't know—I am new here ..... —

Q-15. Did the presbytery or synod for which you are responding submit any overtures proposing amendments to the *Book of Order* between 2006 and the present?

n=187

Yes ..... 46%  
 No (Skip to Q-17) ..... 42%  
 Don't know—I am new here (Skip to Q-17) ..... 11%  
 Don't remember (Skip to Q-17) ..... 2%

Q-15a. How many overtures proposing amendments to the *Book of Order* did the presbytery or synod for which you are responding submit between 2006 and the present?

(Please check here if you don't know: )

n=85

Not checked ..... 73%  
 Checked ..... 27%

n=62

1 ..... 39%  
 2 ..... 21%  
 3 ..... 15%  
 4 ..... 7%  
 5 ..... 12%  
 More than 5 ..... 7%  
 Mean ..... 2.6  
 Median ..... 2.0

Q-16. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on the constitutional issues raised by the overture(s) sent from your presbytery or synod between 2006 and the present?

n=85

Very good ..... 48%  
 Good ..... 20%  
 Fair ..... 19%  
 Poor ..... 2%  
 Not sure ..... 10%

Q-17. Did you, as a presbytery or synod executive or stated clerk, submit any requests for interpretation of the *Book of Order* to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution between 2006 and the present?

n=187

Yes ..... 11%  
 No (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... 74%

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Don't know (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... 12%  
 Don't remember (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... 3%

Q-17a. How many requests for interpretation of the *Book of Order* did your presbytery or synod submit to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution between 2006 and the present? (Please check here if you don't know: )

n=21  
 Not checked ..... 81%  
 Checked ..... 19%

n=17  
 1 ..... 60%  
 2 ..... 20%  
 3 ..... 7%  
 4 ..... 7%  
 5 ..... 7%  
 More than 5 ..... —  
 Mean ..... 1.8  
 Median ..... 1.0

Q-18. Did your presbytery or synod receive a response to your request(s) for interpretation?

n=21  
 Yes ..... 95%  
 No (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... 5%  
 Not sure (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... —

Q-18a. Did you read the response? (If your presbytery or synod received responses to more than one request for interpretation, please reply about the *most recent* response received.)

n=20  
 Yes ..... 100%  
 No (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... —  
 Not sure (Skip to the statement after Q-20) ..... —

Q-19. In its response, how much did the Advisory Committee on the Constitution: (If your presbytery or synod received responses to more than one request for interpretation, please comment on the *most recent* interpretation received.)

n=20  
 a. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the issues you presented?  
 Quite a bit ..... 74%  
 A fair amount ..... 16%  
 Only a little ..... 10%  
 Not at all ..... —  
 Not sure ..... —

Q-19. In its response, how much did the Advisory Committee on the Constitution: (If your presbytery or synod received responses to more than one request for interpretation, please comment on the *most recent* interpretation received.)

n=20  
 b. Identify issues other than those contained in your request?  
 Quite a bit ..... 37%  
 A fair amount ..... 26%  
 Only a little ..... 16%  
 Not at all ..... 16%  
 Not sure ..... 5%

c. Provide a response consistent with the *Book of Order*?  
 Quite a bit ..... 79%  
 A fair amount ..... 10%  
 Only a little ..... 5%  
 Not at all ..... 5%  
 Not sure ..... —

d. Offer a helpful explanation and interpretation of its response?  
 Quite a bit ..... 68%  
 A fair amount ..... 26%  
 Only a little ..... —  
 Not at all ..... 5%  
 Not sure ..... —

e. Other (please specify): +  
 Quite a bit ..... 100%  
 A fair amount ..... —  
 Only a little ..... —  
 Not at all ..... —  
 Not sure ..... —

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Q-20. In its response, did the Advisory Committee on the Constitution: (If your presbytery or synod received responses to more than one request for interpretation, please comment on the *most recent* interpretation received.)

n=20

- a. State that the *Book of Order* sufficiently addressed the issue and therefore no interpretation was required?
  - Yes ..... 50%
  - No ..... 44%
  - Don't remember ..... 6%
- b. Suggest an amendment to the Constitution addressing the issue?
  - Yes ..... 22%
  - No ..... 67%
  - Don't remember ..... 11%
- c. Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Yes ..... 100%
  - No ..... —
  - Don't remember ..... —

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is called—to examine overtures and recommendations that propose amendments to the *Book of Order*, to receive from the Stated Clerk questions requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*, and to report to the General Assembly the committee's findings and recommendations.

Q-21. How faithful is the committee in fulfilling this purpose?

n=187

- Very faithful ..... 53%
- Faithful ..... 38%
- Slightly faithful ..... 3%
- Not faithful ..... 1%
- Not sure ..... 5%

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is called—to examine overtures and recommendations that propose amendments to the *Book of Order*, to receive from the Stated Clerk questions requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*, and to report to the General Assembly the committee's findings and recommendations.

Q-22. How well does the description fit what you think the committee *should* be doing?

- Very well (Skip to Q-23) ..... 52%
- Well ..... 38%
- Not so well ..... 3%
- Poorly ..... 2%
- Not sure (Skip to Q-23) ..... 5%

Q-23. How important to the PC(USA) is the work of the committee as set forth in the description? (To see the description again, please click here. To view, make sure pop-ups are allowed on your computer.)

- Very important ..... 60%
- Important ..... 29%
- Slightly important ..... 6%
- Not important ..... 3%
- Not sure ..... 2%

Appendix C (Excerpts):

- Number of e-mail invitations sent ..... 711
- Number of e-mails undeliverable/ineligible ..... 58
- Number of responses returned ..... 479
- Response rate ..... 73%

*This survey may skip some questions, depending on your responses.*

Evaluating the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

Q-8. How would you rate your overall familiarity with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

- a. Before you attended the 219th General Assembly?
  - Very familiar ..... 6%
  - Familiar ..... 20%
  - Slightly familiar ..... 38%
  - Not familiar ..... 37%
- b. Now?
  - Very familiar ..... 22%
  - Familiar ..... 45%
  - Slightly familiar ..... 24%
  - Not familiar (Skip to Q-13) ..... 8%

If you are not currently familiar with the work of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, skip to the description of the committee

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after Q-12.

Q-9. Between 2006 and the present, how well has the committee n=419

a. Evaluated proposals to amend the *Book of Order*?

Very well .....	25%
Well .....	48%
Not so well.....	9%
Poorly .....	3%
Not sure .....	15%

b. Exhibited fairness in its findings and recommendations?

Very well .....	25%
Well .....	46%
Not so well.....	9%
Poorly .....	7%
Not sure .....	13%

c. Responded to questions from the Stated Clerk during General Assembly plenaries requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*?

Very well .....	36%
Well .....	47%
Not so well.....	6%
Poorly .....	1%
Not sure .....	10%

d. Responded to questions from leaders of General Assembly committees during General Assembly plenaries?

Very well .....	36%
Well .....	43%
Not so well.....	7%
Poorly .....	2%
Not sure .....	12%

Q-10. How many of the opinions of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, found in the *Reports to the General Assembly*, helped you identify and interpret the constitutional issues involved in overtures to the 219th General Assembly?

All did .....	32%
Most did, but a few did not .....	44%
A few did, but most did not .....	13%
None did .....	2%
Didn't read .....	3%
No opinion .....	6%

Q-11. Did an Advisory Committee on the Constitution member resource the General Assembly committee on which you served in 2010?

n=419

Yes .....	62%
No (Please skip to the description of the committee after Q-12) .....	13%
Not sure (Please skip to the description of the committee after Q-12).....	25%

Q-12. How much did the Advisory Committee on the Constitution member who resourced the General Assembly committee on which you served:

n=260

a. Help your committee interpret the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution?

Quite a bit .....	42%
A fair amount.....	39%
Only a little.....	15%
Not at all .....	1%
Not sure .....	3%

b. Clearly articulate the principles of the Constitution and polity with regard to the issues before your committee?

Quite a bit .....	52%
A fair amount.....	32%
Only a little.....	10%
Not at all .....	2%
Not sure .....	4%

c. Demonstrate competence in his or her interaction with members of your committee?

Quite a bit .....	64%
A fair amount.....	27%
Only a little.....	6%
Not at all .....	2%
Not sure .....	1%

d. Present a professional demeanor in his or her interaction with members of your committee?

Quite a bit .....	72%
A fair amount.....	24%
Only a little.....	2%



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Not at all ..... \*

Not sure ..... 2%

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution is called “to examine overtures and recommendations that propose amendments to the *Book of Order*, to receive from the Stated Clerk questions requiring interpretation of the *Book of Order*, and to report to the General Assembly the committee’s findings and recommendations.”

Q-13. How well does this description fit what you think the committee *should* be doing?

Very well (Skip to Q-14) ..... 49%

Well ..... 40%

Not so well ..... 4%

Poorly ..... 2%

Not sure (Skip to Q-14) ..... 4%

If you are not currently familiar with the work of the committee, please skip to Q-15.

Q-15. How important to the PC(USA) is the work of the committee as set forth in the description?

Very important..... 57%

Important ..... 32%

Slightly important ..... 5%

Not important..... 4%

Not sure ..... 2%

About You

Q-17. Were you an elder or minister commissioner to the 219th General Assembly?

Elder commissioner ..... 50%

Minister commissioner ..... 50%

Appendix 10  
Budgetary Information

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) is housed in the Department of Constitutional Services in the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). Budget requests are submitted every two years. Budget approval is a four-step process:

1. Requests are submitted to a budget committee comprised of the budget director and two staff members from each department. This committee reviews each request, making sure that it complies with the funding formulas approved by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), and negotiates any suggested changes with departments.
2. The requests are then submitted for Senior Coordinating Cabinet approval.
3. Once approved by the Senior Coordinating Cabinet, the budget is sent forward to COGA for approval.
4. The final budget proposals are sent to the General Assembly.

The formula used to calculate travel, lodging and meals is \$665.00 for the first day, and \$160.00 for each additional day. The \$665.00 is to include the cost of transportation. The budget does not take into account that some committee members must arrive and/or stay a day later due to airline schedules and/or meetings. Additionally, to reduce cost of staff travel, COGA has requested that as much as possible, all meetings should be held in Louisville. In the past several years, the Advisory Committee has met in Louisville for their spring meeting. The fall meeting is held two days prior to the Fall Polity Conference. At least half of the ACC members are mid council members who are already attending the fall conference, which means less money is used from the budget of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

For even numbered years when the General Assembly meets, COGA budgets for two meetings of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, plus one person to attend the GA Leadership Briefing in the spring. For odd numbered years when the General Assembly does not meet, the ACC has one meeting.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution requests budget for printing and mailing. In the past several years the ACC has been working to use less paper. The current moderator did have the fall 2011 ACC meeting be virtually paperless. The ACC has used electronic meetings (Go To Meeting) to work on business since 2007 and that has been a savings in the budget not to have face-to-face meetings.

The ACC also uses a web-based program, Base Camp/Project Path, to cut down on the use of paper.

The ACC continues to find ways to get their work done in a way that will be less cost to the church.

ACC Budget Allocation & Expenditures  
2007–2012

	<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Spent</u>
2007	\$11,205	\$11,008
2008	39,059	37,789
2009	11,205	7,942
2010	30,494	30,096
2011	11,205	7,082
2012	28,969	-

Part One: The Purpose of the Assembly Committee on Review

The purpose of the Assembly Committee on Review evaluation is not to find fault but to evaluate the committee or commission's goals and goal implementation while helping to formulate solutions for improvement.

The Assembly Committee on Review should:

- Interview committee or commission leadership
- Evaluate self-study draft
- Determine affirmations for committee or commission
- Propose improvements for committee or commission
- Strive for fair and impartial evaluation regarding committee or commission at all levels of the review

Specific criteria are found in the following section, Assessment Criteria. Please review this section carefully.

## Assessment Criteria

## A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

1. *Each committee or commission was created by the church and exists to serve and support the church's mission in a particular area. Each committee or commission is expected to exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC (USA).*
2. The basic process of the committee or commission should demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly. The committee or commission should exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the committee or commission acts.
3. The committee or commission should exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity.
4. The committee or commission should provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly.

## B. Effectiveness of Services

*The services of the committee or commission are consistent with its assembly or constitutional mandate.*

1. The committee or commission has a defined and consistent process for completing its work.
2. The committee or commission has a regular process of self-evaluation of its services.
3. The committee or commission employs a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large.
4. The committee or commission utilizes current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission.
5. The committee or commission has developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC (USA).

Part Two: Evaluation at the General Assembly

## I. Introduction

The Assembly Committee on Review is the second step in the PC (U.S.A.)'s assessment of the committee or commission and its mission.

The review can be a valuable opportunity for the committee or commission to see itself as others see them, and to formulate a plan for goal setting and strengthening of its role both in the PC (U.S.A.) community and within the organization.

## A. Before the General Assembly

Before meeting with the committee or commission for the review, the Assembly Committee on Review may take the following steps:

- Divide the committee into sub-committees to review individual committees or commissions
- Mail out the self-study and survey material to committee members
- Mail out to study "How to review GA permanent and advisory committees and commissions material"

## B. Conducting the Interviews

In conducting the review, the Assembly Committee on Review should take the following steps:

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- Review survey results. This will help with your fact-finding relevant to the self-study.
- Hold the discussion in the style of an open interview. The purpose of the review is not an inquisition, but a fact-finding mission
- Prepare questions in advance
- Listen attentively and take notes. Even with a photographic memory, written documentation is critical for the person or persons preparing the evaluation.
- Ask for documentation if not already provided or made available

### C. Questions to Ask and Things to Look For

Following these guidelines will help ensure a successful review while adhering to a standard protocol.

## II. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

1. Does the committee or commission as it was created by the church serve and support the church's mission in a particular area? Does the committee or commission exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC (USA)?
2. Do the basic process of the committee or commission demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly? Does the committee or commission exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the committee or commission acts?
3. Does the committee or commission exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity?
4. Does the committee or commission provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly?

## III. Effectiveness of Services

*The services of the committee or commission are consistent with its assembly or constitutional mandate.*

1. Does the committee or commission have a defined and consistent process for completing its work?
2. Does the committee or commission have a regular process of self-evaluation of its services?
3. Does the committee or commission employ a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large?
4. Does the committee or commission utilize current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission?
5. Does the committee or commission have a developed vision and plan for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC (USA)."

## IV. After the Interviews

After the interviews, the Assembly Committee on Review should take the following steps. After each interview, summarize each session using bullet points to help you formulate your report

- Identify any additional information needs to be addressed
- Assign a writing group to draft report

## V. Supporting Information

The committee or commission is expected to provide supporting evidence for its claims. In addition to survey results and interviews conducted by the Assembly Committee on Review, information from such sources as other reports and studies, prior General Assembly reports may be included in informational citations.

## Part Three - Evaluation

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### I. Introduction

The Assembly Committee on Review report is the third step in PC(U.S.A.) review process. This important document outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the committee or commission being reviewed and is a valuable tool for improvement.

The report schedule may be hectic, but it is imperative that observations be recorded and distilled promptly for maximum effectiveness.

### II. Preparing the Reports

The report by the Assembly Committee on Review should follow the standard form for reports to the plenary of the general Assembly. Recommendations should be listed first with supporting rationale to follow. In the event that there are no recommendations the report should follow the format of reports with no recommendations.

## III. Committee or Commission Response to the Reports

Bear in mind that the Assembly Committee on Review recommendations, suggestions and findings may be controversial. They must reflect the consensus of the Assembly Committee on Review. After receipt of the report, the committee or commission has the opportunity to respond. Permitted response components could include a correction of factual errors, recommendation and suggestion replies and supporting information and documents that address the committee's concerns.

Response

After the Assembly Committee on Review prepares its report

- The committee or commission may respond to recommendations cited in the final Assembly Committee on Review report
- Address and implement recommendations per their report
- Establish a plan for the committee or commission members to implement the plan
- Create short-term objectives and long-term goals, using the self-study as a guide
- Develop a timeline for the implementation of these objectives and goals

## Appendix 12

Standards for Review of General Assembly Permanent, Advocacy, and Advisory Committee and Commissions

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT, ADVOCACY,  
AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

## A. PURPOSE

The responsibilities of the committee or commission that are being reviewed

1. A self-study of its work based on the review standards covering the previous six years.
2. The self-study will have to be available by the 120-day deadline before the General Assembly at which it is to be reviewed.
3. Representatives of the committee or commission will need to be available at the assembly to serve as resources for the assembly committee.
4. The committee or commission may include responses in the self-study and additional questions that explore the standards that apply to its particular work.
5. The committee or commission may utilize former members to help develop the self-study.

## B. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE REVIEW

1. The Office of the General Assembly (OGA), in consultation with the leadership of the committee or commission, will supervise the development of a survey instrument by the Office of Research Services.
2. Specific training of assembly committee leadership and members as needed to accomplish the evaluation process.
3. Budget for development of self-studies.
4. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the GAC will evaluate the review process after each assembly.

## C. THE WORK OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW

1. The review assignment will be given to a designated assembly committee.
2. The assembly committee's review will be limited to certain questions:

Is the committee or commission fulfilling its mandate (based on self-study, surveys, consultations with committee or commission leadership)?

3. Are there items that need to be referred for further study?
4. The assembly committee will hold hearings, etc.
5. The assembly committee will be in dialogue with representatives of the General Assembly permanent, advocacy, and advisory committees or commissions being reviewed.
6. The assembly committee may break into subgroups to cover each committee or commission being reviewed.
7. The review committee will respect the distinction between a committee and a commission.
8. The assembly committee will make a final report, possibly with recommendations.

## STANDARDS

## A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

1. Each committee or commission was created by the church and exists to serve and support the church's mission in a particular area. Each committee or commission is expected to exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA).
2. The basic process of the committee or commission should demonstrate fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its establishing deliverance, charter, or mandate from the assembly. The committee or commission should exhibit leadership in guiding the church in engagement with the work and resources in which the committee or commission acts.
3. The committee or commission should exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity.
4. The committee or commission should provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly.

## B. Effectiveness of Services

The services of the committee or commission are consistent with its assembly or constitutional mandate.

1. The committee or commission has a defined and consistent process for completing its work.
2. The committee or commission has a regular process of self-evaluation of its services.
3. The committee or commission employs a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large.
4. The committee or commission utilizes current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission.
5. The committee or commission has developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and context of the PC(USA)."

## Endnotes

1. *Manual of the General Assembly of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1976, p. A-7, #32.
2. *Book of Church Order 1982/1983*, Presbyterian Church in the United States, Atlanta, Office of the General Assembly, § 20-7.
3. *Manual of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 2003–2004*, Standing Rules of the General Assembly, Function of the Stated Clerk, 2.j, Louisville, Office of the General Assembly, p. 44.
4. *Manual of Procedures for the Advisory Committee on the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* General Rules for Members, p. 9.
5. Stephen L. Carter, *Integrity*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996, p.6.

**19-Self-Study ACL*****Advisory Committee on Litigation Self-Study***1. *History*

In 1987, the Office of the General Assembly joined with the office of the Advisory Council on Church and Society to carry out a consultation on involvement in litigation in civil courts. Guidelines were prepared to assist the Stated Clerk in carrying out responsibilities in connection with possible participation in litigation in civil courts. In 1988, the Office of the General Assembly recommended that the General Assembly establish an Advisory Committee on Litigation to advise the Stated Clerk on various matters of litigation for which the clerk is responsible under *Organization for Mission* IV.B.2.b. This body was anticipated to strengthen the work of the Office of the General Assembly in dealing with matters such as the filing of briefs *amicus curiae* (friend of the court briefs), and other, more direct forms of participation in litigation in secular civil and criminal courts.

2. *Purpose and Form*

The Advisory Committee on Litigation is made up of six elected persons who are members of a PC(USA) council and ordinarily an attorney-at-law. These six elected persons are experienced in legal fields that relate to issues that may be the subject of legal proceedings in which the church is, or may become, interested. The committee advises the Stated Clerk regarding participation in litigation related to matters of civil and religious liberty, relations between church and state, and any other matters related to the mission and interest of the church.

Occasionally an issue will arise in a presbytery or synod where it will be appropriate for that council to join, or even draft, an *amicus curiae* brief in support of religious liberty or a position of interest to the governing body. An *amicus curiae* brief is literally a "friend of the court" brief. It may raise an issue not explicitly raised by the parties, but one quite relevant to the case. Usually such briefs are filed only with leave of the court. They are almost always limited to appellate level filings.

The *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* gives the General Assembly Stated Clerk authority to join in such briefs on behalf of the General Assembly. Since 1988, the Advisory Committee on Litigation has advised the clerk on whether to join or file particular amicus curiae briefs. The General Assembly has approved seventeen criteria for use in determining whether to file a particular brief (see below).

When a case arises, the Advisory Committee on Litigation reviews all the case material, any social policy of the General Assembly, and any procedure of the PC(USA) that may pertain to the case. They then apply the criteria in deciding how to advise the State Clerk. This process can take many hours of intense evaluation and may result in a recommendation that the Stated Clerk participate in, either directly as a party or by filing an amicus brief, in the litigation. The ACL may also advise that the Stated Clerk not participate in the particular litigation for a variety of reasons.

Over the years, the General Assembly has also occasionally requested that the Advisory Committee on Litigation be a resource in the development of social witness policy when that social witness policy may have secular legal implications.

When the General Assembly Stated Clerk is invited to join or file a brief that would have regional or local implications, the Assistant Stated Clerk will normally contact the stated clerk of the affected governing body. She will provide, upon request, copies of legal pleadings, relevant Scriptural, Confessional, or General Assembly Social Policy statements on the substantive issue. If there is a draft amicus, she will normally share that as well.

A presbytery or synod may join the General Assembly Stated Clerk on briefs if that fits within the social witness of the congregations within the presbytery or synod. The appropriate signatory on such a brief is typically the Stated Clerk as the ecclesiastical representative of governing body. A presbytery may provide by rule for some other person (such as an executive presbyter) who bears that responsibility. It is advisable for the governing body to develop a process and identify responsible officers or employees. If legal issue arises within a presbytery or synod that would benefit by the filing of an *amicus* brief, the General Assembly Stated Clerk will often join the presbytery upon request.

### 3. *Self-Evaluation*

a. In developing and using consistently the criteria for evaluation of litigation, the Advisory Committee on Litigation has a thorough definition of its work and process for completing its work. Because of the nature of litigation, this usually is applied in a short time frame for each particular case involvement, however, the application and evaluation process happens continually for as long as the Stated Clerk is involved in a particular litigation.

b. The Advisory Committee on Litigation regularly self-evaluates its services to the Stated Clerk as it applies to evolving civil law and evolving social policy of the PC(USA). The Advisory Committee on Litigation is always on call for use by the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk may participate in conference calls and meetings of the Advisory Committee on Litigation. The Stated Clerk additionally employs an Assistant Stated Clerk as a liaison with the Advisory Committee on Litigation.

c. Since the Advisory Committee on Litigation advises only the Stated Clerk, the committee itself does not employ a strategy for communication with the church-at-large. The Stated Clerk and the Office of the General Assembly does have a strategy for communication of any litigation in which the Stated Clerk participates through amicus briefs or as a direct party. The OGA has created a webpage that includes copies of all briefs filed by the Stated Clerk as an amicus or a direct party.

d. The Advisory Committee on Litigation utilizes technology made available to them through the Office of the General Assembly. They additionally utilize their professional expertise to advise the Stated Clerk on any needs they may have to fulfill their function as an advisory committee.

e. The Advisory Committee on Litigation meets face-to-face biannually and reviews its mission as well as any potential litigation or social issue that may be emerging that is of interest to the PC(USA). This meeting typically consists of a review of current, past, and future civil legal issues of interest to the PC(USA) and their evolving civil legal precedents and church social policy.

f. The Advisory Committee on Litigation budget includes biannual face-to-face meetings, legal research fees, conference calls, copying, legal resources, and representation to General Assembly.

### 4. *Criteria for Evaluation of an Amicus Brief in Litigation*

a. Does the case raise a significant religious or ethical issue of concern for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

b. Has the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through the General Assembly, the Church Constitution, or accepted biblical, confessional, and theological principles, advocated or adopted a position that is relevant to the issue or issues raised in the case?

- c. Can the church's position on the issue or issues be persuasively and effectively communicated in the amicus brief?
- d. Does the amicus brief enunciate statements inconsistent with policies and positions approved by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the General Assembly or inconsistent with accepted theological principles? If such an inconsistency exists, can the church's position be expressed in such a way as to accurately reflect the church's position without compromising that position or the integrity of the amicus brief? or should a separate amicus brief be prepared?
- e. Is the proposed amicus brief well-written and practically and legally well-reasoned and persuasive?
- f. Has the committee and the Stated Clerk been provided with adequate time to evaluate any proposed amicus brief and the issues presented?
- g. Are the issues raised in the case based on a properly developed record and have key pleadings and lower court decisions been supplied?
- h. What other organizations, including other religious entities, have been requested to join as amici?
- i. Who has prepared the draft amicus brief and for what purpose?
- j. Are there issues in the case that will need interpretation to presbyteries and congregations? Should pastors and governing bodies be notified of the case so that they may be able to answer questions? If yes, staff are instructed to notify.
- k. Are the issues raised in the case of sufficient importance to justify participation?
- l. Does the proposed amicus brief really add anything to the court's consideration of the issues presented?
- m. Within the judicial system, is the level appropriate for the church's participation ?
- n. What positions or views will other proposed amici take with respect to the issue or issues raised?
- o. Is there a legislative remedy?
- p. Criteria 1–5 are guidelines and in each case the committee will exercise its best judgment, but may also consider other factors in making its decision.
- q. Is there a significant or passionate constituency within the PC(USA) who might disagree with the position of the brief?

5. *Stated Clerk's Comments Self-Study of the Advisory Committee on Litigation*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution plays an important role in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition to witness in the public arena, the General Assembly has long recognized the need and value of making witness to our theological, moral, and social justice concerns through the judicial system in our country. Such witness requires knowledge of General Assembly policy and an understanding of the implications of particular judicial actions or inaction on how they are lived out in our society.

The Advisory Committee on Litigation was created to provide the legal advice and expertise to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. It is composed of six Presbyterian attorneys who advise the Stated Clerk on the legal and judicial implications of potential *amicus* briefs that the church is invited to enter from time to time to promote religious freedom, human rights, and social justice.

As the Stated Clerk ultimately responsible for making the decisions to engage in secular judicial actions as a form of social witness, I am so grateful for the competence, dedication, and insight that this committee offers. They have greatly enhanced my understanding of the secular judicial sphere and has enabled the church to make an important witness in a number of areas about which the General Assembly cares deeply.

Below is my brief response as the only "client" of the Advisory Committee on Litigation in relation to the criteria that the General Assembly has specified for the evaluation of its permanent committees:

"V. Assessment Criteria

"A. Fidelity to Mission and Partnership

"1. Each committee or commission was created by the church and exists to serve and support the church's mission in a particular area. Each committee or commission is expected to exhibit a constant faithfulness to and in fulfillment of its servant role in the life of the PC(USA).

## 19 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

*“The ACL committee serves to advise me as Stated Clerk on the complicated connection between the social witness of the General Assembly and the secular judicial process. The Committee has fulfilled their charge faithfully and has carried it out well in their detailed and nuanced advice to me.*

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

*“The ACL has consistently advised me based on the seventeen criteria in the Criteria for Evaluation established by the General Assembly. The members of the committee are ready at a moment’s notice to review complicated cases, briefs and social policy within a relatively short time frame and honesty discuss the affects of any particular amicus witness.*

“3. The committee or commission should exhibit practical cooperation with the other agencies or committees of the church in areas of overlapping responsibility and opportunity.

*“The ACL has received for its review several potential amicus opportunities for social witness from other agencies or committees of the PCUSA and seems to take seriously the difficult work of other agencies and committees.*

“4. The committee or commission should provide timely responses to directives and requests from the General Assembly.

*“The Assembly has not issued directives or requests to the ACL except for the addition of a 17<sup>th</sup> Criteria that the committee has added to its extensive evaluation prior to giving its advice to me as the Stated Clerk. The Committee uses all of the social policy given by the General Assembly in its evaluation of potential amicus briefs in particular cases.*

### “B. Effectiveness of Services

“The services of the committee or commission are consistent with its assembly or constitutional mandate.

“1. The committee or commission has a defined and consistent process for completing its work.

*“The committee has followed its established criteria and has always been available to advise the Stated Clerk either by email, conference call, or face to face meeting often evaluating highly complicated issues. These evaluations often happen with little advance notice and I am grateful to the members of the committee for their attention to highly complex issues within a short time frame.*

“2. The committee or commission has a regular process of self-evaluation of its services.

*“The committee gives to the assembly a regular assessment of the judicial cases in which the amicus briefs were filed.*

“3. The committee or commission employs a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large.

*“The committee’s primary role is to advise the Stated Clerk only so that the committee itself does not have a major interpretive role to the church. However, the Office of the General Assembly has established a website so that the church can be aware of the committee’s procedures and the briefs filed by the Stated Clerk.*

“4. The committee or commission utilizes current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission.

*“The ACL makes regular and effective use of technology in its work.*

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

*“The committee holds a face-to-face meeting every two to three years in which it reviews the General Assembly social witness and current issues before the judicial system to advise the Stated Clerk on opportunities to judicially make witness. This has led to giving priority in briefs to issues of First Amendment Establishment and Free Exercise clause interpretations, human rights, and justice for immigrants.”*

## 6. Excerpts from the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 2012 IV.B and IV.C.4

### IV. General Assembly Officers and Committees and the Office of the General Assembly

#### B. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

1. The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

2. *Functions of the Stated Clerk* [For functions related to General Assembly meetings, see Standing Rule H.2.)

....

b. As an officer of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall preserve and defend the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and support the decisions, actions, and programs of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall give advisory opinions concerning the meaning of the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall give advisory opinions on the meaning of the actions of the General Assembly. When the Stated Clerk deems it necessary, after consulting with appropriate persons or bodies, the Stated Clerk may retain legal counsel and institute or participate in legal proceedings in civil and criminal courts. ...



## 19 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF GA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

### C. *Committees of the General Assembly*

.....

#### 4 *Advisory Committee on Litigation*

a. The Advisory Committee on Litigation shall advise the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly in connection with instituting or participating in legal proceedings (see Functions of the Stated Clerk earlier in this section).

b. The members of the committee shall ordinarily be attorneys, and the members shall be experienced in fields related to issues that may be the subject of legal proceedings in which the church is, or may become, interested. The committee shall be composed of six persons, elected by the General Assembly upon nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee. The advisory committee may invite other persons with special competency related to particular cases or situations to participate in the consideration of particular cases or issues. The members shall be evenly divided into three classes, shall serve six-year terms, and shall be eligible for election to one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. Members of this committee are exempted from the prohibition against service on more than one entity of the assembly set forth in Section IV.C.1.c. above.

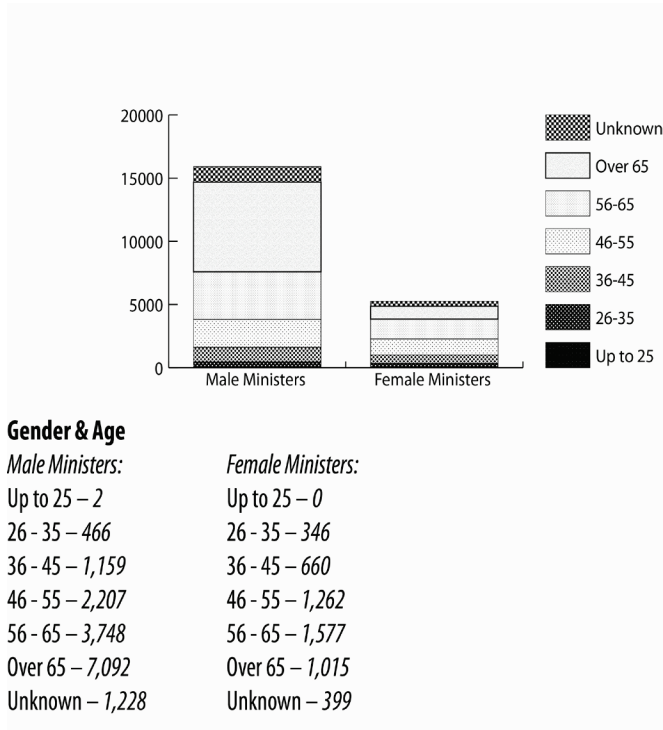
c. The committee shall elect its own moderator and ordinarily shall meet at the call of the Stated Clerk. The committee may carry on its work by correspondence, telephone consultation (including conference telephone calls), or meetings.

d. The committee shall advise the Stated Clerk regarding participation in litigation related to matters of civil and religious liberty, relations between church and state, and any other matters related to the mission and interest of the church. The Advisory Committee on Litigation shall advise the Stated Clerk regarding the establishment and maintenance of a resource file of legal documents as a means of assisting the governing bodies and agencies of the church in initiating or participating in litigation in the areas within the concerns of the committee.

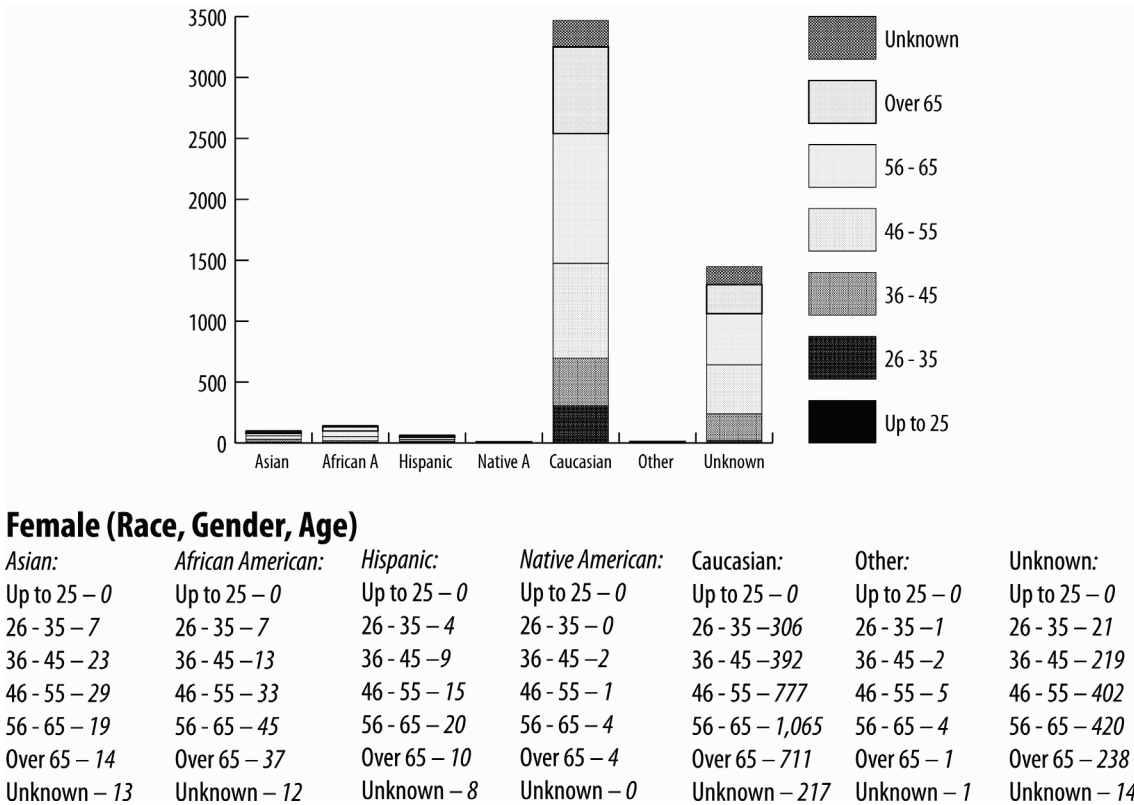
e. The committee shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly, receive staff services as provided by the Stated Clerk, and designate a representative to the annual session of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule B.3.).

f. The committee shall report to each session of the General Assembly.

**Figure 1: All Teaching Elders (Ministers) by Gender and Age.**



**Figure 2: All Female Teaching Elders (Ministers) by Race/Ethnicity and Age**



## Attachment D

### Members who served on the General Assembly Committee on Representation between 2006 and 2012

Name	Synod	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Early Departure
Ms. Megan Acedo	Pacific	Class of 2006	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010			
Mr. Glenn Bezuyen	Southwest	Class of 2006	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010			
Ms. Yung Suk Park	Northwest	Class of 2006	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010			
Mr. Ernest Bighorn Jr.	Rocky Mountains	Class of 2006							
Mrs. Mary Payne	Lincoln Trails	Class of 2006							
Mr. Robert Cross	Lakes and Prairies	Class of 2006							
Mr. Artence Walton	Covenant	Class of 2006							
Mr. William Gardner	Mid-America	Class of 2006	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010				
Rev. Carol Tompkins	Sun	Class of 2008	Class of 2008						
Rev. Marinda Harris	South Atlantic	Class of 2008	Class of 2008						
Mr. Efraín Rivera-Vega	Puerto Rico	Class of 2008	Class of 2008						
Dr. Roy F. Knight	Mid-Atlantic	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2008					
Ms. Alma-Jean Marion	Alaska-Northwest	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Ms. Angelica Michail	Southern California and Hawaii	Class of 2008	Class of 2008						
Rev. Dr. Stanley Bhasker	Trinity	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Rev. John Gulden	Living Waters	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2008	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012		Resigned in 2011
Ms. Alda Bighorn	Rocky Mountains		Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010				Resigned in 2009
Ms. Cindy Ray	Lakes and Prairies		Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Rev. Linda Burger	Covenant		Class of 2010						
Rev. M. Coleman Gilchrist	Lincoln Trails		Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2010				Resigned in 2009
Ms. Deborah Fair	Covenant			Class of 2010	Class of 2010	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Rev. Alice Ridgill	South Atlantic			Class of 2012	Class of 2012				Resigned in 2009

Mr. Stafford Fredricks	Southern California and Hawaii			Class of 2012	Class of 2012				Resigned in 2009
Mr. Eliud Serrano Arroyo	Puerto Rico			Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012			
Mr. Randel Bohanon	Sun			Class of 2012	Class of 2012				Resigned in 2009
Ms. Angela Battle	Mid-Atlantic				Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Mr. Issa Sayar	South Atlantic					Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Mr. Cliff Yang	Southern California and Hawaii					Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Rev. Hector Rivera-Velez	Sun					Class of 2012	Class of 2012	Class of 2012	
Rev. Martha Ross-Mockaitis	Lincoln Trails					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Rev. Heather Walchar	Mid-America					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Mr. Patrick Nelson	Northwest					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Mr. Kenneth Bartlett-Preston	Pacific					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Rev. Amy Mendez	Rocky Mountains					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	
Ms. Dora Martínez	Southwest					Class of 2014	Class of 2014	Class of 2014	

Some members were appointed and elected to unfinished terms – all years in the review period for when the member served are marked. Early departures are marked in the final column.

## Item 20-01

[Withdrawn by the Presbytery of San Diego on May 22, 2012.]

## Item 20-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 20-02. See p. 36.]

*On Directing the Board of Pensions to Provide a Medical Benefits Plan That Will Not Pay for Abortions Except to Save the Life of the Woman—From the Presbytery of Washington.*

The Presbytery of Washington overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to protect Presbyterians who believe abortion is sin, from the sin of complicity in the taking of human life by directing the Board of Pensions to provide a medical benefits plan that will not pay for abortions, except that any procedure necessary to save the physical life of the woman will be covered.

### *Rationale*

The Board of Pensions medical plan currently covers abortion under a wide range of circumstances. We believe this coverage should be revised to a more focused scenario—namely, medical emergencies when the life of the mother is at stake. To do otherwise is to fly in the face of the Scriptures, which show a clear and consistent regard for human life at even its earliest stages. Has not the Lord chosen his people even from before the foundation of the earth (Eph. 1:4–6)? Does not he himself knit us together in our mother’s wombs (Ps. 139:13)? Did not John the Baptist even leap for joy in the womb of his mother when he heard the voice of Mary, the mother of our Lord (Lk. 1:41)? Let us not treat lightly lives that are costly and precious to our Lord, but instead adopt a medical plan that shows compassion for both mother and child, in full obedience to God’s revealed will.

### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 20-02

*Advice and Counsel on Item 20-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 20-02 calls for the Board of Pensions to provide a medical benefits plan that does not pay for abortions except to save the physical life of the woman.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 20-02 be disapproved.

### *Rationale*

Previous General Assemblies have addressed the issue of conscience with regard to financial support of abortion. To that end, the Board of Pensions has structured and operates a [Relief of Conscience \(ROC\) Plan](http://web.pensions.org/Publications/pensions/Home/Forms%20%26%20Publications/Booklets%20%26%20Brochures/ReliefofConscienceReport.pdf) (<http://web.pensions.org/Publications/pensions/Home/Forms%20%26%20Publications/Booklets%20%26%20Brochures/ReliefofConscienceReport.pdf>) that permits

Churches and employing organizations that object as a matter of conscience to the use of their dues for abortion procedures may apply for relief of conscience. A dollar amount equal to the cost of abortion procedures from the prior year is set aside from the Medical Plan dues of employers that have relief of conscience status. These monies are transferred to the Board of Pensions Assistance Program, where they provide a small portion of the funding for Adoption Assistance Grants to Benefits Plan members.

Relief of conscience is granted to the organization that pays dues. The full coverage protection of the Medical Plan is available to all Benefits Plan members whether or not their employing organization has relief of conscience status. (<http://web.pensions.org/Publications/pensions/Home/Forms%20%26%20Publications/Booklets%20%26%20Brochures/ReliefofConscienceReport.pdf>)

This overture would violate the church’s current and longstanding policy on abortion. Since 1970 the PC(USA) has strongly and consistently affirmed that women may face situations in which the decision to terminate a pregnancy may be a morally valid decision. Therefore, a woman’s right to have available to her the full range of reproductive options when faced with a problem pregnancy must also exist within the context of the medical plans offered by the Board of Pensions.

The Relief of Conscience mechanism that is already in place provides an avenue by which those individuals, churches, or organizations that oppose abortion in all circumstances (except to save the physical life of the woman) may have relief of conscience, and thus a provision is already in place to meet objections of conscience.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 20-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 20-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 20-02.

*Rationale*

The ACWC concurs with the comments of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and advises that Item 20-02 be disapproved.

**BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 20-02**

*Comment on Item 20-02—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

The Board of Pensions (the “Board”) advises that the General Assembly disapprove Item 20-02.

The General Assembly has discussed and debated the issues relating to problem pregnancies and abortion for many years.<sup>1</sup>

The Board administers the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) consistent with the normative values of the PC(USA), which affirm the right of a woman to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies.<sup>2</sup> This means that legal medical procedures related to the termination of pregnancy are covered by the Medical Plan, with the admonition that:

Consistent with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s affirmation of the ability and responsibility of a woman to make good moral choices regarding problem pregnancies, the Medical Plan reimburses medical costs for abortion procedures, subject to plan limits. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) further affirms that abortion should not be used as a method of birth control, for gender selection only, or solely to obtain fetal parts for transplantation. See Minutes, 204th General Assembly (1992), available upon request from the Board of Pensions.

Churches and employing organizations that object, as a matter of conscience, to the use of their dues for abortion procedure costs may apply for Relief of Conscience. Monies offset from Medical Plan dues of employers that have applied for and received Relief of Conscience are deposited in the Board’s Assistance Program and are used to help provide Adoption Assistance Grants to plan members. For more information regarding this administrative policy and Adoption Assistance Grants, contact the Board of Pensions.<sup>3</sup>

The Board’s Relief of Conscience (ROC) process was approved by the General Assembly in 1992 and refined by subsequent General Assemblies since its initial approval.<sup>4</sup>

The ROC process reflects the PC(USA)’s long-standing affirmation of the conscience of those who hold a moral position not supported by a majority of Presbyterians. Consistent with the principles of Presbyterian form of government,<sup>5</sup> it allows those who hold varying positions to remain in the church. The ROC process allows individual churches or employing organizations to object to the possible use of its Medical Plan dues for abortion-related procedures. Upon the approval of the presbytery, the church is placed on the Board’s ROC roll. The Medical Plan dues of ROC organizations are separately accounted for and claims related to abortion procedures are not paid from those funds.

The Board tracks nine procedure codes used to submit payment for abortion claims, along with three prescription drugs that may be used to induce an abortion, and aggregates those claims to determine the total amount of medical claims that may have been for the termination of a pregnancy. The Medical Plan paid in excess of \$170 million dollars in medical claims and expenses in 2011. Of that amount, \$8,600 dollars may have been for the termination of a pregnancy.

Ultimately, a dollar amount proportionate to abortion-related procedures are taken from the ROC dues and transferred to an assistance program that provides adoption assistance grants. As of December 31, 2011, there were 537 churches participating in the ROC administrative process.

## Endnotes

1. Since 2001, the General Assembly considered abortion in:  
2010: Items 18-12, 19-03, and 19-04  
2008: Items 10-01, 10-03, and 10-04  
2006: Items 10-01, 10-02, and 10-03  
2004: Items 11-01, 11-02, and 11-03  
2003: Items 08-01, 08-02, and 08-03  
2002: *Overtures 02-37 and 02-48*  
2001: *Overtures 01-26, 01-47, 01-48, 01-50, and 01-54.*
2. “We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies” (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I. p. 69, 368).
3. *Guide to Your Healthcare Benefits 2012*, p. 24.

4. Following an initial study by the Board of Pensions, the 204th General Assembly (1992) approved a process referred to as “Capturing Dues for Alternative Use.”

In 1995, the Board appointed a Special Committee of the Board of Directors, called the Committee on Conscience, who convened a consultation with members of the original relief of conscience work group, persons who objected to the “capture of dues” concept, and the Office of the General Assembly. This consultative process included regional consultations open to the public in San Francisco, California; Cincinnati, Ohio; Overland Park, Kansas; and Charlotte, North Carolina. Based on this consultation, the Relief of Conscience administrative process was modified to further insulate the dues pool. The Board of Pensions also committed to a review of the modified process after two years.

The final report of this special committee was presented to and approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998), formulating relief of conscience as it is currently administered (*Minutes*, 1998, Part I, p.38, 544–46).

5. “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (*Book of Order*, F-3.0205).

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 20-02

*Comment on Item 20-02—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The General Assembly Mission Council recognizes that abortion is a highly sensitive issue that needs to be approached with prayerful consideration. The General Assembly has acknowledged that within our church there is a wide range of deeply held convictions about the matter. The 204th General Assembly (1992) reflected this diversity of opinion, in its approval of the report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion.

Clearly there is both agreement and disagreement in our use and interpretation of Scripture. There is also agreement and disagreement on the basic issue of abortion. The committee agreed that there are no biblical texts that speak expressly to the topic of abortion, but that taken in their totality the Holy Scriptures are filled with messages that advocate respect for the woman and child before and after birth. Therefore the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) encourages an atmosphere of open debate and mutual respect for a variety of opinions concerning the issues related to problem pregnancies and abortion. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 367)

Consequently, as the policies of the General Assembly regarding abortion and related issues have developed, they do not fit neatly into the frequently used forced-choice between “pro-life” and “pro-choice.” The church ought to be able to maintain within its community those who, on the basis of a study of Scripture and prayerful decision, come to diverse conclusions and actions.

The overture asks that The Board of Pensions medical plan “be revised to a more focused scenario—namely, medical emergencies when the life of the mother is at stake.” This is not consistent with General Assembly policy. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to be guided by the 1992 policy on problem pregnancies and abortion, which encourages the church to continue to approach this challenging issue with the atmosphere of “open debate and mutual respect” for a variety of opinions (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 374).

The 1992 policy states,

Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide each situation. Christians seek the guidance of Scripture in the midst of relationships and circumstances of awesome proportions that affect their interpretation and decision making.

We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies.

We call upon Presbyterians to work for a decrease in the number of problem pregnancies, thereby decreasing the number of abortions.

The considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only, or required, decision. Possible justifying circumstances would include medical indications of severe physical or mental deformity, conception as a result of rape or incest, or conditions under which the physical or mental health of either woman or child would be gravely threatened.

The Christian community must be concerned about and address the circumstances that bring a woman to consider abortion as the best available option. Poverty, unjust societal realities, sexism, racism, and inadequate supportive relationships may render a woman virtually powerless to choose freely (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 368)

The General Assembly has been very clear on the issue of abortion legislation, which states, “We do not wish to see laws enacted that would attach criminal penalties to those who seek abortions or to appropriately qualified and licensed persons who perform abortions in medically approved facilities” (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 368).

The 217th General Assembly (2006) reiterated the role of the church in individual and families’ lives as they face problem pregnancy issues:

The church has a responsibility to provide public witness and to offer guidance, counsel, and support to those who make or interpret laws and public policies about abortion and problem pregnancies. Pastors have a duty to counsel with and pray for those who face decisions about problem pregnancies. Congregations have a duty to pray for and support those who face these choices, to offer support for women and families to help make

unwanted pregnancies less likely to occur, and to provide practical support for those facing the birth of a child with medical anomalies, birth after rape or incest, or those who face health, economic, or other stresses. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 905)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) also approved language that clarified the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) position on problem pregnancies:

When an individual woman faces the decision whether to terminate a pregnancy, the issue is intensely personal, and may manifest itself in ways that do not reflect public rhetoric, or do not fit neatly into medical, legal, or policy guidelines. Humans are empowered by the spirit prayerfully to make significant moral choices, including the choice to continue or end a pregnancy. Human choices should not be made in a moral vacuum, but must be based on Scripture, faith, and Christian ethics. For any choice, we are accountable to God; however, even when we err, God offers to forgive us. (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 905)

“In life and death, we belong to God.” Life is a gift from God, and we should preserve and protect it. We derive our understanding of human life from Scripture and the Reformed Tradition in light of science, human experience, and reason guided by the Holy Spirit. Because we are made in the image of God, human beings are moral agents, endowed by the Creator with the capacity to make choices. Our Reformed Tradition recognizes that people do not always make moral choices, and forgiveness is central to our faith. In the Reformed Tradition, we affirm that God is the only Lord of conscience—not the state or the church. As a community, the church challenges the faithful to exercise their moral agency responsibly.

## Item 20-03

[The assembly approved Item 20-03 with amendment. See p. 36.]

*On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Consider the Possibility of Adding to the Disability Benefits the Option of Partial Disability Benefits—From the Presbytery of San Gabriel.*

The Presbytery of San Gabriel humbly overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to ~~instruct~~ urge the Board of Pensions to[:]

**[1.] investigate and consider the possibility of adding to their Disability Benefits the option of receiving partial benefits for partial disability of plan members, appropriately *pro rated* for the medically certified degree of disability, [to include human as well as financial costs] and,**

**[2.] ~~[that the Board of Pensions]~~ report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with ~~[plans for]~~ [its investigation including its recommendations regarding] implementation or the impediments to this scheme being approved.**

### *Rationale*

Presbyterians view ordered ministry as a calling to which those ordained to it do so with the intent of an extended period of service. However, some in professional ministry have been afflicted with progressive diseases that, over time, result in increasing levels of disability. This disability may begin as a partial disability and many in this position desire to continue in professional ministry to the extent they are able.

The Board of Pensions Disability Benefits Plan only provides for benefits when “A Plan member is considered disabled if he or she is unable to perform his or her regular work duties (or any other work providing a reasonably comparable income) due to sickness or bodily injury.” This precludes a status and coverage of partial disability with the congregation, or other employer, and the Board of Pensions sharing the support.

It would seem to be a benefit to all involved—the plan member, the congregation, and the Board of Pensions—for a plan member to continue working part-time to the extent that they are able with the congregation, or other employer, and the Board of Pensions sharing the support.

### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 20-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 20-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval with amendments of Item 20-03. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of San Gabriel humbly overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to instruct the Board of Pensions to ~~investigate and consider~~

~~“[1. evaluate]~~ the possibility of adding to their Disability Benefits the option of receiving partial benefits for partial disability of plan members, appropriately *pro rated* for the medically certified degree of disability, [this evaluation to include human as well as financial costs;] and



“[2.] [~~that the Board of Pensions~~] report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with [~~plans for~~] [its evaluation, including its recommendations regarding] implementation or the impediments to this scheme being approved.”

### *Rationale*

The amendments call for a broad evaluation of costs, consistent with both ministry and stewardship concerns, and require that the evaluation be communicated to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with recommendations.

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### **BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 20-03**

#### *Comment on Item 20-03—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

Should the General Assembly wish to approve the overture, the Board of Pensions advises changing the word “*instructs*” in the first sentence to “*urge*.” The General Assembly, by creating an independent, incorporated Board of Pensions to be responsible for benefits, vested in that board the responsibility for decisions on matters under its jurisdiction. The General Assembly has control of the Board of Pensions by virtue of the requirements that it elects each director of the Board of Pensions, confirms the election of a new president of the Board of Pensions, and must approve in advance any amendment to the Pension Plan that is in the nature of a benefit reduction to the members.

The General Assembly may also simply refer this item to the Board of Pensions for study and report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014). If the General Assembly refers the matter to the Board of Pensions or approves the overture with the “*urge*” language, the Board of Pensions’ study would be conducted in the context of the current benefits philosophy and with appropriate consideration of the Board of Pensions’ fiduciary responsibilities. It should also be noted that such a study should not, in and of itself, establish expectations about any eventual ability to offer additional disability benefits.

#### *Background*

The Board of Pensions recognizes that degenerative diseases may cause a reduced capacity for members to perform their job duties. The Disability Plan is specifically designed, however, to provide members with a source of income in the event of “total disability,” defined as,

the inability of a Member due to sickness or bodily injury to perform substantially all of the material duties of his or her regular work or any other type of work that would afford a reasonably comparable level of income, and after a period of twenty-four (24) consecutive months of such disability, the inability of a Member due to sickness or bodily injury to perform any type of work for which he or she is fitted by education, training or experience...

While the plan has been designed (and funded) to support totally disabled members, there are vocational rehabilitation resources available through Liberty Mutual, the Plan Administrator, for members who may be able to return to full-time employment, often in a position that is different from their previous position but one which they may be able to perform on a full or partial basis, notwithstanding a continuing disability. Therefore, while total disability establishes initial benefit eligibility, permanent disability is not presumed. The Board of Pensions has taken the approach that encouraging a full return to work, where feasible, is in the best interest of the Plan and the member. Under these current terms, members who suffer from progressive diseases may, and do, avail themselves of this income protection at the point in time at which their condition prohibits them from performing their duties. Medical coverage continues for them and their families throughout their disability at no cost to them or to their employing organization.

The funding status of the Disability Plan is actuarially determined on an annual basis, using the cited definition of disability. As financial stewards of this Plan, the Board of Pensions would not be in the position to absorb any portion of a member’s salary expense or related dues obligation for members who had not met the current eligibility standards of total disability. With approximately \$2 billion in salaries and benefits paid to Plan members each year and around 3 percent of active members on disabled status, the scope of funding a salary replacement program would be beyond the means of the Benefits Plan.

The Board of Pensions also notes that the Disability Plan is designed as a complement to Social Security Disability benefits. Any “partial disability” benefit expected to stand alone without a corresponding Social Security benefit could prove more costly than the Benefits Plan can accommodate.

Given these constraints, there are three specific areas that the Board of Pensions would investigate during a study, which would be limited to specific degenerative diseases that would ultimately result in total disability:

1. definitions of “partial disability” used by organizations that act as administrators of disability benefits and the administration of those definitions, where available;
2. “partial disability” coverage for specific progressive diseases that might be offered by other denominational plans; and
3. opportunities for offering partial disability coverage as an optional rider to the existing plan.

## Item 20-04

[The assembly disapproved Item 20-04 with comment. See pp. 36-37.]

*On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Switch Mental Health Providers—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska.*

The Presbytery of Central Nebraska overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to instruct the Board of Pensions to switch mental health providers from Cigna to a company that offers more counselors in all geographic areas, including small cities and rural areas.

**[Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) commends and encourages the Board of Pensions to increase mental health care network providers for all members.]**

### *Rationale*

The current mental health provider available through the Board of Pensions, Cigna, is primarily an employee assistance program, not a mental health provider.

Cigna does not provide as many mental health providers as other companies nationwide. The problem is especially worse in smaller towns and cities and rural areas. In one Central Nebraska city of 30,000, Kearney, Cigna has five mental health providers. Blue Cross has ninety-three.

Grand Island, the next large city to Kearney, also has thirteen Cigna providers. After Grand Island, the next options are in Lincoln or Omaha.

This does not just impact clergy in Grand Island or Kearney or other “hub” cities. Clergy in smaller cities and towns almost certainly have to go into the larger cities for counseling. If two hours are spent driving to and then an additional two hours are spent driving back from therapy sessions this causes problems with stress, fatigue, and time management.

Clergy problems with depression, stress, obesity, divorce, and burnout point to a need for better access to mental health providers. These problems are not just problems of the clergy but extend to their dependent families, other church employees, and the congregations being served.

Additional cost for an out-of-network provider is borne by the presbytery or Pension Plan member already. Many presbyteries, including Central Nebraska have paid for Pension members to receive counseling from an out-of-network provider. Cigna may be lower cost, but the problems of hidden costs to presbyteries and pension plan members still exist. Also, the cost of untreated behavioral health issues is incalculable.

This proposed change would allow all Pension Plan members and their dependents better access to mental health professionals no matter where they live.

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**Concurrence to Item 20-04 from the Presbyteries of Albany and Prospect Hill.**

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### **BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 20-04**

*Comment on Item 20-04—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

The Board of Pensions (“the Board”) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 20-04.

The General Assembly, by creating an independent, incorporated Board of Pensions to be responsible for benefits, vested in that board the responsibility for decisions on matters under its jurisdiction. It would serve neither the Board of Pensions nor the church to have decisions of the incorporated Board of Pensions subject to appeal to the unincorporated, ecclesiastical General Assembly. The General Assembly has control of the Board of Pensions by virtue of the requirements that it elects each director of the Board of Pensions, confirms the election of a new president of the Board of Pensions, and must approve in advance any amendment to the Pension Plan that is in the nature of a benefit reduction to the members.

This overture addresses vendor selection, an issue operational in nature for the Board of Pensions and beyond the scope of the General Assembly’s control of the Board of Pensions.

The Board of Pensions is committed to attending to the issue raised in the overture. The Board of Pensions has addressed the concern about the number of providers in Central Nebraska with CIGNA and is committed to finding solutions for plan members, including single-case agreements where appropriate.

The Board of Pensions has also reached out to leaders in the Presbytery of Central Nebraska to seek information on specific providers that plan members wish to have included as in-network providers. With that information, the Board of Pensions and CIGNA can seek to have those providers included in CIGNA's network of providers.

## Item 20-05

[The assembly approved Item 20-05 with amendment. See pp. 36, 37.]

**The Board of Pensions recommends that the ~~[219th]~~ [220th] General Assembly ~~[(2010)]~~ [(2012)] approve the following amendments to its Articles of Incorporation, which require the prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be effective. [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]**

### “COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### “AMENDED AND RESTATED ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION “OF THE BOARD OF PENSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

“FIRST: The name of the corporation is ‘The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’. The registered office of the corporation is 2000 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-3298.

“SECOND: The purposes for which the corporation shall exist are exclusively charitable and shall consist of the following:

“(a) To acquire, receive and hold, directly or in trust, by gift, legacy, devise, purchase or otherwise, money, securities, income and property, real and personal, in whatever form, in any state, territory or country, for and about the general objects and purposes of *the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including pensions, benefits and relief for ~~ministers teaching elders~~ (as defined in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.))*, missionaries and non-ordained employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as well as to collect and receive all interest and income therefrom, and to grant, bargain, sell and otherwise dispose of personal properties and real estate when necessary, required or expedient.

“(b) To pay pension and other benefits to those entitled to receive the same in accordance with rules adopted by the corporation and approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“(c) To make grants to such eligible ~~ministers teaching elders~~, missionaries and non-ordained employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and/or its predecessors, and their surviving spouses and dependents, as may be entitled in accordance with rules adopted by the corporation.

“(d) To own and operate such homes as have been or may be established for the care of such eligible ~~ministers teaching elders~~ and missionaries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and/or its predecessors, and their surviving spouses and dependents, and such other persons as may be entitled in accordance with rules adopted by the corporation.

“(e) To engage in and conduct such business as may be authorized by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and which is permitted under the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law.

“The purposes ~~for which the corporation exists~~ *identified in paragraphs (a) through (e)* may not be altered, amended or repealed without the prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“THIRD: The purposes for which the corporation shall exist are exclusively charitable within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law (the ‘Code’). Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(a) of the Code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, or (b) by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(a) of the Code as being to an organization referred to in Section 170(c)(2) of the Code.

“No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its directors, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its exempt purposes. Except as otherwise provided by Section 501(h) of the Code, no substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

“Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes specified

herein and in such a manner to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes which at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any assets not so distributed by the Board of Directors shall be distributed by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the corporation's principal office is then located exclusively for the corporation's exempt purposes. The use of any surplus funds for private inurement to any person in the event of a sale of the assets or dissolution of the corporation is expressly prohibited.

"FOURTH: The term for which the corporation shall exist is perpetual.

"FIFTH: The corporation does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit, incidental or otherwise.

"SIXTH: The corporation is organized on a nonstock, *non-member* basis.

"SEVENTH: The management and control of the corporation shall be vested in a Board of Directors and the corporation shall have no members. The number of directors and their term of service shall be fixed from time to time by the bylaws of the corporation. All directors shall be elected by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall be citizens of the United States of America, over twenty-one (21) years of age and members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At least a majority of the ~~Board~~ *directors* shall be from the laity. The requirement that all directors be elected by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may not be altered, amended or repealed without the prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

"EIGHTH: The assets of all funds administered by any predecessor or merging corporation shall continue to be administered by the Board of Directors of this corporation in such equitable manner as to assure adherence to the purposes for which such funds were set aside and to fulfill all liabilities and obligations of any such predecessor or merging corporation.

"NINTH: The assets of all pension funds administered by the corporation shall be administered solely and exclusively in the interest of the beneficiaries of the pensions fund.

"TENTH: Subject to the limitations set forth herein these Articles may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors provided written notice that the proposed amendment would be presented for action shall have been given in writing to each Director at least fifteen days before the meeting. The Board of Directors shall not have the power to amend these Articles so as to change the provisions in *subparagraphs (a) through (e) of Article Second or Article Seventh* without prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any amendment to the Articles adopted by the Board of Directors shall be reported to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."

### *Rationale*

At its meeting on March 3, 2012, the Articles of Incorporation of the Board of Pensions were amended to state that any amendment to subparagraphs (a) through (e) of Article Second or Article Seventh of the Articles requires the prior approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be effective. These amendments authorize the Board of Directors to undertake activities in service to the PC(USA) in addition to those required by the General Assembly and conform the document to the new Form of Government. The Board of Pensions respectfully requests the General Assembly's approval of this amendment in order that it may take advantage of any synergistic collaborations among the national agencies or mid councils that might arise in the future.

## **Item 20-06**

[The assembly approved Item 20-06 with comment. See pp. 36, 37.]

**The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to**

- 1. continue its churchwide gifts program, as well as utilize the Foundation's subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., for the benefit of churches, church organizations, and individuals who wish to use the foregoing to make gifts as an expression of Christian faith and stewardship;**
- 2. explore and initiate ways to enhance its expertise and capacity in support of planned and deferred giving (including wills emphasis) and to explore the services of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that will allow these programs and entities to be ever more effective contributors toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission for the Glory of God.**

**[Comment: We urge the 220th General Assembly (2012) to affirm the work of the Presbyterian Foundation and encourage all Presbyterians to seriously consider the Presbyterian Foundation for investment services, financial advice, endowments, and assistance in growing a culture of generosity within the church; the Presbyterian Foundation**

reinvests its fees to further the mission of the church and follows investment strategies that accord with our values. We request that the General Assembly allow time to view the video *God's Hidden Treasures*.]

### *Rationale*

Each year, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation trustees ask the General Assembly to endorse the Foundation's work in support of mission and ministry throughout the church. This unbroken series of affirmations allows the Foundation to confidently pursue its ministry among congregations, presbyteries, synods, related organizations, and individual Presbyterians. General Assembly validation of our vital work on behalf of mission and ministry is essential to our effectiveness throughout the church.

The amount of \$65.9 million was made available through the Foundation for mission in 2011. Additionally, as a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation's efforts to nurture the accumulated resources of Presbyterians to further the mission of the church, call us to grow the resources that support mission giving for the future. New gifts and accounts amounting to almost \$21.1 million were received over the course of the year.

These striking results are a testament to the power of giving witnessed by the Foundation as it lives its goal of bringing people and mission together. Because of the generosity of faithful Presbyterians, over the past five years the Foundation has made available more than \$368 million for the work and mission of the church.

## Item 20-07

[The assembly approved Item 20-07 with amendment. See pp. 36, 37.]

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, New Covenant Trust Company, recommends that the [212th] [220th] General Assembly (2012) confirm the following individuals as directors of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that have been elected for the year 2012, consistent with the Deliverance for New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., as approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999) and amended by the 212th and 214th General Assemblies (2000) and (2002), and subject to applicable law:"

*Foundation Trustee:* Lois A. Clarke (investment professional, white, female, married, lay, over 50) Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

*Former Foundation Trustees:* Timothy P. Clark (senior bank officer, white, male, married, lay, over 50) Synod of Living Waters; Sharon Z. Fesler (retired trust officer, white, female, married, lay, over 50) Synod of Lincoln Trails.

*OGA Designee:* Christopher Y. Nicholas (OGA staff, Asian, male, married, lay, over 50) Synod of Living Waters.

*GAMC Designee:* Donald S. Hunt (retired bank executive, white, male, married, lay, over 50) Synod of Lincoln Trails.

### *Rationale*

In response to changing needs, including a new business plan and reduced budget, in December 2011 the Foundation, as the majority shareholder of NCTC, reduced the size of NCTC's board of directors and elected a new slate of directors. New Covenant Trust Company seeks confirmation of the following individuals:

## Item 20-08

[The assembly approved Item 20-08. See pp. 36, 37.]

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) confirm the reelection of Marc Lewis to a second, four-year term as president and publisher of Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

### *Rationale*

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has reelected Marc Lewis following a review of the recent self-study and review conversations with board members, staff, and other PC(USA) colleagues.

## Item 20-09

[The assembly approved Item 20-09. See pp. 36, 37.]

**The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Office of Theology, Worship and Education, and Presbyterian Association of Musicians herewith present the final selection of hymns, songs, and liturgical material to the 220th General Assembly (2012) and recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:**

1. **Commend *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* to the churches for their use in worship.**
2. **As part of the report of PPC's General Assembly committee, allocate ten minutes to recognize the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song and to express thanks for their work.**

### *Rationale*

The above recommendations are in response to the following referral: *2006 Referrals: Item 13-10: On the Development of a Denominational E-Hymnal; and Item 13-11: On a New Denominational Hymnal for Corporate Worship (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 1142–43).*

The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gave authorization to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) to research the feasibility of a new Presbyterian hymnal, in cooperation with the denomination's Office of Theology, Worship, and Education (TAW) and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM). The results of this study were reported to the 217th General Assembly (2006), which authorized PPC to prepare a new denominational hymnal, the first since 1990, in cooperation with TAW and PAM.

The recommendation (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 1142–43, Item 13-11*) included the following points:

- PPC, TAW, and PAM would jointly assemble a committee to choose the contents of the new hymnal;
- the hymnal committee would have two people who were under the age of twenty-five at the start of the project;
- PPC would bear all expenses for the project, without using any mission funds of the PC(USA);
- the committee would exhibit “sensitivity to the need for inclusive language, the diversity of worship styles regnant in the church today, the richness of multicultural and global forms of worship, the enduring value of traditional hymnody, the importance of the Psalter, and the distinctiveness of the Reformed theological tradition”; (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 1142*)
- PPC would give serious attention to including liturgical material in the book “in order to enhance its utility in a variety of worship contexts”; (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 1142*)
- PPC would “explore publication of the new hymnal in a variety of media as befits the worship practices of the church at the time of publication, with developing an e-hymnal being the top priority”; (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 1143*)
- PPC will “report its progress in the development of the new hymnal to the 218th and 219th General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) and present the final selection of hymns and liturgical material to the 220th GA (2012).” (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 1143*)

A separate overture from the Presbytery of Miami (2006, 13-10) requested that PPC, TAW, and PAM develop an “internet-based denominational resource for congregational singing” as part of the hymnal project. This overture was approved by the Assembly. (*Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 1141*)

The PPC, TAW, and PAM are pleased to report that they have fulfilled each of these recommendations.

The hymnal committee, renamed the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song (PCOCS) to signal the diversity of music they wanted to include in the book, was appointed in 2008 following a nationally advertised search for nominees. The committee consists of fifteen voting members (two of whom were under the age of twenty-five when the project began), the hymnal editor, and three *ex officio* members appointed by TAW (David Gambrell), PPC (David Maxwell), and PAM (Alan Barthel). The committee members all volunteered their time and gave countless hours to the work. Biographies of the committee members are attached.

Under the leadership of hymnal editor David Eicher and committee chair Mary Louise Bringle, the PCOCS met on fifteen occasions from September 2008 to January 2012. During this time they reviewed material from an open submission process (3,678 items) and material from various subgroups working within the PCOCS structure (Other Hymnals, Global, Contemporary, and Single Author/Composer Collections); wrote a Statement on Language (attached); consulted with staff from the World Mission and Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries divisions of the General Assembly Mission Council; met with representatives of Presbyterians for Disability Concerns; held Skype consultations with leaders in the fields of global and

contemporary congregational song; conducted research into the usage of hymns and songs in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); developed a plan of organization for the hymnal; and discussed various electronic options.

All material considered for inclusion in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* was reviewed anonymously. Author, composer, arranger, and copyright holder information was removed before the committee members saw the material. A two-thirds majority vote was required in order for a selection to be placed on the Approved to Carry Forward list. Each item was read carefully, sung, and discussed before a vote was taken.

The committee also prepared a theological statement that was used to guide their work. The entire statement is attached, but this excerpt gives insight into their perspective: “The overarching theme of the collection will be God’s powerful acts of creation, redemption, and final transformation. It will also bespeak the human responses that God’s gracious acts make possible. In other words, the framework for this collection of congregational song will be the history of salvation.”

The PCOCS concluded their service with a worship celebration in the chapel of the Presbyterian Center on January 11, 2012.

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation is assuming all costs for the development and production of the hymnal, including the expenses of the PCOCS. No money is being spent on the project from the denomination’s budget.

The hymnal is now in production, and will be published in the fall of 2013. In addition to the pew edition, churches will be able to purchase an accompaniment edition, enlarged print edition, gift edition, web-based electronic edition, projection edition, e-Book edition, and a hymnal companion. Print and digital versions of the hymnal will also be produced for people with visual impairments.

All of this is done to the Glory of God. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

#### Attachment A: Complete List of Contents<sup>1</sup>

Title (First Line and/or Common Title)	TUNE
A Cheering, Chanting, Dizzy Crowd	CHRISTIAN LOVE
A Grateful Heart Is What I Bring (Psalm 111)	ROCKINGHAM
A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing	DEO GRACIAS
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	EIN’FESTE BURG
A Prophet Woman Broke a Jar	TBD
A Sower Came from Ancient Hills	MARY AND MARTHA
A Stable Lamp Is Lighted	ANDUJAR
A Woman and A Coin	LIFE RESTORED
Abide with Me	EVENTIDE
Ah, Holy Jesus	HERZLIEBSTER JESU
Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed	MARTYRDOM
All Creatures of Our God and King	LASST UNS ERFREUEN
All Glory, Laud, and Honor	VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN
All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!	CORONATION
All Hail to God’s Anointed (Ps. 72)	ROCKPORT
All People That on Earth Do Dwell (Psalm 100)	OLD HUNDREDTH
All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night	TALLIS’ CANON
All Things Bright and Beautiful	ROYAL OAK
All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly	HOLY MANNA
All Who Love and Serve Your City	CHARLESTOWN
All With Joyful Exultation (Psalm 30)	YISRAEL V’ORAITA
Alleluia	
Alleluia	CELTIC ALLELUIA
Alleluia (Hughes)	

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Alleluia	HONDURAS ALLELUIA
Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks	ALLELUIA NO. 1
Alleluia! Christ Is Arisen (¡Aleluya! Cristo resucitó)	SANTO DOMINGO
Alleluia! Laud and Blessing (Psalms 111 and 112)	WEISSE FLAGGEN
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!	HYFRYDOL
Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound	AMAZING GRACE
Amen	LAND OF REST
Amen (Roberts)	
Amen (Oliver)	
Amen (Haugen)	
Amen (Schubert)	
Amen (Harling)	
Amen (Dresden)	
Amen (African American)	
Amen (Danish)	
Amen (Hopson)	
Amen, We Praise Your Name	AMEN SIAKUDUMISA
An Upper Room Did Our Lord Prepare	O WALY WALY
Angels, from the Realms of Glory	REGENT SQUARE
Angels We Have Heard on High	GLORIA
Arise, O Lord Our God, Arise (Psalm 132)	BOURBON
Arise, Your Light Is Come!	FESTAL SONG
As a Chalice Cast of Gold	INWARD LIGHT
As a Child Rests (Psalm 131)	AS A CHILD RESTS
As Dew Falls Gently at Dawn	AS DEW FALLS
As Morning Dawns (Psalm 5)	WAREHAM
As Pants the Deer for Living Streams (Psalm 42 and 43)	MARY AND MARTHA
As the Deer	AS THE DEER PANTS
As the Wind Song	WAIRUA TAPU
As Those of Old Their Firstfruits Brought	FOREST GREEN
As with Gladness Men of Old	DIX
At the Name of Jesus	KING'S WESTON
Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn	REJOICE, REJOICE
Awake My Soul, and with the Sun	MORNING HYMN
Away in a Manger	MUELLER
Away in a Manger	CRADLE SONG
Baptized in Water	BUNESSAN
Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread	ST. FLAVIAN
Be Not Afraid	BE NOT AFRAID
Be Still and Know That I Am God	PSALM 46
Be Still, My Soul	FINLANDIA
Be Thou My Vision	SLANE
Because You Live, O Christ	VRUECHTEN



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Before I Take the Body of My Lord	LAYING DOWN
Before the Marvel of This Night	MARVEL
Beneath the Cross of Jesus	ST. CHRISTOPHER
Bless All Who Trust in God (Ps. 128)	FRANCONIA
Bless the Lord, My Soul	BLESS THE LORD (Taizé)
Bless the Lord, My Soul and Being (Psalm 104)	RUSTINGTON
Bless the Lord, O My Soul	BLESS THE LORD
Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!	ASSURANCE
Blessed Jesus, at Your Word	LIEBSTER JESU
Blessing and Honor	O QUANTA QUALIA
Blest Are They	BLEST ARE THEY
Blest Be God, Praised Forever	SANAA
Blest Be the God of Israel (Song of Zechariah)	MERLE'S TUNE
Blest Be the Tie That Binds	DENNIS
Born in the Night, Mary's Child	MARY'S CHILD
Bread of Heaven, on Thee We Feed	ARFON
Bread of Life from Heaven	ARGENTINE SANTO/BREAK NOW THE BREAD
Bread of the World in Mercy Broken	RENDEZ À DIEU
Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light	ERMUNTRE DICH
Break Thou the Bread of Life	BREAD OF LIFE
Breathe on Me, Breath of God	TRENTHAM
Brethren, We Have Met to Worship	HOLY MANNA
Bring Many Names	WESTCHASE
By All Your Saints Still Striving	KING'S LYNN
By Gracious Powers	INTERCESSOR
By the Babylonian Rivers (Ps. 137)	KAS DZIEDAJA
By the Waters of Babylon (Psalm 137)	BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON
Called as Partners in Christ's Service	BEECHER
Calm to the Waves	CALM SEAS
Change My Heart, O God	CHANGE MY HEART
Child of Blessing, Child of Promise	KINGDOM
Christ Be Beside Me	BUNESSAN
Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia	MFURAHINI, HALELUYA
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen	LAND OF REST
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Roberts)	
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Haugen)	
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Pavlechko)	
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Schubert)	
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Harling)	
Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen (Hopson)	
Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers	SUO GAN
Christ Is Alive!	TRURO
Christ Is Coming	UNSER HERRSCHER
Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation	WESTMINSTER ABBEY

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Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!	HYMN TO JOY
Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands	CHRIST LAG IN TODESBANDEN
Christ the Lord Is Risen Today!	LLANFAIR
Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies	RATISBON
Come, All You People	UYAIMOSE
Come and Fill Our Hearts	CONFITEMINI DOMINO
Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom	MADELEINE
Come and Sing the Praise of the Lord (Psalm 150)	HAL'LUHU
Come - Behold! - the Feast of Heaven	LLANFAIR
Come, Bring Your Burdens to God	WOZA NOMTHWALO WAKHO
Come, Christians, Join to Sing	MADRID
Come, Come Emmanuel	COME, COME EMMANUEL
Come Down, O Love Divine	DOWN AMPNEY
Come, Great God of All the Ages	ABBOT'S LEIGH
Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire	VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS
Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove	ST. AGNES
Come into God's Presence	COME INTO HIS PRESENCE
Come, Labor On	ORA LABORA
Come, Let Us Eat	A VA DE
Come Like Driving Wind, O God (Ps. 68)	NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND
Come, Live in the Light (We Are Called)	WE ARE CALLED
Come Now, O Prince of Peace (Ososo)	O-SO-SO
Come Now, You Blessed, Eat at My Table	COME NOW, YOU BLESSED
Come, O Holy Spirit, Come	WA EMIMIMO
Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us	EBENEZER
Come Quickly, Lord, to Rescue Me (Psalm 70)	DISTRESS
Come Sing, O Church in Joy!	DARWALL'S 148TH
Come Sing to God (Psalm 30)	ELLACOMBE
Come, Thou Almighty King	ITALIAN HYMN
Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	NETTLETON
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	HYFRYDOL
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	STUTTGART
Come to Me, O Weary Traveler	AUSTIN
Come to the Table	COME TO THE TABLE
Come to the Table of Grace	TABLE OF GRACE
Come, Worship God (Psalm 95)	O QUANTA QUALIA
Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy	RESTORATION
Come, Ye Thankful People, Come	ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR
Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain	ST. KEVIN
Comfort, Comfort You My People	PSALM 42
Commit Your Way to God the Lord (Psalm 37)	GUILSBOROUGH
Crashing Waters at Creation	CRASHING WATERS
Create in Me a Clean Heart	CREATE IN ME (Capers)
Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God (Psalm 51)	SARADAY

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Creator of the Stars of Night	CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM
Crown Him with Many Crowns	DIADEMATA
Day Is Done	AR HYD Y NOS
Day of Arising	RAABE
Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded	IN DIR IST FREUDE
Dear Lord and Father of Mankind	REST
Dearest Jesus, We Are Here	LIEBSTER JESU
Deep in the Shadows of the Past	SHEPHERD'S PIPES
Do Not Be Afraid	ISAIAH 43
Dona nobis pacem	DONA NOBIS PACEM
Down Galilee's Slow Roadways	WEST MAIN
Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether	UNION SEMINARY
Dream On, Dream On	DREAM ON
Dying You Destroyed Our Death (Oliver)	
Dying You Destroyed Our Death (Haugen)	
Earth and All Stars	EARTH AND ALL STARS
Eat This Bread	BERTHIER
Eternal Father, Strong to Save	MELITA
Every Time I Feel the Spirit	PENTECOST
Everyone Who Longs for the Boundless Love of God	EVERYONE WHO LONGS
Fairest Lord Jesus	CRUSADERS' HYMN
Faith Begins by Letting Go	LUX PRIMA
Farewell, Good Friends (Shalom, Chaverim!)	SHALOM, CHAVERIM
Feed Us, Lord	FEED US
Fight the Good Fight	DUKE STREET
Fill My Cup	FILL MY CUP
Filled with Excitement (Mantos y Ramos)	HOSANNA
For All the Faithful Women	NYLAND
For All the Saints	SINE NOMINE
For Everyone Born	FOR EVERYONE BORN
For the Beauty of the Earth	DIX
For the Bread Which You Have Broken	KINGDOM
For the Fruit of All Creation	AR HYD Y NOS
For the Healing of the Nations	ST. THOMAS (Wade)
For the Life That You Have Given	PLEADING SAVIOR
For the Troubles and the Suffering	PELAS DORES DESTE MUNDO
For You, My God, I Wait (Psalms 130 and 131)	SPRINGTIME
For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits (My Soul in Stillness Waits)	MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS
Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive	DETROIT
Forgive Us, Lord (Perdón, Señor)	CONFESIÓN
Forty Days and Forty Nights	AUS DER TIEFE RUFEN ICH
Freedom Is Coming	FREEDOM IS COMING
From All That Dwell Below the Skies (Psalm 117)	LASST UNS ERFREUEN

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From Heaven Above	VOM HIMMEL HOCH
From the Nets of Our Labor (We Will Rise Up and Follow)	HAMILTON
From the Rising of the Sun (Psalm 113)	RISING SUN
Gentle Mary Laid Her Child	TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM
Give Praise to the Lord (Psalm 149)	LAUDATE DOMINUM
Give Thanks	GIVE THANKS
Give Thanks for Those Whose Faith Is Firm	REPTON
Give Thanks, O Christian People	ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN
Give Thanks to God Who Hears Our Cries (Psalm 107)	MORNING SONG
Give to the Winds Thy Fears	FESTAL SONG
Give Us Light (Jyothi dho Prabhu)	JYOTHI DHO
Gloria, Gloria	GLORIA (Taize)
Gloria, Gloria, Gloria	GLORIA CUECA
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	AUSTRIAN HYMN
Glory Be to the Father	
Glory Be to the Father (Greatorex)	
Glory to God (Gloria a Dios)	MACHU-PICHU
Glory to God in the Highest (Hopson)	
Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me	GLORY TO GOD (Vasile)
Go in Grace and Make Disciples	WONDROUS LIGHT
Go, My Children, with My Blessing	AR HYD Y NOS
Go, Tell It on the Mountain	GO TELL IT
Go to Dark Gethsemane	REDHEAD 76
Go to the World!	SINE NOMINE
Go with Us, Lord	TALLIS' CANON
God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me (O Christ, Surround Me)	GREEN TYLER
God Be with You Till We Meet Again	RANDOLPH
God Be with You Till We Meet Again	GOD BE WITH YOU
God, How Can We Forgive	LEONI
God Is Calling Through the Whisper	W ZLOBIE LEZY
God Is Here!	ABBOT'S LEIGH
God Is Here Today (Dios Está Aguí)	DÍOS ESTÁ AQUÍ
God Is My Strong Salvation (Psalm 27)	WEDLOCK
God Is Our Help, Refuge and Strength (Psalm 46)	GOD IS OUR HELP
God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength (Psalm 46)	WINCHESTER OLD
God Is So Good	GOD IS SO GOOD
God Moves in a Mysterious Way	DUNDEE
God, My Help and Hiding Place (Psalm 71)	TOKYO
God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us	O QUANTA QUALIA
God of Grace and God of Glory	CWM RHONDDA
God of Great and God of Small	GOD OF GREAT AND SMALL
God of Our Life	SANDON

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God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand	NATIONAL HYMN
God of the Fertile Fields	ITALIAN HYMN
God of the Sparrow	ROEDER
God Reigns! Let Earth Rejoice (Psalm 97)	MARION
God, Reveal Your Presence	ARNSBERG
God the Sculptor of the Mountains	JENNINGS-HOUSTON
God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian	CHURCH UNITED
God, We Honor You	ABUNDANT BLESSINGS
God Weeps with Us Who Weep and Mourn	MOSHIER
God Welcomes All	THEMBA AMEN
God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens	HOLY MANNA
God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending	BEACH SPRING
God, You Rule with Royal Bearing (Psalm 93)	BRYN CALFARIA
God, You Spin the Whirling Planets	PLEADING SAVIOR
God's Glory Fills the Heavens (Psalm 19)	ST. PATRICK
God's Word is Upright (Ps. 33)	LA PALABRA DEL SEÑOR
Golden Breaks the Dawn	LE PING
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice	IN DULCI JUBILO
Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing	GELOBT SEI GOTT
Goodness Is Stronger than Evil	GOODNESS IS STRONGER
Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading	NJOO KWETU, ROHO MWEMA
Great Are You, Lord	GREAT IS THE LORD
Great God of Every Blessing	AURELIA
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	FAITHFULNESS
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah	CWM RHONDDA
Guide My Feet	GUIDE MY FEET
Hail Thee, Festival Day!	SALVE FESTA DIES
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah	HALLE
Hallelujah	
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Praise the Name of the Lord (Psalm 113)	HALLELUJAH (Egypt)
Hallelujah! Sing Praise to Your Creator (Ps. 148)	NYANYIKANLAH NYANYIAN BARU
Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	MENDELSSOHN
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)	WE'LL WALK IN THE LIGHT
Have Mercy, God, Upon My Life (Psalm 51)	IRISH
He Came Down	HE CAME DOWN
He Is King of Kings	HE IS KING
Healer of Our Every Ill	HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL
Hear My Cry, O God, and Save Me! (Psalm 77)	GENEVAN 77
Hear My Prayer, O God (Psalm 143)	HYMN CHANT
Hear, O Lord, My Plea for Justice (Psalm 17)	CHARLESTOWN
Hear the Good News of Salvation (Wotanin Waste Nahon Po)	NETTLETON

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Heaven Is Singing for Joy (El cielo canta alegría)	ALEGRÍA
Heaven Opened to Isaiah (Holy, Holy, You Are Holy)	HOLY, HOLY, YOU ARE HOLY (Rwanda)
Heaven Shall Not Wait	HEAVEN SHALL NOT WAIT
Heleluyan We Are Singing	HELELUYAN
Help Us Accept Each Other	BARONITA
Here in This Place (Gather Us In)	GATHER US IN
Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather	TOKYO
Here, O Our Lord, We See You Face to Face	MORECAMBE
Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand	KWAKE YESU NASIMAMA
Ho, All Who Thirst (Come Now to the Water)	JACOB'S WELL
Holy God, We Praise Your Name	GROSSER GOTT, WIR LOBEN DICH
Holy, Holy (Poole)	
Holy, Holy, Holy (Vasile)	
Holy, Holy, Holy (Santo, Santo, Santo)	ARGENTINE SANTO
Holy, Holy, Holy (Haugen)	
Holy, Holy, Holy (Schubert)	
Holy, Holy, Holy (Harling)	
Holy, Holy, Holy, Holy (Santo, Santo, Santo, Santo)	CUÉLLAR
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord	LAND OF REST
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord (Roberts)	
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord (Oliver)	
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord (Pavlechko)	
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord (Hopson)	
Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!	NICAEA
Holy Lamb of God	YA HAMALALLAH
Holy, Most Holy Lord (Sanna, Sannanina)	SANNANINA
Holy Spirit, Come to Us (Veni Sancte Spiritus)	VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS
Holy Spirit, Come to Us (Tui Amoris Ignem)	TUI AMORIS IGNEM
Hope of the World	DONNE SECOURS
Hosanna, Loud Hosanna	ELLACOMBE
How Blest, Those Whose Transgressions (Psalm 32)	TBD
How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord	REPTON
How Firm a Foundation	FOUNDATION
How Great Thou Art	O STORE GUD
How Happy Are the Saints of God (Psalm 1)	WAREHAM
How Long, O Lord (Psalm 13)	HOW LONG
How Long, O Lord, Will My Prayers Be in Vain?	LAND OF MERCY
How Lovely, Lord (Psalm 84)	MERLE'S TUNE
How Our Hearts with Joy Abound (Psalm 45)	GOTT SEI DANK DURCH ALLE WELT
How Very Good and Pleasant (Psalm 133)	HOW VERY GOOD
I Am the Bread of Life	I AM THE BREAD
I Believe in God the Father	GENEVAN 42
I Bind unto Myself Today	ST. PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE
I Call, O Lord, on You (Psalm 141)	ST. BRIDE

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I Come with Joy	DOVE OF PEACE
I Danced in the Morning	SIMPLE GIFTS
I Depend Upon Your Faithfulness (Tú Fidelidad)	TÚ FIDELIDAD
I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art	TOULON
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say	KINGSFOLD
I Long for Your Commandments (Ps. 119)	PSALMEN DAVIDS (Schütz)
I Love the Lord, Who Heard My Cry (Psalm 116)	I LOVE THE LORD
I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord	ST. THOMAS
I Love to Tell the Story	HANKEY
I Love You, Lord	I LOVE YOU, LORD
I Need Thee Every Hour	NEED
I Rejoiced When I Heard Them Say (Psalm 122)	ENGLAND
I Sing a Song of the Saints of God	GRAND ISLE
I Sing the Mighty Power of God	ELLACOMBE
I, the Lord of Sea and Sky (Here I Am, Lord)	HERE I AM (Schutte)
I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes (Psalm 121)	DUNDEE
I Waited Patiently for God (Psalm 40)	LEWIS-TOWN
I Want Jesus to Walk with Me	WALK WITH ME
I Want to Be as Close to You	DAVIDSON
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light	HOUSTON
I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry	WATERLIFE
I Will Call upon the Lord	I WILL CALL
I Will Come to You in the Silence (You Are Mine)	YOU ARE MINE
I Will Exalt My God, My King (Te exaltaré, mi Dios, mi Rey) (Psalm 145)	TE EXALTARÉ, MI DIOS
If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee	WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT
If You Only Had Faith	SI TUVIERAS FE
I'll Praise My Maker (Psalm 146)	OLD 113TH
I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table	WELCOME TABLE
I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me	I'M GONNA LIVE
Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	ST. DENIO
In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness	CORONAE
In An Age of Twisted Values	CHURCH UNITED
In Bethlehem a Newborn Boy	IN BETHLEHEM
In Christ Alone	IN CHRIST ALONE
In Christ Called to Baptize	ST. DENIO
In Christ There Is No East or West	ST. PETER
In Christ There Is No East or West	MC KEE
In Deepest Night	ROSE MARY
In God Alone (Mon âme se repose)	MON ÂME SE REPOSE
In My Life (Lord, Be Glorified)	LORD, BE GLORIFIED
In Remembrance of Me	RED
In Silence My Soul Thirsts (Psalm 62)	MY SOUL THIRSTS
In the Bleak Midwinter	CRANHAM

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In the Bulb There Is a Flower (Hymn of Promise)	PROMISE
In the Cross of Christ I Glory	RATHBUN
In the Darkness of the Morning	KAS DZIEDAJA
In the Heavens Shone a Star	IN THE HEAVENS
In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful	IN THE LORD I'LL BE EVER THANKFUL
In the Midst of New Dimensions	NEW DIMENSIONS
In the Presence of Your People (Psalm 22)	CELEBRATION
In the Singing	BREAD OF PEACE
Incline Your Ear, O Lord, to Me (Psalm 86)	DANBY
Infant Holy, Infant Lowly	W ZLOBIE LEZY
Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old	SAMANTHRA
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear	CAROL
It Is Good to Sing Your Praises (Psalm 92)	ELLESDIE
I've Got Peace Like a River	PEACE LIKE A RIVER
Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love	CHEREPONI
Jesus Calls Us	GALILEE
Jesus Christ Is Risen Today	EASTER HYMN
Jesus Entered Egypt	KING'S WESTON
Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child	WONDERFUL CHILD
Jesus Knows the Inmost Heart	LOE DE ÍSÁ
Jesus, Light of Joy	LAUDA ANIMA
Jesus, Lover of My Soul	ABERYSTWYTH
Jesus Loves Me	JESUS LOVES ME
Jesus, Priceless Treasure	JESU, MEINE FREUDE
Jesus, Remember Me	JESUS, REMEMBER ME
Jesus, Savior, Lord, Now to You I Come (Saranam, Saranam)	SARANAM
Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun	DUKE STREET
Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain	UNSER HERRSCHER
Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee	ST. AGNES
Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts	QUEBEC
Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me	ST. CATHERINE
Jesus, We Are Here (Jesu, tawa pano)	JESU, TAWA PANO
Joy to the World	ANTIOCH
Joy to the World	RICHMOND
Joyful Is the Dark	LINDNER
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	HYMN TO JOY
Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor	RHUDDLAN
Just a Closer Walk with Thee	CLOSER WALK
Just as I Am, Without One Plea	WOODWORTH
Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning	KEEP YOUR LAMPS
Know That God Is Good	MUNGU NI MWEMA
Kum ba Yah	KUM BA YAH
Lamb of God (Vasile)	



Lamb of God (Farlee)	
Lead Me, Guide Me	LEAD ME, GUIDE ME
Lead On, O King Eternal	LANCASHIRE
Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence	PICARDY
Let All the World in Every Corner Sing	AUGUSTINE
Let All Things Now Living	ASH GROVE
Let the Whole Creation Cry	SALZBURG
Let's Sing unto the Lord (Cantemos al Señor)	CANTAMOS AL SEÑOR
Let Us Break Bread Together	LET US BREAK BREAD
Let us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell (All Are Welcome)	TWO OAKS
Let Us Come to Worship God	HI-A-O-HO-I-AN
Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ	LINSTEAD
Let Us with a Gladsome Mind (Psalm 136)	MONKLAND
Lift Every Voice and Sing	LIFT EVERY VOICE
Lift High the Cross	CRUCIFER
Lift Up the Gates Eternal (Psalm 24)	ISRAELI
Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates	TRURO
Light Dawns on a Weary World	TEMPLE OF PEACE
Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah	TIF IN VELDELE
Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us	AUSTIN
Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song	BRIDEGROOM
Listen, God Is Calling	NENO LAKE MUNGU
Listen to the Word Which God Has Spoken	LISTEN
Live in Charity (Ubi Caritas)	UBI CARITAS (Taizé)
Live Into Hope	TRURO
Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending	HELMSLEY
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming	ES IST EIN' ROS
Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken	BEACH SPRING
Lonely the Boat	BAI
Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness (Christ, Be Our Light)	CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT
Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table!	COPELAND
Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace (Song of Simeon)	LAND OF REST
Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing	SICILIAN MARINERS
Lord, Have Mercy	
Lord, Have Mercy (Russian)	
Lord, Have Mercy	
Lord, Have Mercy	LAND OF REST
Lord, Have Mercy (Hopson)	
Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us	
Lord, I Want to Be a Christian	I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN
Lord Jesus, Think on Me	SOUTHWELL

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Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song (Jésus, je voudrais te chanter)	LES PETITES SOEURS
Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying	CHILDREN PRAYING
Lord, Make Us More Holy	LORD, MAKE US MORE HOLY
Lord of All Good	TOULON
Lord of All Hopefulness	COURTNEY
Lord, Prepare Me (Sanctuary)	SANCTUARY
Lord, Speak for Me, for I Am Yours (Psalm 26)	PERRY
Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak	CANONBURY
Lord, to You My Soul Is Lifted (Psalm 25)	GENEVAN 25
Lord, We Have Come at Your Own Invitation	O QUANTA QUALIA
Lord, We Thank You for This Food	MOTOMASE
Lord, When I Came Into This Life	LAND OF REST
Lord, Who May Dwell Within Your House (Psalm 15)	RIDGEMOOR
Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days	ST. FLAVIAN
Lord, Why Have You Forsaken Me (Psalm 22)	DISTRESS
Lord, You Give the Great Commission	ABBOT'S LEIGH
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	HYFRYDOL
Love Has Come	BRING A TORCH
Love the Lord Your God	GREAT COMMANDMENT
Loving Spirit	OMNI DIE
Make a Joyful Noise to God (Ps. 66)	DIX
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace	PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS
Make Your Face to Shine (Haz resplandecer tu rostro) (Psalm 31)	HAZ RESPLANDECER
Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Works	LACQUIPARLE
Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple	EVENING HYMN
May God Support You All Your Days (Psalm 20)	DICKINSON COLLEGE
May the God of Hope Go With Us (Canto de Esperanza)	ARGENTINA
May the Love of the Lord	WEI YUAN SHEN DI AI
Men of Faith, Rise Up and Sing (Shout to the North)	SMITH
Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory	BATTLE HYMN
More Love to Thee, O Christ	MORE LOVE TO THEE
Morning Has Broken	BUNESSAN
Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth	NORWICH
My Country, 'Tis of Thee	AMERICA
My Faith Looks Up to Thee	OLIVET
My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less	SOLID ROCK
My Life Flows On (How Can I Keep from Singing)	HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING?
My Lord! What a Morning!	MY LORD, WHAT A MORNING
My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (Psalm 23)	RESIGNATION
My Song Forever Shall Record (Ps. 89)	PUER NOBIS NASCITUR
My Song Is Love Unknown	LOVE UNKNOWN

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My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout (Canticle of the Turning)	STAR OF COUNTY DOWN
My Soul Gives Glory to My God (Song of Mary)	MORNING SONG
My Soul Is at Rest (Psalm 62)	MY SOUL IS AT REST
New Songs of Celebration Render (Psalm 98)	RENDEZ À DIEU
No Wind at the Window	COLUMCILLE
Nothing Can Trouble (Nada te Turbe)	NADA TE TURBE
Now Go in Joy	JUNKANOO
Now Thank We All Our God	NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT
Now the Green Blade Rises	NOËL NOUVELET
Now the Heavens Start to Whisper	JEFFERSON
Now the Silence	NOW
Now There Is No Male or Female	OMNI DIE
O Beautiful for Spacious Skies	MATERNA
O Beauty Ever Ancient	ANCIENT BEAUTY
O Blest Are They Who in Their Love (Psalm 41)	GUILSBOROUGH
O Carpenter, Why Leave the Bench	LEWIS-TOWN
O Christ, the Great Foundation	AURELIA
O Christ, the Healer	ERHALT UNS, HERR
O Come, All Ye Faithful	ADESTE FIDELES
O Come and Sing Unto the Lord (Psalm 95)	IRISH
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	VENI EMMANUEL
O Come Unto the Lord	KOREA
O Day of Joy and Wonder!	JONATHAN'S TUNE
O Day of Peace	JERUSALEM
O Day of Radiant Gladness	ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN
O for a Closer Walk with God	CAITHNESS
O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing	AZMON
O for a World	AZMON
O Gladsome Light	LE CANTIQUE DE SIMÉON
O God, Be Gracious (Psalm 4)	TALLIS ORDINAL
O God in Whom All Life Begins	NOEL
O God of Every Nation	LLANGLOFFAN
O God, Show Mercy to Us (Psalm 67)	THAXTED
O God, We Bear the Imprint of Your Face	TODOS LOS COLORES
O God, Who Gives Us Life	NOEL
O God, You Are My God (Step by Step)	STEP BY STEP
O God, You Are My God Alone (Psalm 63)	GRATUS
O God, You Search Me (Psalm 139)	O GOD, YOU SEARCH ME
O Hear Our Cry, O Lord (Psalm 80)	VINEYARD HAVEN
O Holy City, Seen of John	MORNING SONG
O Jesus, I Have Promised	ANGEL'S STORY
O Jesus, I Have Promised	NYLAND
O Lamb of God	LAND OF REST
O Little Town of Bethlehem	ST. LOUIS

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O Look and Wonder (¡Miren qué bueno!) (Psalm 133)	MIREN QUÉ BUENO
O Lord, Have Mercy (Oré poriajú verekó)	ORÉ PORIAJÚ VEREKÓ
O Lord, Hear My Prayer	HEAR MY PRAYER
O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?	VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN
O Lord, Our God, How Excellent (Ps. 8)	WINCHESTER OLD
O Lord, Our Lord, How Majestic Is Your Name (How Majestic Is Your Name)	HOW MAJESTIC
O Lord, You Are My God and King (Psalm 145)	JERUSALEM
O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High	DEO GRACIAS
O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go	ST. MARGARET
O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee	MARYTON
O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright	WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET
O My Soul, Bless Your Redeemer (Psalm 103)	STUTTGART
O Radiant Light, O Sun Divine	CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded	PASSION CHORALE
O Save Me, God, and Hear My Cry (Psalm 54)	DETROIT
O Savior, in This Quiet Place	ST. STEPHEN
O Sing a New Song (Psalm 96)	O SING A NEW SONG
O Sing a New Song to the Lord (Psalm 96)	GONFALON ROYAL
O Sing a Song of Bethlehem	KINGSFOLD
O Sing to the Lord (Cantai ao Senhor)	CANTAI AO SENHOR
O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing	O FILII ET FILIAE
O Splendor of God's Glory Bright	PUER NOBIS NASCITUR
O That I Had a Thousand Voices	O DASS ICH TAUSEND ZUNGEN HÄTTE
O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair	DEO GRACIAS
O Word of God Incarnate	MUNICH
Of the Father's Love Begotten	DIVINUM MYSTERIUM
Oh, Worship the King, All Glorious Above!	LYONS
On a Barren Hilltop	KING'S WESTON
On Christmas Night All Christians Sing	SUSSEX CAROL
On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry	WINCHESTER NEW
On Pentecost They Gathered	MUNICH
On This Day Earth Shall Ring	PERSONENT HODIE
Once in Royal David's City	IRBY
One Bread, One Body	ONE BREAD, ONE BODY
Open My Eyes That I May See	OPEN MY EYES
Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty	UNSER HERRSCHER
Open the Eyes of My Heart	OPEN THE EYES
Open Your Ears, O Faithful People	YISRAEL V'ORAITA
Open Your Mouth and Praise the Lord	OPEN YOUR MOUTH (Yoruba)
Our Darkness Is Never Darkness In Your Sight	LA TÉNÈBRE
Our Father, Which Art in Heaven	WEST INDIAN
Our God Is an Awesome God (Awesome God)	AWESOME GOD
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past (Psalm 90)	ST. ANNE

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Our Help Is In the Name of God the Lord (Psalm 124)	OLD 124TH
Our Hope, Our Life (Psalm 49)	O WALY WALY
Out of Deep, Unordered Water	RUSTINGTON
Out of the Depths I Cry to You (Psalm 130)	AUS TIEFER NOT
Peace of God Be with You	AS-SALAAMU LAKUM
People, Look East	BESANÇON
People of the Lord (Psalm 78)	JENNY VAN TSCHEGG
Peoples, Clap Your Hands! (Psalm 47)	GENEVAN 47
Praise God, All You Nations (Psalm 117)	DA N'ASE
Praise God for This Holy Ground	HEYMONYSTRAAT
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (Ken)	OLD HUNDREDTH
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (Weatherhogg)	OLD HUNDREDTH
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (Weatherhogg)	PRAISE GOD (Hopson)
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (Wren)	LASST UNS ERFREUEN
Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord	JE LOUERAI L'ETERNEL
Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven	LAUDA ANIMA
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven	LAUDA ANIMA
Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord!	LOUEZ LE SEIGNEUR
Praise the Lord, God's Glories Show	LLANFAIR
Praise to God the Father	DA N'ASE
Praise to the Lord	PRAISE TO THE LORD
Praise Ye the Lord (Psalm 150)	CLEVELAND
Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty	LOBE DEN HERREN
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	PRECIOUS LORD
Prepare the Way, O Zion	BEREDEN VÅG FÖR HERRAN
Prepare the Way of the Lord	PREPARE THE WAY
Rain Down	RAIN DOWN
Rains of Spring Flow	RAINS OF SPRING
Raise a Song of Gladness	JUBILATE DEO
Rejected and Despised	CARDINAL
Rejoice in God's Saints	OLD 104TH
Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers	LLANGLOFFAN
Rejoice, the Lord Is King	DARWALL'S 148TH
Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!	MARION
Remember Not, O God (Psalm 79)	SOUTHWELL
Restore in Us, O God	BAYLOR
Ride On! Ride On in Majesty!	ST. DROSTANE
Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen	SURGE ECCLESIA
Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me	TOPLADY
Sacred the Body	TENDERNESS
Save Me, O God; I Sink in Floods (Psalm 69)	SALVATION
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	BRADBURY

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Savior of the Nations, Come	NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND
Search Me, O God (Psalm 139)	KÁM-CHHAT
Seed, Scattered and Sown	SEED SCATTERED
Seek Ye First	LAFFERTY
Send Me, Lord (Thuma mina)	THUMA MINA
Shadows Lengthen Into Night	TENEBRAE
Shall Tribulation or Distress	ROMANS 8
Shall We Gather at the River	HANSON PLACE
Sheaves of Wheat (Una Espiga)	UNA ESPIGA
Shepherd Me, O God (Psalm 23)	SHEPHERD ME
Shine, Jesus, Shine	SHINE, JESUS, SHINE
Show Us, O Lord, Your Steadfast Love (Psalm 85)	MENDON
Sign Us with Ashes	PHOENIX
Silence! Frenzied, Unclean Spirit	AUTHORITY
Silence! Frenzied, Unclean Spirit	EBENEZER
Silent Night, Holy Night	STILLE NACHT
Since Our Great High Priest, Christ Jesus	ALL SAINTS
Sing a New Song Unto the Lord (Psalm 98)	SING A NEW SONG
Sing Glory to the Name of God (Ps. 29)	LASST UNS ERFREUEN
Sing, My Tongue the Glorious Battle	FORTUNATUS NEW
Sing of God Made Manifest	SALZBURG
Sing Out, My Soul (Magnificat)	MAGNIFICAT (Taizé)
Sing Out With Joy to God Our Strength (Psalm 81)	SHEPHERDS' PIPES
Sing, Praise and Bless the Lord	LAUDATE DOMINUM (Taizé)
Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above	MIT FREUDEN ZART
Sing Praise to God, Whose Mighty Acts (Psalm 9)	SALVATION
Sing Praise to God, You Heavens! (Psalm 148)	WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN
Sing to God With Joy (Psalm 147)	GLENDON
“Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us	WACHET AUF
Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling	SOFTLY AND TENDERLY
Somebody’s Knocking at Your Door	SOMEBODY’S KNOCKING
Sometimes a Light Surprises	SALLY GARDENS
Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo/We Are the Body of Christ	SOMOS EL CUERPO DE CRISTO
Son of God, Whose Heart Is Peace	TAMA NGAKAU MARIE
Soon and Very Soon	SOON AND VERY SOON
Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness	SCHMÜKE DICH
Sound a Mystic Bamboo Song	MYSTIC BAMBOO SONG
Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud	ABERYSTWYTH
Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayers	NUN DANKET ALL’ UND BRINGET EHR’
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart	MORECAMBE
Spirit of the Living God	LIVING GOD
Spirit, Open My Heart	WILD MOUNTAIN THYME
Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness (Spirit)	SPIRIT

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Standing on the Promises	PROMISES
Stay with Me	STAY WITH ME
Steal Away	STEAL AWAY
Still, Still, Still	STILL, STILL, STILL
Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes	BEACH SPRING
Surely It Is God Who Saves Me	FIRST SONG
Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory	GENEVA
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT
Take Me to the Water	TAKE ME TO THE WATER
Take My Life	HENDON
Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am	TAKE ME AS I AM
Take the Saving Word of God	DAWK'YAH TOWGYAH
Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord	HALL
Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said	BOURBON
Take Us As We Are, O God	ENDLESS FEAST
Taste and See (Psalm 34)	TASTE AND SEE
Ten Lepers Facing Constant Scorn	RADIANT CITY
Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise	THANKFUL HEARTS
That Boy-Child of Mary	BLANTYRE
That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright	PUER NOBIS NASCITUR
The Bread and the Wine are Here	LOVE FEAST
The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound	MC KEE
The Church of Christ in Every Age	WAREHAM
The Church's One Foundation	AURELIA
The Day of Resurrection	LANCASHIRE
The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended	ST. CLEMENT
The Days Are Surely Coming	LLANGLOFFAN
The Earth Belongs to God Alone	SIMMONS
The First Nowell	THE FIRST NOWELL
The Foolish in Their Hearts Deny (Psalm 14)	MAPLE AVENUE
The Glory of These Forty Days	ERHALT UNS, HERR
The God of Abraham Praise	LEONI
The God of Heaven (Psalm 29)	GLORY
The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (Hopson)	
The King of Love My Shepherd Is (Psalm 23)	ST. COLUMBA
The Lord Almighty Reigns (Psalm 93)	ST. BRIDE
The Lord Hears the Cry of the Poor (Psalm 82)	THE CRY OF THE POOR
The Lord is God	AZMON
The Lord Is My Light (Psalm 27)	THE LORD IS MY LIGHT
The Lord Now Sends Us Forth (Enviado soy de Dios)	ENVIADO
The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want (Psalm 23)	CRIMOND
The Mighty God, with Power Speaks (Ps. 50)	KINGSFOLD
The People Who Walked in Darkness	ISAIAH 9
The Play of the Godhead	PERICHORESIS

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The Rice of Life	BÍ-NÍU
The Right Hand of God	LA MANO DE DIOS
The Risen Christ	WOODLANDS
The Snow Lay on the Ground	VENITE ADOREMUS
The Steadfast Love of the Lord Never Ceases (Ps.105)	THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD
The Strife Is O'er	VICTORY
The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing (The Feast Is Ready)	THE FEAST IS READY
The Woman Hiding in the Crowd	SIMMONS
Thee We Adore, O Hidden Savior, Thee	ADORO TE DEVOTE
There in God's Garden	SHADES MOUNTAIN
There Is a Balm in Gilead	BALM IN GILEAD
There Is a Longing in Our Hearts	LONGING
There Is a Place of Quiet Rest (Near to the Heart of God)	MC AFEE
There Is a Redeemer	GREEN
There Is Now a New Creation	STUTTGART
There's a Star in the East (Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow)	RISE UP, SHEPHERD
There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit	SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy	IN BABILONE
These Things Did Thomas Count as Real	KEDRON
These Treasured Children	PUER NOBIS NASCITUR
They Crucified My Lord (He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word)	CRUCIFIXION
Thine Is the Glory	JUDAS MACCABEUS
This Is My Father's World	TERRA BEATA
This Is My Song	FINLANDIA
This Is the Day (Este Es el Dia) (Psalm 118)	ESTE ES EL DIA
This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made (Psalm 118)	NUN DANKET ALL' UND BRINGET EHR'
This Is the Feast of Victory	FESTIVAL CANTICLE
This Is the Night	MY NEIGHBOR
This Joyful Eastertide	VRUECHTEN
Though I May Speak	O WALY WALY
Thy Mercy and Thy Truth, O Lord (psalm 36)	TALLIS' ORDINAL
Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet	THY WORD
To a Maid Engaged to Joseph	ANNUNCIATION
To Abraham and Sarah (I Will Be Your God)	LLANFYLLIN
To Bless the Earth (Ps. 65)	CHRISTUS, DER IST MEIN LEBEN
To God Be the Glory	TO GOD BE THE GLORY
To My Precious Lord	TO MY PRECIOUS LORD
To the High and Kindly Hills (Psalm 121)	NA-UI DO-UM
To You, O Lord, We Lift Our Eyes (Psalm 123)	CANNONS
Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples	KINGSFOLD
Together We Serve	SAN ANSELMO



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Touch the Earth Lightly	TENDERNESS
Tremble, Oh Tremble (Ps. 99)	TROMBLEY
Trust in God (Psalm 125)	SONG 13
Twins in the Moon of Wintertime	UNE JEUNE PUCELLE
Unless the Lord the House Shall Build (Ps. 127)	BOURBON
Unseen God, Your Hand Has Guided	MERTON
Wait for the Lord (Ps. 27)	WAIT FOR THE LORD
Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters	BEACH SPRING
Watchman, Tell Us of the Night	ABERYSTWYTH
We All Are One in Mission	ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN
We Are Forgiven	WE ARE FORGIVEN (Hopson)
We Are Marching in the Light of God (Siyahamba)	SIYAHAMBA
We Are One in Christ Jesus (Somos Uno en Cristo)	SOMOS UNO
We Are One in the Spirit (They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love)	THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS
We Are Standing on Holy Ground (Holy Ground)	HOLY GROUND
We Cannot Measure How You Heal	CANDLER
We Come as Guests Invited	WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN
We Come to You for Healing, Lord	LAND OF REST
We Fall Down	WE FALL DOWN
We Gather Here in Jesus' Name (Come, Share the Lord)	COME, SHARE THE LORD
We Gather Together	KREMSER
We Give Thanks unto You (Psalm 136)	WE GIVE THANKS UNTO YOU
We Give Thee but Thine Own	SCHUMANN
We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding	BREWER
We Know That Christ Is Raised	ENGELBERG
We Lift our Voices (We Are an Offering)	OFFERING
We Praise You, O God	KREMSER
We Shall Overcome	WE SHALL OVERCOME
We Three Kings of Orient Are	THREE KINGS OF ORIENT
We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom	MERLE'S TUNE
We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight	DUNLAP'S CREEK
We Who Once Were Dead	MIDDEN IN DE DOOD
We Will Go Out with Joy	WE WILL GO OUT WITH JOY
We Will Walk with God (Sizohamba naye)	SIZOHAMBA NAYE
We've Come This Far by Faith	THIS FAR BY FAITH
Were You There	WERE YOU THERE
What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine (Leaning on the Everlasting Arms)	SHOWALTER
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	CONVERSE
What Child Is This	GREENSLEEVES
What Does the Lord Require of You?	MOON
What Is the World Like	NEW WORLD
What Is This Place	KOMT NU MET ZANG

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What Shall I Render to the Lord (Psalm 116)	MARTYRDOM
What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright	PUER NOBIS NASCITUR
What Wondrous Love Is This	WONDROUS LOVE
When a Poor One (Cuando el Pobre)	EL CAMINO
When All Is Ended	YOGANANDA
When at This Table	FEASTDAY
When God Delivered Israel (Ps. 126)	SHEAVES
When God Restored Our Common Life (Ps. 126)	RESIGNATION
When Hands Reach Out and Fingers Trace	O WALY WALY
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	HAMBURG
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	ROCKINGHAM
When in Our Music God Is Glorified	ENGELBERG
When in the Night I Meditate (Psalm 16)	ST. FLAVIAN
When Israel Was Going Forth (Ps. 114)	PISGAH
When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	GO DOWN MOSES
When Jesus Wept	WHEN JESUS WEPT
When Memory Fades	FINLANDIA
When Morning Gilds the Skies	LAUDES DOMINI
When Peace like a River (It Is Well with My Soul)	VILLE DU HAVRE
When the Lord Redeems the Very Least	I'LL FLY AWAY
When the Morning Stars Together	WEISSE FLAGGEN
When Twilight Comes	DAPIT HAPON
When We Are Living (Pues si vivimos)	SOMOS DEL SEÑOR
When We Are Tested	ANGELS OF HEALING
When We Must Bear Persistent Pain	TBD
Where Armies Scourge the Countryside (Bring Peace to Earth Again)	PACE MIO DIO
Where Charity and Love Prevail	TWENTY-FOURTH
Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life	GERMANY
Where Shepherds Lately Knelt	MANGER SONG
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks	CHRISTMAS
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks	WINCHESTER OLD
While We Are Waiting, Come	WAITING (Cason)
Who Would Think that What Was Needed	WHITE ROSETTES
Why Do Nations Rage Together (Psalm 2)	EBENEZER
Why Has God Forsaken Me?	SHIMPI
Why Should I Feel Discouraged? (His Eye Is on the Sparrow)	SPARROW
Why Stand So Far Away (Psalm 10)	MORNING SONG
Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice	ABERYSTWYTH
Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)	KELVINGROVE
Will You Let Me Be Your Servant	THE SERVANT SONG
With Grateful heart My Thanks I Bring (Psalm 138)	ST. PETERSBURG
Within Our Darkest Night	DANS NOS OBSCURITÉS
Within Your Shelter, Loving God (Psalm 91)	ABBEY

Woman in the Night	NEW DISCIPLES
Woman, Weeping in the Garden	KINGDOM
Womb of Life and Source of Being	RAQUEL
Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed	PENTECOST (Boyd)
You Are Before Me, Lord (Ps. 139)	SURSUM CORDA (Smith)
You Are Holy (Eres santo)	DU ÄR HELIG
You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)	YOU ARE HOLY
You Are My Refuge, Faithful God (Psalm 31)	MORNING SONG
You Are My Strength When I Am Weak (You Are My All in All)	JERNIGAN
You Are the Lord, Giver of Mercy	WAYFARING STRANGER
You Belong to Christ	YOU BELONG TO CHRIST
You Have Come Up to the Lakeshore (Tú has venido a la Orilla)	PESCADOR DE HOMBRES
You Have Put On Christ	BAPTIZED IN CHRIST
You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd	PICARDY
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart	FINEST WHEAT
You Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim	HANOVER
You Shall Go Out with Joy (The Trees of the Field)	THE TREES OF THE FIELD
You Thirsty Ones, Come	HEAVEN'S RAIN
You Walk Along Our Shoreline	WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN
You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord (On Eagle's Wings) (Psalm 91)	ON EAGLE'S WINGS
Your Endless Love, Your Mighty Acts (Psalm 106)	ST. MAGNUS
Your Faithfulness, O Lord, Is Sure (Ps. 145)	WINCHESTER NEW
Your Law, O Lord, Is Perfect (Ps. 19)	CHRISTUS, DER IST MEIN LEBEN
Your Only Son (Lamb of God)	LAMB OF GOD

Endnote for Attachment A

1. Listed here in alphabetical order. Minor changes may be made to this list during the rights and permissions process.

#### Attachment B: Members of the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song

##### *Mary Louise (Mel) Bringle, Chair*

Mel is professor of philosophy and religious studies and chair of the Humanities Division at Brevard College in Brevard, North Carolina. She received her PhD from the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University, with particular interest in practical and pastoral theology. She has served as a consultant for the Office of Health Ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recognized in 2002 as an “emerging hymn text writer of the U.S. and Canada,” she has won many international competitions for hymn texts, and is the author of two single-author collections. Her texts are included in hymnals and supplements of numerous denominations and her translations from the Spanish figure in a bilingual hymnal under production by GIA. She currently serves as president of The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada, and is a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

##### *Chi Yi Chen*

Chi Yi is choral associate at Princeton Theological Seminary. Born in T'ai-nan, Taiwan, into a Taiwanese Presbyterian pastor's family, Chi Yi earned a degree from T'ai-nan Theological Seminary and College and a Masters in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey. Her undergraduate studies with Dr. I-To Loh led to her interest in global church music and liturgy, and Asian hymnody. She has traveled throughout Europe, Asia, and the United States to various conferences and churches, and has been a workshop clinician at the Kodaly Choral Institute. Chi Yi is a member of the Taiwanese/American Fellowship Presbyterian Church in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

##### *Adam Copeland*

Adam J. Copeland is a Presbyterian minister, writer, and blogger. He serves as mission developer for The Project F-M, an emerging faith community in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area. Previously, he was pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Hallock, Minnesota. A grad-

uate of Columbia Theological Seminary, Adam's interests include ministry, social media, young adult culture, and technology. He twice received the Emma Gaillard Boyce Memorial Award for the best paper on music and worship. As an undergraduate, Adam attended St. Olaf College where he sang with the St. Olaf Cantorei and St. Olaf Choir. Adam blogs at A Wee Blether, (<http://adamjcopeland.com>) and lives in Moorhead, Minn. with his partner Megan Thorvilson.

*Alfred V. Fedak*

Al is minister of music and arts at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Capitol Hill in Albany, New York. He holds degrees in organ performance and music history from Hope College and Montclair State University, and has done additional study at Westminster Choir College, Eastman School of Music, and in Austria and England. A Fellow of the American Guild of Organists, he also holds the guild's Choirmaster Certificate. A widely published and well-known composer of church music, he has more than 150 choral and organ works in print, and his many hymn tunes appear in hymnals and collections throughout the English-speaking world and Asia.

*Stephen H. Fey*

Steve serves as codirector of music ministries at First Presbyterian Church of Bristol, Tennessee. He is a native of Arkansas and received degrees from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and from the University of North Texas. A member of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, Steve teaches church music courses as an adjunct faculty member of King College, Bristol. He is dean of the Northeast Tennessee/Southwest Virginia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and serves on the editorial committee for *A! Magazine for the Arts*, a monthly regional arts journal. Steve served on the 2000 Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) Western Conference planning team and codirected with his wife, Vicki, the 2002 PAM Westminster Conference.

*Charles D. Frost*

Charlie is minister of music at Sea Island Presbyterian Church in Beaufort, South Carolina. A native of Red Bank, New Jersey, he holds degrees from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey. Prior to his work at Sea Island, he served churches in New Jersey, New York, California, Washington, and Michigan. He serves on the executive committee of the Lowcountry Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, board of directors of the Beaufort Orchestra, and is keyboardist for the Beaufort Orchestra. Charlie is a member of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians and The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada.

*Karen Hastings-Flegel*

Karen is organist and director of music ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Concord, California. She holds a doctor of musical arts degree in organ performance from Stanford University, and is currently attending seminary at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, where she is working toward a master of divinity and an MA in biblical languages. Karen is a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto, California, and is under care of their session as an inquirer.

*Beverly Howard*

Beverly is professor of music at California Baptist University in Riverside, California, where she teaches music and worship, music theory, and organ. Since 1988, she has also served as organist at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Riverside. She holds degrees from the University of Oklahoma and the University of North Texas. In December 2008, she will complete a six-year term as Editor of *THE HYMN: A Journal of Congregational Song*, the journal of The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada.

*Paul Junggap Huh*

Paul is assistant professor of worship and director of Korean American Ministries at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. He has taught at Yonsei University in Korea and served Euro American and Korean American churches in the United States. For six years he was the pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church in Bloomfield, New Jersey. He was the editor of *Come, Let Us Worship: The Korean-English Presbyterian Hymnal and Service Book* (Geneva Press, 2001), and is a frequent keynote speaker, preacher, and conference leader.

*Mary Beth Jones*

Mary Beth is director of music ministries at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Troy, Michigan, where she has led in collaborative efforts with the Troy Interfaith Group as a witness to the multicultural community. She holds a degree in church music from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. A member of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians Executive Board from 1999–2004, she directed the 2004 PAM Westminster Conference on Worship and Music.

*Eric T. Myers*

Eric serves as pastor of Frederick Presbyterian Church in Frederick, Maryland. Before ordination, he served as director of music and organist at churches in South Carolina and Virginia. He holds degrees from Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Notre Dame, and a PhD from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary; he has served as adjunct faculty at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary and Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

*Chelsea Roeder Stern*

Chelsea Stern is director of music at Greenland Hills United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas. She is a licensed Kindermusik educator and teaches for Kindermusik by SoundSteps in Dallas. She has served as music intern at Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas and at Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas. Chelsea has also served as director of children's ministry and children's choir director at First Presbyterian Church, Temple, Texas. She holds the master of sacred music degree from Perkins School of Theology, the master

of music in vocal performance from Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University, and the bachelor of music degree in church music from Baylor University.

*Edwin Chr. van Driel*

Edwin is assistant professor of theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. A native of the Netherlands, he received degrees from Utrecht University and Yale University. He has one book published and is currently working on another project. Edwin is a contributor to several volumes of "Feasting on the Word," the lectionary commentary series published by Westminster John Knox Press. His home congregation is Valley Presbyterian Church in Brookfield, Connecticut.

*Michael Waschevski*

Michael is associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth, Texas. He holds a degree in music from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and degrees in theology and ministry from Brite Divinity School and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. A member of Grace Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, he is also a member of the Educator Certification Council of the General Assembly. He is an associate member of the Iona community where he participates in the worship life of the abbey for several days each year.

*Barbara G. Wheeler*

Barbara is director of the Center for the Study of Theological Education at Auburn Seminary in New York City, and for thirty years was president of Auburn. She was a founding member of the board of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation and a member of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A graduate of Barnard College, she is a published author and frequent speaker on the future of religion in North America, the public role of religion, and resources for healing religious divisions and conflicts. A member of Peniel Presbyterian Church in Granville, New York, she serves as its elder commissioner to the Presbytery of Albany.

### Attachment C: Theological Vision Statement

Collections of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs give voice to the church's core beliefs and theological convictions. Their texts are "compact theology,"<sup>1</sup> and the selection of hymns and songs (both the themes that are emphasized and those that are overlooked), the order in which they are presented, and even the ways they are indexed shape the theological thinking and ultimately the faith and practices of the church.

Previous hymnals have responded to the needs of the church and the world by highlighting the rhythms of the church year, the centrality of the Psalms in the prayer and praise of Reformed churches, the corporate witness of the church to the world, the seeking of God's peace and God's justice, and the rich musical and poetic resources of world Christianity. All these motifs remain important and should be retained, in one way or another, in this collection.

The next Presbyterian collection of hymns and songs, however, will be published amid different conditions than those that molded previous ones. It will be offered in a world in which trust in human progress has been undermined and eclectic spiritualities often fail to satisfy deep spiritual hungers. It will be used by a church many of whose members have not had life-long formation by Scripture and basic Christian doctrine, much less Reformed theology. It is meant for a church marked by growing diversity in liturgical practice. Moreover, it addresses a church divided by conflicts but nonetheless, we believe, longing for healing and the peace that is beyond understanding.

To inspire and embolden a church facing these formidable challenges, the overarching theme of the collection will be God's powerful acts of creation, redemption, and final transformation. It will also bespeak the human responses that God's gracious acts make possible. In other words, the framework for this collection of congregational song will be the history of salvation.

This theme of salvation history answers the needs of the church and the world in the following ways:

- The priority placed on God's acts offers hope to those whose faith in human efforts has been undermined.
- A focus on salvation history reminds a church and world riddled with anxiety, frustration, and conflict that love has come to earth and that the risen and ascended Christ is alive and active.
- The emphasis on God's provision for us invites our grateful response. It makes a place for expressions of corporate commitment (a special emphasis of the previous hymnal) as well as personal devotion.
- The framework of salvation history is widely inclusive. It has places for existing hymns and invites the writing of new words and music to supply major omissions. It makes room for the whole of the biblical witness, not only psalms and the Gospels that are well reflected in hymn texts, but also the segments of the Scriptures that are not. It incorporates the events of the Christian year, the sacraments, and the mission of the church throughout the world as Christ's living body.
- As such, this framework both encompasses and enriches the liturgical practices that exist in the church. It includes the christological rhythm of the liturgical year, from Advent to Christ the King, but also places the liturgical year in the wider framework of God's covenantal acts in creation and towards Israel. It challenges all users, whatever liturgical patterns they use, to shape their worship by the full extent of the biblical narrative.

- The rich narrative of salvation history—with the real life stories of people like Abraham and Sarah, Eli and Samuel, Boaz and Ruth, Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch—makes audible the manifold ways in which God engages people different in age, nationality, race, and gender.

- The framework of the history of salvation offers a theological rationale for asking us to learn songs that come from cultures different than our own: Pentecost teaches us to speak and hear the gospel in many tongues and languages and only thus, “with all the saints,” to comprehend the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ (Eph. 3:18). We do not sing hymns and songs because they were birthed in our culture; we sing them because they teach us something about the richness that is in God.

- Likewise, the notion of salvation history invites us to bridge the divide between different musical styles and traditions. As scribes who have been trained for God’s reign will bring out of their treasures “what is new and what is old” (Mt. 13:52), so musicians are invited to lead us in songs both old and new, in praise of a God who is the first and the last, the ancient of everlasting days and the Lord of the new creation.

#### Endnote for Attachment C

1. “Compact theology” is a phrase used by the late David Allan Hubbard, biblical scholar and president of Fuller Seminary, to describe hymn texts.

#### Attachment D: A Statement on Language

Language is close to the heart of Christian faith. As befits a faith community called into being by a God we know as the Word made flesh, we pray, proclaim, teach, comfort, admonish, serve and administer justice with words woven in and through all our actions. Language used in worship has great power. Therefore the language used in collections of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs matters a great deal. Worshipful words joined to worshipful music deeply shape the faith and practices of the church.

The church has been enriched by several decades of conversations about language used for God and for the people of God. Christians in denominations like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have become aware that our language can exclude and stereotype, but also that carefully chosen language can embrace and include people who have been separated from the centers of power. A commitment to inclusive language for the people of God reflects the consensus of the church.<sup>1</sup> When it comes to use of language for God, however, the conversation is still ongoing. While many are deeply nurtured and comforted by traditional imagery for God, many others are concerned about associations of patriarchy and other forms of domination and are looking for other and more diverse language.

In negotiating these different convictions, the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song is guided by the theological framework of this new collection of songs: salvation history. Scripture uses an abundantly rich array of prose and poetry to tell us about God’s powerful acts of creation, redemption, and final transformation. Much biblical imagery is indeed masculine, but there is also a wide variety of other metaphors that are either feminine or gender-neutral. Most important, behind all biblical narrative lies the deep and prevailing sense that God is the one whose ways and thoughts are as beyond human speech as the heaven is higher than the earth (Isa. 55:8). Our lips need to be cleansed by a burning coal before we speak or sing any word about the holy God (Isa. 6:5).

The framework of salvation history requires a collection of songs that reflects the full extent of the biblical narrative and also the full array of biblical language used for God—even if that leads us to using words and imagery that go beyond our natural comfort.

Given these commitments, the Committee seeks a songbook that is characterized, as a church document formulates it, by “inclusive language with reference to the people of God, and expansive language with reference to God.”<sup>2</sup> Thus the committee uses the following guidelines:

##### *Language used for the people of God*

- Language that stereotypes persons according to categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, age, or disabilities will be avoided.
- The “generic masculine” is no longer generally understood to include persons of both genders and will therefore be avoided. Texts that employ the generic masculine will be evaluated individually to determine what alterations, if any, are poetically appropriate.
- Salvation history invites us to sing joyfully of the creative and healing presence of our God. We will be sensitive, however, to potentially denigrating implications of poetic metaphors in our songs, especially with respect to persons of color or with disabilities.

##### *Language used for God*

- The collection will draw from the full reservoir of biblical imagery for God and God’s gracious acts. The final product will include both metaphors that are comfortable in their familiarity and those that are enriching in their newness.
- The collection will emphasize that the God who meets us so graciously and intimately in salvation history is at the same time one who is wholly other and beyond gender.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, texts will reflect a strong preference for avoiding the use of male pronouns for God. In evaluating each hymn or song, issues of tradition, theological integrity, poetic quality, and copyright will all be considered. The goal is a collection in which traditional hymns and songs are balanced with others that are more gender-neutral or expansive in their reference to God.
- Two references to God should be preserved in the collection:

(1) In the biblical narrative both the God of Israel and Christ are called “Lord.” The practice of calling God “Lord” goes back to Greek-speaking Jews who sought to avoid pronouncing God’s holy name, YHWH, by using a replacement term: Lord (kurios). The practice has since been followed by virtually all Christian Bible translations. Rather than being an expression of domination or masculinity, “Lord” stands in for the name by which God chose to disclose Godself in Hebrew Scripture (Exod. 3:15).

That “Jesus Christ is Lord (kurios)” is one of the oldest confessions concerning Jesus. It has both a Roman and a Jewish background. On the one hand, “Lord” (kurios) was the title of the Roman emperor. When the writers of the New Testament confess Jesus to be Lord, they thereby proclaim that not Caesar, but Christ rules this world. On the other hand, in applying the reference to the name of Israel’s God to Jesus, the New Testament makes a startling identity statement: that in Jesus this very God has become present among us.

Were we no longer to use “Lord” for Israel’s God, we would no longer understand what we claim about Jesus’ identity when we confess him Lord. Were we no longer to use “Lord” for Jesus, we would lose the strongest defense we have against empire: that Christ is Lord, and not Caesar.

(2) The church confesses a Trinitarian God: one God, in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is the formula by which we are baptized; this is the name that unites us with each other and with all Christian communities beyond our denomination (Mt. 28:19). This three-fold name will not be eliminated. At the same time, many other images and metaphors for the Trinity will be welcomed, as long as they express the principles of Trinitarian theology:

- God exists in three persons, but there is nevertheless only one God who knows and loves and acts;
- In salvation history, no person of the Trinity acts alone; every act is an act of all three persons in the one God;
- Each person of the Trinity is not a part of God, but fully God.

#### Endnotes for Attachment D

1. Cf. the *Book of Order W-1.2006-a*, the PC(USA) “Report and Recommendations in Response to Referral on Inclusive Language,” and the “Report to the Church on Issues of Language and Gender.”
2. *Well Chosen Words!* Published by the Women’s Ministries, National Ministries Division, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the PC(USA). Cf. also the *Book of Order W-1.2006-b*.
3. Cf. the PC(USA) *The Study Catechism*, questions 11-13.

## Item 20-10

[The assembly approved Item 20-10 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 36, 37.]

### *General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC)*

The General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the PPC to do the following:

1. Consider hiring personnel to relate to mid councils, being conscious of the importance of diversity in the hiring of staff.
2. Be aware of the General Assembly mandate for cultural proficiency, especially in the hiring of senior staff.
3. Continue and increase the publication of material that provides a platform for new voices, material that is important to the life of the church, and material that represents the diversity of the church, realizing, as they have stated in their self-study, that “some books, in fact, are accepted with PPC’s full expectation of break-even sales or, in a few cases, even [loses] [losses].”
4. Initiate and continue collaboration with Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) on the development of cultural and linguistic resources that will develop discipleship and leadership for the whole church.
5. Continue and enhance the collaboration with all of the agencies of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) in order to produce material that fulfills the mission of each of the agencies.
6. Continue to explore and develop ways to utilize current and emerging online and digital technologies, both as a delivery system and as a resource to the whole church.
7. Work with other agencies of the church to consolidate and leverage their marketing efforts, including electronic publishing, to facilitate a better understanding of and access to the resources available through the PC(USA).

**8. Undertake a comprehensive and collaborative review by all agencies involved in publishing to determine if there is duplication of services and resources that does not serve the mission of the church as effectively as possible, and that PPC initiate such a review.**

**[Comment: That the General Assembly pay attention specifically to Recommendation 8.]**

### *Rationale*

The General Assembly Committee on Review echoes the applause of the former review committee and shares its appreciation for the way in which PPC is weathering the economic and political climate of the last few years and preparing for even greater challenges in the coming years. We believe PPC has demonstrate fidelity to the church's mission, has provided an invaluable service to the Reformed family, and has become a recognized leader in the religious publishing community

#### I. Introduction

The General Assembly Committee on Review is pleased to present to the 220th General Assembly (2012) a written review of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC). This review is the result of the decision of the 213th General Assembly (2001) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that established a new evaluation process of General Assembly (GA) agencies.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the review process is "to evaluate the relationship of their individual [agency] ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 67, addition of Standing Rule E.10. Agency Review). The instructions to the General Assembly Committee on Review were that the committee must conduct the process according to predetermined standards and present a written report to the next General Assembly (*Manual of the General Assembly*, pp. 71–72). The first review of the PPC was conducted in 2002–2003 with the results being presented to the 215th General Assembly (2003). This is the second review of the agency.

The review process is founded on the principle that an agency of the General Assembly shall participate in a self-study review process with a General Assembly Committee on Review elected by the General Assembly. The General Assembly Committee on Review, likewise, shall participate with the agency in a study process the scope of which is limited to helping the assembly and its agency see that the mission of the church is being fulfilled according to certain standards. (See *Manual of the General Assembly*, pp. 71–72.) It is not the intent of the review process to find fault, but rather to evaluate and offer suggestions for improvement.

It is important to note that the scope of the review is also limited by the amount of time and resources allocated for the review process. Initially, the General Assembly Committee on Review spent two days together to train for the task and to prepare a survey to send out to various constituencies of the PPC. Subsequently, the committee engaged in two conference calls with the full committee, several conference calls with individual subgroups, and came back together for three days to conduct on-site interviews with agency leaders and appropriate General Assembly staff and elected leaders. At the on-site visit, the committee presented the initial report to the PPC for response, as outlined in the *Agency Review Manual*. After the final revisions were made, the committee submitted the report to the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) for presentation at the next General Assembly.

The following report is the result of the work of the OGA in developing an "Agency Review Manual," the published *Self-Study of the PPC*, the data collected by the Research Services Office of the PC(USA), and the work of the elected General Assembly Committee on Review for PPC. The elected committee brought skills from all facets of church and society. Members were well versed in matters relating to the publishing industry, the business community, and the PC(USA) theology, polity, and ethos.

The committee based the report on the self-study published by PPC; interviews with the President and Publisher Marc Lewis, members of the board of directors, PPC staff, General Assembly Council Executive Director Linda Valentine, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, and others identified by the committee; and the results from a survey conducted by Research Services Office. The General Assembly Committee on Review organized itself around three focus groups: Program Effectiveness, Policies and Practice, and Church Relatedness. The committee also structured the report around these three areas.

In the initial evaluation of the PPC in 2003, the review committee offered six specific recommendations that were approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003). This report will also address the effectiveness of the PPC in addressing those recommendations.

Those recommendations of the 2003 review committee were:

1. That PPC work to improve its presence on the worldwide web.



2. That the curriculum publishing change, the additional trade name, and the original trade name that is now used without the slash (“/”) should be noted in appropriate attachments or amendments to the deliverance, the *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, and PPC’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

3. That the PPC mission statement be revised by the board of directors and management to produce a more succinct statement that will better communicate the unique nature of PPC.

4. That the board of directors and management work together to develop a long-range plan (for three to five years). The long-range plan should include a business plan outlining a market and competitive analysis as well as a marketing plan. This long-range plan, and resultant major decisions, should be reviewed with and approved by the board prior to implementation.

5. That, in order to ensure a broader representation from the church, that the PPC do the following as soon as financially feasible:

a. Revise the membership of the board of directors by naming the president and publisher of PPC, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly or their designee, as ex-officio members without vote.

b. Maintain the required number of nine voting members by electing two additional members in 2004, and distributing those nine members among equal classes.

c. Authorize up to twelve voting members when PPC resources permit.

d. Add congregational pastoral experience to the categories of expertise needed by one or more members of the board of directors.

6. That PPC continue to strengthen its marketing efforts to congregations, lay leaders, and seminarians.

The General Assembly Committee on Review expresses appreciation to President and Publisher Marc Lewis, the PPC’s board of directors, the staff of PPC, and the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council for their helpfulness and willing cooperation in completing this review. Their self-study stands as a model for all other agencies.

In accordance with Standing Rule E.10., the following persons were elected by commissioners of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to serve as the General Assembly Committee on Review: Mary Gene Boteler, moderator (Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy); Jose Luis Casal (Presbytery of Tres Rios); Melva Wilson Costen (Presbytery of Greater Atlanta); Karen E. Dimon (Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse); Ernest E. Ettlich (Presbytery of Cascades); Carolyn Heyward (Presbytery of Charleston); David Hintz (Presbytery of Heartland); Rodger Y. Nishioka (Presbytery of Greater Atlanta); David Olson (Presbytery of South Dakota); Marvin L. Roloff (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America); Allison Seed (Presbytery of Heartland).

As we began our work, Karen E. Dimon resigned from the review committee because she was named to the Commission on Middle Governing Bodies and Ernest Ettlich resigned for health reasons.

## II. Policies and Program Effectiveness

The General Assembly Committee on Review (committee) examined the PPC execution of its mandate from General Assembly. In addition, the committee devoted effort to understanding how PPC is addressing the dramatic changes in the publishing business and the decline in traditional users of their services.

The PPC must be financially self-sustaining. Since 1994, the PPC has generated an overall net surplus from operations leading to a more sound financial position. The PPC experienced a loss in 2010 but is projecting a surplus in 2011. The committee has concluded that PPC has met its mandate from General Assembly to be financially self-sufficient, but faces continued challenges as the publishing and delivery environment changes. The PPC has placed a significant emphasis on the success of the new hymnal.

The committee examined what we aggregated as “operational effectiveness.” The PPC exhibited adherence to general business “best practices.” An outside audit is conducted on an annual basis, and the audits have been issued without exception. Management closely monitors appropriate external and internal metrics and appears to be willing to adjust to the ever-changing publishing environment. The PPC has appropriate policies and procedures in place. Staffing performance and compensation are determined in a rational approach. The PPC racial ethnic staff percentage has exceeded the General Assembly recommended level for the last five years. The PPC continues to be technologically innovative and has developed strong partnerships with external firms to stay current in an efficient manner. The committee has concluded that the PPC is operationally effective.

Looking forward, the PPC faces several significant concerns. Sales continue to decline at a rate that could, at some point, make financial viability questionable. The PPC management is fully aware of the trends in publishing and the challenges they bring to the organization. The long-range plans address the current reality and outline their plans for flourishing in a new and different publishing world. In the short-term, the major focus of the PPC is the development and publishing of the new hymnal. If sales are realized as estimated, the resulting income will generate a significant surplus that will provide a cushion as the PPC adjusts to a “new normal” in publishing.

In the midst of stressful financial times and the continuing changes in publishing, particularly in the area of electronic publishing, PPC faces a number of significant challenges in the years ahead.

First of all is the immense task of developing, publishing, and marketing a new hymnal to the congregations and agencies of the church. This will require careful planning and collaboration, and a significant financial commitment to introduce and deliver this resource to the church.

Second is the transition to a new system of distribution of products to its retail customers in the church. The challenges come from electronic book sales, on-line book sales, and a decrease in brick and mortar retail outlets. The new delivery systems must bring a closer relationship of the congregations and their members to the publishing house.

Third is the continued challenge of the PPC’s strong academic book program to publish books of academic excellence to the PC(USA) and beyond. It will take major expertise and financial commitment to attract and publish the work of scholars writing for both the academy and the church.

Finally, strategic budgeting will be required to plan and implement optimum stewardship of the resources available to the publishing house.

Other observations include:

1. If the new hymnal sales fall below expectations, there may be a critical financial concern for PPC.
2. There is significant lead time in bringing new products to market.
3. The PPC must work to publish books and other material that appeal to the broad spectrum of theological thinking.
4. The PPC must publish books aimed for emerging markets growing within the Presbyterian church worldwide.

The PPC Board and senior management appear to be aware of the constraints with which the organization is faced, especially financial resources, and are acting in good faith to move the organization forward to fulfill its mission. The agency is effectively managed and able to address the changes in the publishing environment.

### III. Collaboration

The final recommendation presented in the 2003 Review of the PPC was more a hope than a directive, calling on “the General Assembly, Office of the General Assembly, General Assembly Council, and PPC board to make every effort to work together toward a common call to serve the church of Jesus Christ” (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 672).

It is the determination of this committee on review, based on the PPC’s self-study and its own research, that the PPC has taken this encouragement from hope to reality in significant ways. The PPC has cooperated with Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) to develop curriculum growing out of the *Feasting on the Word* series; developed resources to equip members, leaders, and congregations of the church through the Thoughtful Christian and Presbyterian Leader; assisted the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) in creating the Bible study for General Assemblies; and now shares warehouse and distribution services with CMP. Other agencies of the denomination recognize the PPC as a robust partner in carrying out the mission of the PC(USA) within the church and beyond. The PPC has rightly recognized that it does not have the resources to meet the needs of the church on its own and that collaborative efforts are critical to the fulfillment of its stated mission (Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Self-Study, p.12).

While these efforts are to be lauded, it must be noted that the PPC remains unknown in certain segments of the Presbyterian church. The Six Agency Review Committee (2010) conducted a survey that determined that respondents, taken from a broad spectrum of the church, were largely unaware of PPC’s work with other agencies and, indeed, unaware of PPC as a PC(USA) agency as well.

In the survey conducted by this committee on review, the following assessments were gleaned:

Six in ten agency leaders (64 percent) but only one in ten middle governing bodies (MGB)<sup>2</sup> executives (10 percent) report that PPC has collaborated with their agency or middle governing body “very extensively” or “extensively” in the past two years. In fact, a slight majority of MGB executives (56 percent) report that PPC has not collaborated with their entity at all.

Of those serving agencies or entities with which PPC has collaborated at all in the past two years, seven in ten agency leaders (69 percent), but only one-third of MGB executives, say that collaboration has been “very successful” or “successful.” Of those with an opinion, many more agency leaders (82 percent) than MGB executives (43 percent) describe PPC’s resources overall as “very helpful” or “helpful” to “you personally in your ministry.”

Four in ten MGB executives with an opinion (38 percent) report that PPC is “very helpful” or “helpful” in resourcing congregations in their presbytery or synod. More (46 percent) respond “somewhat helpful.” (Final Report, Research Services, 6/24/11, Appendix)

To the committee on review this indicates a need for increased efforts in working with MGB leadership as well as other agency leadership in developing and promoting pertinent resources to constituents. Having PPC staff assigned to liaise with MGB staff would be another way of growing collaboratively and multiplying awareness and use of PPC and jointly produced material.

Continuing obstacles to collaboration exist, to be sure. Because much of PPC’s output is going to academic audiences with ecumenical perspectives, not just to Presbyterians, collaboration with entities outside the denomination is vital. Collaboration with corporate entities such as Barnes and Noble has so far been limited. However, staff report that ways are being found of distributing CMP resources through Amazon.com, which has been a significant partner for PCC in distribution.

Furthermore, as PPC is self-sustaining financially, there are some collaborative efforts that cannot be undertaken because of cost. Although there are some projects that proceed at a financial loss because of their importance, PPC must constantly weigh not only the worthiness of those efforts in fulfilling its mission but also the cost and projected revenue involved in doing so.

All the same, one area consistently emerging from interviews with PPC staff and from the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) staff that necessitates further study, collaboration, and implementation is the production of materials for congregations in languages other than English to reflect more fully the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to multicultural ministry and growth. While this may not be immediately cost-effective, it is critical to the fulfillment of the church’s mission.

#### IV. Church Relatedness

The concluding segment of the work assigned the General Assembly Committee on Review focused on an assessment of church relatedness. The objective was to review how well PPC serves and supports the church’s mission and exhibits a continuous awareness of its servant role in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The self-study revealed that PPC has a well-thought-out plan of execution to fulfill its mandate to the constituency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The six agencies of the General Assembly collaborate to serve the congregations and middle governing bodies, as fully as resources allow, with theological stimuli and study aids for growth and development spiritually, intellectually and emotionally.

Interviews with board members and leadership teams revealed that PPC has the pool of talent, enthusiasm, and commitment necessary to provide resources for the church constituency. They are well aware of the task ahead of them with limited resources and the necessity to work with all agencies to get the job done.

The survey revealed the need for a stronger PPC identity in all groups surveyed. In five of the nine groups surveyed (customers, authors, agency leaders, MGB executives, youth & young adults, Presbyterian Leader users, Thoughtful Christian users, racial ethnic congregations, and congregations) only small majorities were “very familiar” or “familiar” with PPC: congregations (51 percent), racial ethnic congregations (52 percent), Presbyterian Leader users (54 percent), agency leaders (56 percent), and middle governing body executives (54 percent) (See Table 2. pg. 2 of Final Review). The majority of the remaining responders in each group were “somewhat familiar” except in the young adult group, where more were “not very familiar.”

The General Assembly Review Committee observed and commends the PPC for its strong commitment to the mission needs of the PC(USA). Commitment to providing more awareness of its books and resources to small congregations, seminaries, and lay leaders through workshops, training, and book table events is commendable.

The PPC annually offers the *Robert W. Bohl Racial Ethnic Scholarship and Internship Program* to a racial ethnic student or recent graduate from a PC(USA) seminary who is interested in considering religious publishing as a ministry option. The recipient works with both the Westminster John Knox (WJK) and Geneva imprints.

The PPC articulated the ongoing need for personnel and financial resources if it is to function as the sole publishing arm of the PC(USA). The leadership continues to partner with other agencies of the PC(USA) and outside agencies to provide individuals, congregations, and institutions with resources that they might better understand and be equipped to carry out their respective missions.

#### Endnotes

1. Agencies related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., General Assembly Mission Council, and Office of the General Assembly.
2. Now referred to as mid councils.

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#### PPC COMMENT ON ITEM 20-10

*Comment on Item 20-10—From the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.*

1. *That the PPC consider hiring personnel to relate to middle governing bodies, being conscious of the importance of diversity in the hiring of staff.*

*Response:* The PPC agrees that this is an important area of need to address. Executive Director of Church Relations Vince Patton's transfer to GAMC in late 2010 was a loss to PPC and left a 'service' gap with this constituency. The Hymnal Marketing Advocate position is working in this capacity for the next two years for that important project. In light of financial constraints, PPC will plan for a permanent resource to address this need in 2013. In the short term, PPC will continue to participate at MGB events as possible and collaborate with Congregational Ministries Publishing to feature PPC resources at MGB events.

2. *That the PPC be aware of the General Assembly mandate for cultural proficiency, especially in the hiring of senior staff.*

*Response:* The PPC takes this mandate seriously and will continue to work conscientiously to address the need for diversity among senior staff. Given the current financial constraints related to the development and introduction of the new Presbyterian hymnal, we expect to recruit and select a racial ethnic member of senior staff no later than 2013.

3. *That PPC continue and increase the publication of material that provides a platform for new voices, material that is important to the life of the church, and material that represents the diversity of the church, realizing, as they have stated in their self-study, that "some books, in fact, are accepted with PPC's full expectation of break-even sales or, in a few cases, even losses."*

*Response:* The PPC has perhaps the most accomplished record of excellence among denominational publishers in this area and plans to continue that practice. Two new series, *Belief* and *Beyond the Pale*, are just two examples of our robust efforts in the progressive publishing of new and diverse voices.

4. *That PPC initiate and continue collaboration with Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) on the development of cultural and linguistic resources that will develop discipleship and leadership for the whole church.*

*Response:* The PPC initiated collaboration with Congregational Ministries Publishing and the Seminario Evangelico de Puerto Rico to both adapt studies and develop new studies in Spanish as a new offering on The Thoughtful Christian website. The PPC will continue this work and collaboration (within reasonable financial means) with other PC(USA) entities, especially for the resource programs like TheThoughtfulChristian.com and ThePresbyterianLeader.com.

5. *That PPC continue and enhance the collaboration with all of the agencies of the GAMC in order to produce material that fulfills the mission of each of the agencies.*

*Response:* The PPC is committed to this collaboration, particularly in partnership with the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The PPC is working with the Office of Theology and Worship and PAM (Presbyterian Association of Musicians) on the development of the new hymnal and resources for Presbyterian Leader.com. The PPC is also in beginning stages of collaborative development for a new or revised *Book of Common Worship*. The PPC regularly discusses ideas for PC(USA) resources with various offices within the GAMC to ensure that efforts are aligning with the overall mission of the PC(USA).

6. *That PPC continue to explore and develop ways to utilize current and emerging online and digital technologies, both as a delivery system and a resource to the whole church.*

*Response:* The PPC is a leader among religious publishers in the effective utilization of emerging technology in publishing and in the delivery of resources, and will continue that leadership. The PPC is expanding the resources it has available

electronically and pursuing new models for these resources, such as new formats of leadership and worship resources on ThePresbyterianLeader.com and the new electronic hymnal resources to accompany the 2013 Presbyterian hymnal. In addition, PPC's sales of eBooks increased by approximately fifteen times in 2011 compared to 2010.

7. *That the PPC work with other agencies of the church to consolidate and leverage their marketing efforts, including electronic publishing, to facilitate a better understanding of and access to the resources available through the PCUSA.*

*Response:* The PPC is represented with other PC(USA) entities in the further development of the PC(USA) web site and will continue to pursue collaborative opportunities for electronic resources and communication in the future, in addition to its proprietary efforts that serve Presbyterian and ecumenical audiences.

8. *That a comprehensive and collaborative review be undertaken by all agencies involved in publishing to determine if there is duplication of services and resources that does not serve the mission of the church as effectively as possible, and that PPC initiate such a review.*

*Response:* The PPC will initiate with other PC(USA) entities a collaborative review beginning in the fall of 2012 for publishing activities done within the PC(USA). The goal of this review will be to appropriately identify and reconcile duplication of publishing services among General Assembly entities. The PPC will report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the findings of the review and on any mutual actions taken by the entities to resolve ineffective duplication of services. In order for this to be an effective effort, it is advised that there be joint ownership and commitment of this review between GAMC, OGA, and PPC. It is advised that a committee of ten people be named as responsible for this review, including: the three entity heads for PPC, GAMC, and OGA; the chairs or another elected designate from the boards of PPC, GAMC, and OGA; one additional staff persons from each of the entities, designated by the agency head; and one person from the General Assembly Committee on Review of PPC, in order to help represent the review committee's intent for this recommendation.

## Item 20-11

**[The assembly disapproved Item 20-11 with comment. See pp. 36, 37-38.]**

*On Amending G-2.0804 Regarding Freedom of Conscience Regarding the Benefits Plan—From the Presbytery of Stockton.*

The Presbytery of Stockton overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0804 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-2.0804 Terms of Call

“The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister's terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly. *Any installed teaching elder or minister who objects on theological grounds, as a matter of conscience, to provisions of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall have the freedom to have the session reallocate the amount equivalent to the cost of participation in that benefits plan to provide for similar benefits through a third-party provider separate from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*”

**[Comment: In response to the urging of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Board of Pensions has been working to develop a relief of conscience mechanism related to benefits for the same gender domestic partners of plan members. The Board had a special committee that met for a year and has now communicated to plan members and employing organizations offering the opportunity to register an objection. We encourage them in this effort in the interest of maintaining the unity of the Body of Christ.]**

### *Rationale*

Although the current Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) requires all installed teaching elders or ministers to participate in the denomination's benefits plan, some individuals who serve Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations object to the broadening of benefits to include services or persons whose beliefs or practices are theologically incompatible with their own. In keeping with the new missional emphasis of PC(USA), permitting an individual to utilize a different benefits plan will allow that person to focus on furthering the work of the Church universal without penalty, specifically in cases in which that individual disagrees theologically with the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A

critical concern for individual teaching elders and ministers is that their theological beliefs continue to be respected by allowing a different benefits plan.

This amendment guarantees that individual will be permitted to exercise their freedom of conscience in considering their benefits plan with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or with a third-party provider.

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**Concurrence to Item 20-11 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 20-11**

*Advice on Item 20-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to disapprove Item 20-11.

*Rationale*

The overture would add a sentence to the current text of G-2.0804 permitting a teaching elder in an installed position to “have the session re-allocate” the cost of participation in the Board of Pensions Benefits Plan for the purchase of similar benefits from a third-party provider outside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). There are multiple constitutional problems with this overture.

First, the proposed amendment would provide that the pastor can “have the session allocate” certain funds. A simple reading implies that the pastor can dictate the allocation of session funds set aside for the payment of Benefit Plan dues, under the terms of G-2.0804. This represents a significant misreading of the authority of the pastor as moderator of the session, and of the congregation’s right to determine the terms of the pastoral call (*Book of Order*, G-1.0503b and c). It is not clear whether the intent of “reallocation” is that the pastor and/or session might act without the knowledge and approval of the congregation as regards participation in the Board of Pensions, but if so the action would appear to contravene the right of the congregation to approve the terms of call.

Second, the overture undercuts the role of the presbytery in approving terms of call. Terms of call are not set at the sole discretion of sessions and/or congregations, but are also subject to the approval of the presbytery (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0301a: “establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them; G-3.0307: “... presbytery’s oversight of ... approval of calls for pastoral services and invitations for temporary pastoral services ...”, and G-2.0502: “... no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery”). It is not clear whether the intent of the overture is that the session might be empowered to reallocate funds solely at the request of the teaching elder in the installed relationship. If so, it contravenes the authority of the presbytery to approve such calls, including the requirement of the present paragraph (*Book of Order*, G-2.0804) that calls “shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery.”

Third, the Benefits Plan already provides for “relief of conscience” around issues of abortion. Because calls are not merely the prerogative of the individual congregation, but also require the approval of the presbytery, obtaining this relief requires the approval of the presbytery, as well. The proposed language would circumvent presbytery’s approval, thereby undermining the shared nature of the call.

Fourth, by making participation in the Benefits Plan a matter of individual choice, the overture undercuts the role of the General Assembly. “The General Assembly is the council of the whole church, and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ...” (*Book of Order*, G-3.0501). This basic ecclesiological fact is the reason why the approval of the General Assembly is required on certain changes to the Benefits Plan offered through the Board of Pensions; such a plan is a plan for the whole church, and requires the participation of the whole church. Opting out of the plan on an individual basis places the choice of the individual teaching elder in a position of priority over the interests of the whole church as expressed through the actions of the General Assembly.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 20-11**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 20-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) disapprove Item 20-11.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) concurs with the comments of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on this item.

The ACWC also concurs with the comments of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, but sees the impact of the relief of conscience from coverage by the Board of Pensions Plan to be broader and less well-defined than the single issue of abortion coverage.

The ACWC objects to the overture because it is vague, unworkable, impractical, and discriminatory. The ACWC views the impact and extent of the ‘theological incompatibility’ as described in the rationale for the overture as limited only to the theology of an individual teaching elder. The theological objection is not limited to a certain procedure or type of medical procedure but is intended to include theological objections to “persons whose beliefs or practices are theologically incompatible with those of” the teaching elder seeking exemption from the Plan. We remind the commissioners that the Plan covers not only other teaching elders but also employees of churches, counsels, agencies, and programs of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their families without regard to the beliefs or practices of the program participants—many of whom are not Presbyterian.

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### BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 20-11

*Comment on Item 20-11—From the Board of Pensions (BOP).*

The Board of Pensions (the “Board”) advises that Item 20-11 be disapproved.

The overture would allow an exception to the participation mandate provision of the *Book of Order*, as a matter of conscience. In its consultation with representatives of the presbytery, the Board of Pensions heard that the intent of the overture is to reverse the effect of the action of the Board of Pensions to extend benefits for same-gender couples in response to the 219th General Assembly (2010) on Item 18-06 (see the Board of Pensions’ comment on Item 18-06 for more information, *Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 1302–1303 of the electronic copy). The action of the Board of Pensions to extend benefits to same-gender spouses and domestic partners in legally sanctioned partnerships was taken in response to a direct urging by the General Assembly and consistent with earlier General Assembly actions that have, since the 1970s, called for equal civil rights for gays and lesbians. As early as the 190th General Assembly (1978), the UPCUSA called on “Presbyterians to work for the passage of laws that prohibit discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations based on the sexual orientation of a person” (*Minutes*, 1978, Part I, p. 266).

The Board of Pensions respects the views of persons whose conscience is offended by certain provisions of the Benefits Plan. In that regard, the Board of Pensions develops and maintains processes to protect the conscience of individuals who participate in the Benefits Plan. For example, the Board of Pensions has maintained the Relief of Conscience administrative process relating to the coverage of abortion-related procedures by the Medical Plan since 1995. The Board of Pensions’ comment on Item 18-06 (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 1302–1303 of the electronic copy) regarding the extension of benefits to the same-gender domestic partners of plan members includes a commitment to continue work on the development of a relief of conscience process as further financial information becomes available to the Board of Pensions.

The Board regrets that our members might be faced with a decision that pits their conscience against their own welfare and that of their families, but notes that the benefits provided are consistent in every respect with the urgings and policies of the denomination as expressed by its General Assemblies over the years.

While the Board recognizes that employee benefits are available in the commercial marketplace, the unique provisions of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are not available commercially.

The Board of Pensions supports disapproval of the overture for three overriding reasons:

- The mandate is an essential part of Presbyterian polity that defines the PC(USA) as a connectional denomination as distinguished from a congregational denomination.
- The overture is not in the best interests of the community of members of the Benefits Plan.
- The Board of Pensions continues to seek a relief of conscience mechanism related to benefits for the same-gender domestic partners of plan members.

The Board of Pensions wishes to remind the General Assembly that the current mandate has served both members and employing organizations well to several ends:

- The Benefits Plan provides a common level of benefits to called and installed clergy that is an integral part of their terms of call and total compensation package.
- The Benefits Plan is a portable benefits package that members take with them from call to call, often across state lines, without breaks in service or loss of benefits.

- The Benefits Plan is grounded in “Call Neutrality” so that Plan members do not have to “negotiate” benefits for themselves or their family as they move to a new call. Call Neutrality also provides the same benefits for all members and their families regardless of the member’s marital status, gender, age, ethnicity, or any other basis for inappropriate discrimination.

- The Benefits Plan reflects the connectional nature of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through “The Community Nature of the Plan” so that benefits for the lower paid and higher paid are the same, and that the cost of benefits is borne in proportion to the effective salary of the participants. The Community Nature provides subsidized pension, death, and disability benefits to half of the Plan membership, and also provides excellent full family medical coverage to every Plan member at a price to employing organizations that is substantially discounted from premiums required by commercial insurers for equivalent coverage.

- The Benefits Plan avoids adverse selection in the Medical Plan, thus contributing to the solvency and cost effectiveness of the Medical Plan. It is a fact that several denominational healthcare plans have become insolvent because of the high risks that result from adverse selection. One other denomination has recently adopted a mandate precisely to avoid the risk of insolvency. The constitutional mandate avoids this risk because the dues paid on account of healthy members help fund the claims of those needing medical care.

- There is no equivalent Benefits Plan available in the commercial market.

- The Pension Plan provides permanent increases in the pension credits of active members and the pensions of retired members when investment returns are sufficient to both safely fund the Pension Plan and share the gains with the membership.

- The Benefits Plan provides generous survivor benefits to members at dues rates that are 1/3 the rates of similar commercial plans.

- The Benefits Plan provides increases in payments to disabled members from time-to-time to take account of pay increases they may have earned had they not been disabled.

The Board of Pensions also reminds the General Assembly that consideration of this topic does not begin with this overture. Attempts to construe the language of the *Book of Order* that mandates participation in the Benefits Plan to permit the exclusion of dues payments by certain employing organizations were made in:

- 1985,
- 1990,
- 1991, and
- 2004.

The wisdom of the PC(USA) in approving mandated participation in the Benefits Plan for teaching elders in installed positions has been validated by the church time and again.

To permit members or sessions to opt out of participation in the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA) for any objection of theological grounds would

- be a dramatic change in the fundamental polity of the denomination,
- compromise and jeopardize the theological foundation of the community nature of the Benefits Plan,
- work against the interests of those Plan members who depart the Plan, imposing on them an extreme hardship because equivalent benefits are not otherwise available, and
- create the opportunity for significant adverse selection in the Medical Plan of the Board of Pensions.

## Item 20-12

[The assembly approved Item 20-12. See pp. 36, 38.]

*Commissioner Resolution. On Shared Benefits Plan.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) requests that the Stated Clerk do the following:**

- 1. In consultation and with the support of the Board of Pensions, initiate conversations with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (EC), and other possible partners for the purpose of sharing a benefits plan consistent with the values and principles of the present Board of Pensions Plan.**



**2. Report (within one year) to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly the result of these conversations, specifically for the purpose of suggesting possible actions by the 221st General Assembly (2014) that would lead to such a shared benefits plan.**

### *Rationale*

The economic climate in the United States has caused the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to rethink significant fiscal matters that lie ahead of us.

The Board of Pensions has identified the challenges of declining plan membership that threatens the future of the Plan viability as we have known it.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) finds itself in the context of significant changes in denominational relationships.

Divisions in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) require us to consider reconciliatory initiatives that will give witness to the unity of the church across denominational lines.

David Dobi, Presbytery of Shenango  
Gary Davis, Presbytery of Great Rivers

### **ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 20-12**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 20-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The ACSWP counsels the following considerations:

The continuing economic crisis is eroding the financial position of many churches. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) is concerned that the church's economic witness and equity among ministers be a part of any planning for the long-term benefit of its ministers.

Every institution with pension liabilities is doing future planning; we appreciate the strength of the Board of Pensions established to sustain the ministers and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We also understand that in most cases when employees leave the service of a given employer, that employer ceases to contribute pension dues, and that this currently holds for pastors leaving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for other denominations.

The conversation proposed is about sharing (or extending) a benefits plan with two particular denominations composed in part of former PC(USA) congregations and ministers not in accord with some of "the values and principles" of the PC(USA) itself. Thus, if the conversation is worth having, it might conceivably also include other Presbyterian denominations composed partly of former PC(USA) members: the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in America. The broader question is whether this conversation is being proposed in order to open the door to detaching the Board of Pensions from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at some future point.

A different approach would look at pension fund planning with communion partner denominations; the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) might also be considered.

At the time of reunion, the pension plans of both the former UPCUSA and PCUS were joined. Lessons from this process are certainly still relevant for future planning and consideration of any merger with less financially strong pension plans.

## **Item 20-13**

**[The assembly approved Item 20-13. See pp. 36, 38.]**

2. *2010 Referral. Item 18-12. Recommendation that the Board of Pensions Develop a Plan to Ensure That Funds from Any Relief of Conscience Churches Do Not Go to Fund Abortions Through Any Avenue (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1313 of the electronic version). [This referral was removed from the consent agenda and was sent to 20. Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Foundations, and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation as Item 20-13.]*

*Response:* The scope of such a plan would be far beyond the reach of the Board of Pensions. As contemplated by the 219th General Assembly (2010), such a plan would require that any dollar that passed through a Relief of Conscience employing organization be insulated from paying for an abortion at any time in the future.

While the Board of Pensions is vigilant to ensure that claims that may be for the elective termination of a pregnancy are not paid from the dues remitted by Relief of Conscience employing organizations to the Board of Pensions, the Board of Pen-

sions has no control over funds expended by Relief of Conscience employing organizations for anything other than those dues. Dollars spent by Relief of Conscience employing organizations to purchase goods and services as varied as insurance, utilities, music, and communion supplies may be expended by their next holder for any legal purpose. The Board of Pensions has no means to control these many avenues through which funds from Relief of Conscience employing organizations may go to fund abortions.

## Item 20-14

[The assembly approved Item 20-14. See pp. 36, 38.]

*Board of Pensions' Response to 2010 Referral: Item 18-06: On Directing the Board of Pensions to Extend Benefits to Same-Gender Spouses and Domestic Partners.*

In response to Item 18-06, the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the following resolution:

1. Urge the Board of Pensions to adopt amendments to the Benefits Plan to extend eligibility for spousal and dependent benefits under the Plan to Benefits Plan members, their same-gender domestic partners, and the children of their same-gender domestic partners, on the same basis as, and equivalent to, benefits made available to Benefits Plan members, their spouses, and the children of their spouses.

2. Approve an increase in dues for the Benefits Plan of up to 1 percent, effective January 1, 2012, to be allocated among the plans of the Board of Pensions, including but not limited to the Pension Plan, as the Board, in its sole discretion, deems necessary to fund the cost of the additional benefits. Should the Board not implement these benefits for any reason, approval of the increase in dues is rescinded.

Comment: That the Board of Pensions be highly urged to provide relief of conscience, to be implemented simultaneously with these actions, for those congregations for whom these actions cause a moral dilemma.

In response to this referral, in October 2010, the chair of the Board of Pensions (the "Board") appointed a Special Committee of the Board to consider the matter. Following consideration of comments solicited and received from individuals and churches within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), consideration of financial issues, and consideration of the existing legal environment including both federal and state laws, the special committee reported to the Board in October 2011 and March 2012.

Upon receiving those reports, the Board, on March 3, 2012, acted to adopt amendments to the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as follows:

### A. Definition of Spouse

Current Definition: The Benefits Plan defines "Spouse" as follows: "an individual who is legally married to a Member." Sec. 2.1"

Proposed Amendment: "an individual who is legally married to a Member in a marriage that conforms to the definition of marriage in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."

### B. Definition of Qualified Domestic Partner

New Definition:

QUALIFIED DOMESTIC PARTNER" is an individual who is in a legally sanctioned same-gender union with a Member affording rights of inheritance under the laws of the jurisdiction where the union occurred."

### C. Definition of Covered Partner

New Definition:

COVERED PARTNER. A Spouse or a Qualified Domestic Partner

### D. Definition of Children

Current Definition: "CHILDREN (OR CHILD). A Member's children (natural children, legally adopted children or stepchildren) for each of whom the Member is providing at least fifty percent (50%) support. For purposes of eligibility for coverage as a dependent under the Medical Plan, the support requirement is not applicable, except in the case of extended coverage for an adult child with a total disability." Sec. 2.1

Amendment: "CHILDREN (OR CHILD). A Member's children (natural children, legally adopted children or stepchildren) for each of whom the Member is providing at least fifty percent (50%) support. Each child of a Qualified Domestic Partner for whom the Member is providing at least fifty percent (50%) support shall have the same rights and benefits as a child of the Member under the Plan. For purposes of eligibility for coverage as a dependent under the Medical Plan, the support requirement is not applicable, except in the case of extended coverage for an adult child with a total disability."

### E. Amendment to Definition of Surviving Spouse.

The Plan currently defines "Surviving Spouse" as "The Spouse of a member on the date of a Member's death who survives the death of the Member." The definition of Surviving Spouse would be deleted from the Plan and replaced with the following new definition:

New Definition: “SURVIVING COVERED PARTNER. The Covered Partner of a Member on the date of a Member’s death who survives the death of the Member.”

F. Definition of Covered Person

The Plan currently defines “Covered Member” as “A Member who is eligible for and currently enrolled in a designated Benefits Plan program or plan and whose dues for such coverage are not delinquent.” Based on this definition, we propose to add a definition to use when the entire family is covered.

New Definition: “COVERED PERSON. A Covered Member, a Covered Partner and their eligible Children and Surviving Covered Partner provided that each individual is enrolled in the Benefits Plan program or plan and the dues required for their coverage, if any, are not delinquent.”

The Board did not approve any increase in dues at this time with respect to this decision.

The Board carefully considered the issue of the “relief of conscience” that was raised in the comment to the General Assembly’s referral on Item 18-06. The Board will monitor the cost of coverage for same-gender domestic partners and their children and consider the relief of conscience issue if and when such costs are determinable.

In adopting these Plan Amendments, the Board believes that it is discharging appropriately its fiduciary duty to Plan members. The Plan Amendments do not risk Plan solvency or stability.

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## Item 20-A

[The assembly approved Item 20-A. See p. 38.]

**The Board of Pensions recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) receive the following report regarding amendments to The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Plan”) and its Bylaws that the Board of Pensions adopted since the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

### *Rationale*

#### Report on Benefits Plan Amendments

##### 1. *Benefits Plan Amendments*

The process for amending the Plan is established in the plan document (Article XIX). The Board has the sole discretion and authority to adopt amendments. Certain amendments to the Pension Plan are not effective until approved by the General Assembly; most amendments are effective on the date specified by the Board and need only be reported to the General Assembly.

- Amendments to the Pension Plan (Articles VI, VII, VIII, and IX) that are in the nature of a benefit reduction or a Pension Plan dues increase are only effective upon approval of the General Assembly. The Board must provide written notice of its intent to submit such Pension Plan amendments to the General Assembly and the Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries at least sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of the General Assembly.
- All other amendments to the Plan adopted by the Board must be reported to the next succeeding General Assembly and to the Members, local churches and presbyteries in a reasonable manner.

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Board has not adopted any amendment to the Pension Plan that requires the approval of General Assembly prior to becoming effective.

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Board granted a disability benefit increase for Plan Years 2010 and 2011 and adopted certain amendments to the Pension, Medical, and Retirement Savings Plans. A summary of the amendments to the Plan is provided below. The effective dates of the amendments are noted. The verbatim text of the Plan amendments is available from the corporate secretary of the Board of Pensions.

A letter advising the Benefits Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries of this report and the amendments was posted to the website of the Board of Pensions on April 16, 2012, and an email was directed to all of the email addresses in the Board of Pensions records advising of that posting. A complete copy of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2012) is also available on the website of the Board at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org) or by calling 1-800-PRES-PLAN (1-800-773-7752).

## 2. *Eligibility Provisions*

At its March, 3, 2012, meeting, the Board of Directors approved, by more than a two-thirds majority of the members present, the following amendments to the eligibility provisions of the Pension, Death and Disability, and Medical Plans to extend coverage to legally sanctioned same-gender domestic partners, and the children of their same gender domestic partners, on as nearly as possible the same basis as, and equivalent to, benefits made available to members and their spouses and children, effective as of January 1, 2013:

- a. An amendment to the definition of “Spouse” in Sec. 2.1 was adopted to conform the definition of the term “marriage” to the term as defined ecclesiastically in the *Book of Order* rather than “marriage” as defined civilly.
- b. New definitions of a “Qualified Domestic Partner” and a “Covered Partner” were added to Sec. 2.1.
- c. The definition of “Children” was amended to address coverage for children of Qualified Domestic Partners.
- d. The term “Surviving Spouse” was changed to “Surviving Covered Partner.”
- e. The term Covered Person was adopted to use throughout Plan documents when referring to a Member’s Covered Partner and their Eligible Family members.

## 3. *Pension Plan Amendments*

a. *Experience Apportionment Grants.* The Pension Plan provides in Sec. 7.3 that the Board may determine, in its sole discretion, that sufficient Pension Plan assets have accumulated, due to favorable investment and actuarial experience, over and above those required for actuarial reserves, general contingency reserves, and other special reserves, to grant an experience apportionment. Due to the impact of the 2008 economic recession, the Board of Pensions determined that there were not sufficient assets in hand at the end of Plan Years 2010 and 2011 as a result of cumulative favorable investment and actuarial experience to grant an experience apportionment in either year.

### b. *Other Pension Plan Amendments*

(1) *Qualified Military Service Provisions:* Secs. 2.1, 6.4, and 9.1 of the Pension Plan were amended effective January 1, 2011, to provide pension and death benefits equivalent to active Plan members in the event of the death of a member on leave to serve in qualified military service.

(2) *Joint and Survivor Options.* Effective January 1, 2012, Secs. 9.1 and 9.4 of the Pension Plan were amended to clarify the benefits payable to a member’s surviving spouse, in the event that the spouse married to the member on the pension benefit commencement date predeceased the member, the member remarried thereafter and then predeceased the new spouse.

## 4. *Death and Disability Plan Amendments*

a. *Disability Benefit Increase.* The Death and Disability Plan provides in Sec. 11.3(h) that the Board may determine, in its sole discretion, that sufficient Death and Disability Plan assets have accumulated, due to favorable investment and actuarial experience, over and above those required for actuarial reserves, general contingency reserves and other special reserves, to grant a disability benefit increase. The Board of Directors determined that the Death and Disability Plan fund had sufficient Death and Disability Plan fund assets and reserves in hand at the conclusion of Plan Years 2010 and 2011 to grant a disability benefit increase each year. The Board approved a one and one-half percent (1.5 percent) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2010, beginning July 1, 2011, and a three percent (3.0 percent) increase in disability benefits for those receiving such benefits on December 31, 2011, beginning July 1, 2012.

b. *Partial Return to Work.* Beginning January 1, 2011, the Board of Directors adopted an amendment to the Death and Disability Plan, Sec. 11.3(f) and 11.7, to permit a disabled member to try to return to work without the loss of benefits.

c. *Suspension or Termination of Benefits Rights Expanded.* Effective January 1, 2011, the Board of Directors adopted an amendment to Sec. 11.9 of the Death and Disability Plan authorizing the Board to suspend benefit payments if the Disabled Member fails or refuses to provide documentation to substantiate his or her current medical or work status.

## 5. *Medical Plan Amendments*

Since the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Board adopted the following amendments to the Medical Plan provisions in response to changes in benefits, vendors and federal and other laws. The substantive amendments were:

a. *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“PPACA”) Reforms.* While many of the coverage reforms in the federal health-care reform legislation do not begin until January 1, 2014, a number of the coverage reforms became effective

immediately (March 31, 2010) or the beginning of the first plan year thereafter (i.e., January 1, 2011, for the Medical Plan). The Board of Pensions adopted the following amendments necessary to comply with the federal health-care reform.

(1) Beginning as of January 1, 2011, Sec. 13.2(c), the Medical Plan eligibility provision was amended to continue coverage for the children of members up to attainment of age 26, regardless of dependency or student status.

(2) Effective January 1, 2011, Sec. 13.2 of the Plan provided that the Medical Plan was a grandfathered plan under PPACA and not required to adopt a number of the PPACA reforms. As of Plan Year 2012, the Board of Directors amended Sec. 13.2, to eliminate the Medical Plan's grandfathered status and became subject to certain required PPACA reforms, including the appeals process described in (5) below.

(3) Beginning as of January 1, 2011, Sec. 13.3 was amended to eliminate the preexisting condition limitations on coverage for children under age 19.

(4) Beginning Plan Year 2011, Sec. 13.9 was amended to eliminate the lifetime maximum benefits provisions; adopt an annual minimum benefit of \$3.5 million dollars, and eliminate the annual maximum benefit amounts for certain essential benefits.

(5) Effective January 1, 2012, the Board of Directors amended Administrative Rule 1201, relating to appeals, to adopt an external review process for the final appeal of Medical Plan claims.

b. *Changes in Medical Plan Member Obligations*

(1) *Medical Plan Participation Basis.* Effective January 1, 2012, the Board amended Sec. 2.1 to change definition of the Medical Plan participation basis to give the Board discretion to establish both a minimum and a maximum amount that were not based on a percentage of the median salary but were fixed amounts. For Plan Year 2012, the Board fixed the minimum and maximum at \$38,000 and \$117,000, respectively.

(2) *Specialist Copayment.* Sec. 13.4(a)(1)(A) was amended effective January 1, 2012, to raise the copayment from \$35 dollars to \$45 dollars for an office visit to a specialist physician.

(3) *Annual Deductibles.* Sec. 13.6(a)(2) was amended effective January 1, 2012, to raise the deductible for network and non-network medical costs from 1 percent to 1.25 percent and for out-of-network medical costs from 2 percent to 2.5 percent. The annual deductible is capped at 2.5 percent of medical costs and no more than 70 percent of the maximum Medical Participation Basis.

(4) *Maximum Annual Out of Pocket Costs*

Sec. 13.6 was amended to provide that

(a) Effective as of January 1, 2013, the annual copayment maximum for Network and Non-Network Medical Costs was changed to 5 percent of the lesser of the member's Medical Participation Basis or 150 percent of the Pastors' Median, and

(b) Effective as of January 1, 2013, the annual copayment maximum for Out-of-Network Medical Costs was changed to 15 percent of the lesser of the member's Medical Participation Basis or 150 percent of the Pastors' Median.

c. *In vitro fertilization.* Effective January 1, 2011, Sec. 13.1(l)(21) was amended to clarify that charges for advanced reproductive technology, including in-vitro fertilization (IVF), zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT), gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), cryopreserved embryo transfers, intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), or ovum microsurgery; and for the supplies and prescription drugs related to such therapies, are covered by the Medical Plan subject to the limitations in Sec. 13.9(b)(2).

d. *Medicare Part D Plan.* To maximize the federal subsidies available to employers offering retiree medical coverage, the Board contracted with Express Scripts to offer a Part D Prescription Drug Plan with wrap around benefits effective January 1, 2012. The Prescription Drug Program provisions of the Medicare Supplement Plan were amended accordingly.

6. *Retirement Savings Plan*

Under the authority granted in Article XVII of the Benefits Plan, the Board of Pensions administers an optional defined contribution known as the Retirement Savings Plan ("Savings Plan").

a. The Plan was amended effective January 1, 2010, to clarify the administration of the inservice plan-to-plan transfer provision of the Savings Plan.

b. *Required Minimum Distribution Relief.* The Savings Plan was amended effective as of January 1, 2009, to provide required minimum distribution relief to participants for the 2009 calendar year, as permitted under the Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act of 2010.

Complete copies of the Savings documents, as well as the verbatim text of the amendment described above, are available from the Board's website or upon request from the corporate secretary.

#### 7. *Report on Amendments to the Bylaws*

The Board of Pensions reports that it adopted amendments to the bylaws to conform them to the new Form of Government and an amendment to the description of the Assistance Committee to delegate the authority to approve homes budgets to the committee.

## Item 20-Info

### A. *Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Agency Summary*

#### 1. *Mission Statement*

A vital part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation cultivates, attracts, and manages financial resources of individuals and institutions to serve Christ's mission.

#### 2. *Summary*

The Presbyterian Foundation was established in 1799 to raise and safeguard funds for mission. We work with congregations, councils, agencies, and other entities to ensure that they have resources for mission today, tomorrow, and two hundred years from now.

From such humble beginnings more than 200 years ago, the Presbyterian Foundation has grown to become one of the nation's largest religious foundations.

The Foundation is committed to strengthening congregations, presbyteries, synods, the General Assembly, seminaries, colleges and universities, retirement communities, and other agencies of the church by developing gifts and managing funds on their behalf. The Foundation is here to serve the church and its mission.

Our nationwide staff of ministry relationship officers works with pastors, ministry leaders, and individual donors to develop communities of Christian generosity in support of Christ's mission in the world.

In countless ways, the Foundation offers charitable expertise and services that unite and empower Presbyterians and the ministries about which they are passionate. We strive to do so in a trustworthy, clear, and accessible manner that reflects the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s faith-based values.

The Foundation has much to offer the church:

*Stability.* The Foundation has been bringing together people and mission for more than two centuries. One of six national agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation is composed of highly skilled officers and support staff trained in the area of gift administration and compliance, accounting, law, marketing, and a specialized group of ministry relationship officers located around the country to better serve the church.

*Connection.* We work in leadership and partnership with the whole denomination to fund its mission. The Foundation does not compete with local congregations or any other institution of the church for charitable gifts. To the contrary, we are committed to strengthening these entities by developing gifts and managing funds on their behalf.

*Commitment.* We provide all Presbyterians with an avenue to realize their philanthropic goals through a variety of giving options. We maintain a strong focus on the Presbyterian values and principles that drive our stewardship initiatives.

#### a. *Ministry Relationships*

The Foundation remains true to its original charge from the 1799 General Assembly to solicit from individuals and congregations "pious donations and bequests in order to supply the funds which are absolutely necessary to carry on with advantage the great and charitable work" of the church.

Our nationwide staff of ministry relationship officers works with pastors, ministry leaders, and individual donors to cultivate funds for mission and build communities of generosity throughout the church. Combining decades of pastoral and de-

velopment experience, the officers help church leaders assess the financial health, generosity capacity, and stewardship practices of their congregations, then build on their strengths and address their weaknesses.

b. *Project ReGeneration*

Faithful stewardship of church resources always looks to the future because congregations go through life cycles. The closing of a church building can mean more than the end of a previously vibrant ministry. It can also mean the opportunity for the sale or transformation of that property into funds for new ministry. It can mean freeing an existing congregation from the burden of supporting a facility that no longer serves its mission needs.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation is partnering with churches and presbyteries across the denomination to discover and explore creative options for ministries that need adequate funding in order to grow and prosper. Endowment funds are among the many options available to leave a lasting legacy of the faith community by naming a ministry and specific purpose for the use of the fund and provide support in perpetuity.

c. *Presbyterian Community*

Presbyterians are generous by nature—we are passionate about mission and give joyfully to the projects, causes, and organizations that touch our hearts and engage our minds.

To help expedite that generosity, the Foundation has created *The Presbyterian Community*—a web-based giving hub with tools to facilitate easy online donations. We are excited about offering this important tool to our generous community.

Presbyterians can use the *Community* to discover and fund churches and charities that are sharing their gifts to heal the sick, feed the hungry, clothe and shelter the poor, educate and build up their communities, and promote the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

d. *Wills Emphasis*

Annually, the Presbyterian Foundation offers a Wills Emphasis program to congregations throughout the denomination. At the program's beginning in the 1950s, wills were the main focus of gift development. Currently, that focus has shifted to remembering the church in estate planning. While simple bequests in a will are still important, now the Foundation can provide guidance for complex estate plans in coordination with an individual's tax and legal advisors.

To complement congregation-based bequest and planned giving efforts, available program resources include a leadership guide, bulletin inserts, bulletin covers, poster, and bookmarks. These materials are provided free of charge to any Presbyterian congregation—the only expenses are the shipping and handling costs.

e. *A Change in Investment Management*

Over the past two years, the Foundation leadership spent considerable time in congregations and middle governing bodies across the country asking how we might best serve our church and constituents. These conversations clearly indicated a desire for better church relations, investment performance, and more timely and high-quality reporting regarding investment performance and market conditions. Constituents also expressed a desire to see the Foundation focus on how it might best fulfill its mission to the church.

During that time, we carefully and comprehensively evaluated various investment-related approaches, and determined that the Foundation would do best to spend its time advancing the church's mission while allowing trusted expert partners to manage the investments overseen by the Foundation.

To that end, the Foundation has partnered with Cambridge Associates, a world-class investment firm with expertise in managing foundation and endowment assets, to manage the permanent assets entrusted to us.

To learn more about the Presbyterian Foundation, visit our website at [www.PresbyterianFoundation.org](http://www.PresbyterianFoundation.org) or call 800-858-6127.

**B. *Report of the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.***

New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. (NCTC), a subsidiary of the Presbyterian Foundation, was chartered January 2, 1998. The company serves as trustee of various types of trust instruments in which there is a Presbyterian or Presbyterian-related beneficial interest and provides investment management services. The NCTC's board has enacted policies and procedures to ensure compliance with banking laws and provides oversight of the delivery of services to the Presbyterian community.

Until February 22, 2012, NCTC, through its department, One Compass Advisors, served as the registered investment adviser to New Covenant Funds. On November 19, 2011, the New Covenant Funds board voted to select SEI Investments Management Corporation (“SIMC”) to serve as the investment adviser to the Funds, subject to shareholder approval. The NCTC’s parent corporation, the Presbyterian Foundation, supported this change as part of its effort to listen to the feedback of its constituency and to simplify the Foundation’s structure. The NCTC will continue to provide shareholder services to New Covenant Funds, including providing social witness guidelines to SIMC so that the funds can continue to be invested according to Presbyterian principles. The NCTC and the Foundation remain committed to New Covenant Funds and the important purpose they serve. For additional information regarding the New Covenant Funds, please visit their website, [www.newcovenantfunds.com](http://www.newcovenantfunds.com).

The Foundation and NCTC consistently strive to deliver superior service to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and seek to enhance the vehicles available to Presbyterians to express their Christian faith and generous stewardship. We partner with Presbyterian and related organizations in the delivery of enhanced trust services, such as personal trusts, wholly charitable trusts, and charitable remainder trusts. The NCTC accepts IRA accounts and provides life and legacy financial planning. These estate-planning devices provide an opportunity to care for loved ones while providing for planned giving opportunities.

In response to changing needs, including a new business plan and reduced budget, in December 2011 the Foundation, as the majority shareholder of NCTC, reduced the size of NCTC’s board of directors and elected a new slate of directors.

### ***C. The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 2010–2011 Agency Summary***

*Marking the 295th Anniversary of the beginning of the work now carried on by this Board and presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012) meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 30–July 7, 2012.*

The responsibilities assigned to the Board of Pensions by the General Assembly are

- the design and administration of a comprehensive program of retirement, death, disability, medical, and optional benefits for ministers, missionaries, and other church workers;
- the design and administration of a program of financial assistance to help meet needs that are beyond the scope of the pension and benefits program;
- the establishment and operation of a retirement housing program for eligible retirees and their spouses; and
- the receipt, investment, and disbursement of the funds required to support these plans and programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of members and beneficiaries of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other beneficiaries of the assistance and retirement housing programs.

This report incorporates by reference the 2010 Annual Report and 2011 Annual Review of The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in which the financial information for the Board of Pensions and the Plans and Programs it administers is presented.

#### *1. The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides pension benefits, death and disability benefits, medical benefits, optional benefits (supplemental death benefits, supplemental disability benefits, dental coverage, long-term care insurance, and a retirement savings plan), and a retirement and financial planning education program. The *Book of Order* (G-2.0804) mandates that all teaching elders (ministers of the Word and Sacrament) in installed positions must participate in the Benefits Plan. A particular church may also enroll other church employees in the Benefits Plan. Teaching elders in non-installed positions and employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or affiliated organizations may also be enrolled in the Benefits Plan.

The Affiliated Benefits Program (ABP) offers the same benefits, including the Retirement Savings Plan but excluding the Pension Plan, to employing organizations for certain non-mandated employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or affiliated organizations.

The 215th General Assembly (2003) approved changes to the Benefits Plan amendment process to accommodate biennial meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The right to amend the Benefits Plan is reserved solely to the Board of Pensions. Amendments to the Plan that constitute a reduction in Pension Plan benefits or an increase in Pension Plan dues are effective only upon approval by the General Assembly. The bylaws of the Board of Pensions require approval of a two-thirds majority of directors present at a duly constituted meeting to amend the Pension Plan except for a benefit reduction or a dues increase (which amendments require the approval of the General Assembly). The Board of Pensions must provide sixty days’ notice to the General Assembly, Plan members, local churches, and presbyteries of any amendment requiring General Assembly approval and reasonable notice of any other amendment to the Benefits Plan. These amendments are detailed in Item 20-A, Report on Benefits Plan Amendments.



## 2. *The Community Nature of the Benefits Plan*

The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), administered by the Board of Pensions, is designed to care for and protect the community of Benefits Plan members as a whole.

An employing organization's cost of providing benefits for its employees enrolled for pension, medical, death, and disability benefits is not based on their marital status, gender, family size, or age. The dues contributed by the employing organization are instead based on a percentage of the participating members' salaries and represent that organization's share of the cost of protecting the entire community. The salaries used to determine the dues for the Pension Plan, the Death and Disability Plan, and the Medical Plan are subject to both minimum and maximum salary amounts.

In order to assist lower-paid employees, no employee accrues benefits at less than the median salary for his or her employment classification (i.e., teaching elder, lay exempt, lay nonexempt). Deductibles and copayment maximums are also set as a percentage of salary to lessen the impact on lower-paid members. In order to contain members' out-of-pocket healthcare costs, there are caps on medical deductibles and copayment expenses for higher paid members.

Affiliated Benefits Program medical dues are uniformly determined based on the medical claims experience of the overall group. Dues for individual members are based on the specific cost-sharing policy of their employing organization and the participation levels selected by the member. Some members may choose employee-only coverage, while others may choose to cover an entire family. This flexibility is one of the key advantages of the Affiliated Benefits Program.

## 3. *Pension Plan and Death and Disability Plan*

Towers Watson, actuarial advisors for the Board of Pensions, reported that there continued to be sufficient funds on hand to meet the obligations to current and future retirees and disabled members as of December 31, 2011, the most recent valuation of the programs.

### a. *Pension Experience Apportionment and Disability Benefit Increases*

Each year the directors of the Board of Pensions have the responsibility of determining whether the Pension Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should grant an experience apportionment. An experience apportionment is a permanent increase in the retirement benefits of all Plan members, including active, retired, and terminated vested members, and eligible survivors.

The decision to grant an apportionment is a way for the Pension Plan to share favorable actuarial and investment experience with Plan members. This sharing of experience is an unusual, if not unique, feature of the Pension Plan. It involves a balance between near-term benefit improvement and long-term security of future benefits.

The Board of Pensions has several overriding objectives in determining the experience apportionment:

- maintain the solvency of the Pension Plan,
- protect the benefits of both active and retired Pension Plan members against the impact of inflation, and
- achieve generational equity—meaning that, on a cumulative basis throughout its active and retirement years, one group of Pension Plan members should not fare materially better or worse in the granting of apportionments than any other group.

Unlike the Pension Plan experience apportionment, the disability benefit increase applies only to benefits currently being paid to disabled members. Most active members will not become disabled and will never receive disability benefits.

The purpose of granting a disability benefit increase is to protect the benefits paid to disabled members against the impact of inflation. Other than determining the adequacy of the contingency reserve to support the granting of an increase, the key considerations in arriving at an appropriate recommendation for a disability benefit increase are the annual change in cost of living and the rate at which the incomes of active church workers are increasing.

For descriptions of the processes used in determining whether to grant an experience apportionment or a disability benefit increase, see Item 20-A, Report on Benefits Plan Amendments of this report. The decisions made in 2010 and 2011 are described in detail there.

### (1) *History of the Pension Apportionments and Disability Benefit Increases*

In the table below, the recent experience apportionments and disability benefit increases are compared to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a government-issued measure of inflation in consumer goods and services.

<b>Experience Apportionments and Disability Benefit Increases Compared to Consumer Price Index 2004-2011</b>								
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Pension*	3.0%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Disability*	3.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	0%	3.0%	1.5%	3.0%
CPI	3.3%	3.4%	2.5%	4.1%	0.1%	2.7%	1.5%	3.0%
* Experience apportionments and disability benefit increases become effective the year following the year shown.								

(2) *Impact of Experience Apportionments*

For the years 2002 through 2011, the following table shows the number of teaching elder plan members with at least fifteen years of service who retired at or after age sixty-five and the average annual amount of their pensions at the time of retirement. By applying the experience apportionments granted over the past ten years, the Pension Plan has been able to fulfill its intent to shelter both pension credits and retirement income from the inroads of inflation. The average pension with an inflationary increase based solely on the CPI is shown for comparison.

<b>Average Annual Pensions (2000-2011)</b>				
			<b>Value of Average Pension in 2011</b>	
<b>Year of Retirement</b>	<b>Number of Retirements</b>	<b>Average Annual Plan Pension at Retirement</b>	<b>Reflecting Inflationary Increases</b>	<b>Reflecting Experience Apportionments</b>
2002	151	30,039	37,494	35,193
2003	172	32,015	39,215	37,508
2004	129	31,822	37,734	35,661
2005	133	32,186	36,910	33,893
2006	123	35,158	39,335	37,844
2007	141	32,763	35,212	34,008
2008	156	35,054	37,637	35,054
2009	136	37,256	38,949	37,256
2010	138	34,954	36,003	34,954
2011	140	35,302		

b. *Other Changes to the Pension Plan, Death and Disability Plan, and Optional Programs*

Details of other changes made to the Pension and Death and Disability Plans and various Optional Programs are offered in the Board of Pensions' recommendation regarding the amendments to the Benefits Plan (Item 20-A, Report on Benefits Plan Amendments of this report).

4. *Medical Plan*

a. *Plan Financing*

Financially, 2010 was a pivotal year for the Medical Plan. For the first time in recent history, expenses, which include both claims and administrative expenses, exceeded dues income. In part, this reflected the intentional decision to hold dues to 19.5 percent of effective salary for the fourth consecutive year because of historically strong reserve levels. Rising medical trends, influenced by a higher number of catastrophic claims in 2010, contributed to a 5.8 percent increase in total expenses over the 2009 Plan Year. The 2010 claim expense included the cost of plan simplification, achieved by a series of plan changes, approved by the Board of Directors and detailed in the 2010 Report to the General Assembly, as well as the first year cost of the expanded habilitative service benefits for children with certain developmental disabilities. Similarly, in 2011, with modest provisional changes that were required under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), plan expenses increased another 4 percent. The dues percentage again remained flat, which contributed to a net loss of just over \$12 million for the 2011 plan year.

Erosion of reserve levels, a shrinking dues base, an aging population, a volatile economic environment, and the uncertainty created by Healthcare Reform are some of the principal factors considered by the Board of Directors when they approved the first Traditional Medical Plan dues increase in five years, effective January 1, 2012. Dues for Active Medical Plan members were increased to 20.25 percent of effective salary, effective January 1, 2012, and will be increased to 21 percent of effective salary, effective January 1, 2013. The Minimum and Maximum Medical Plan dues basis increased as follows:

Effective Date	Minimum Dues Basis		Maximum Dues Basis	
	From	To	From	To
January 1, 2012	65% of Pastor's median (\$34,385)	\$38,000	200% of Pastor's median (\$105,800)	\$117,000
January 1, 2013	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$117,000	\$124,000

Concurrently, the Board of Directors approved increased member cost share through the following Medical Plan design changes:

Effective Date	Provision	From	To
January 1, 2012	Annual Deductible	1% of effective salary in-network 2% of effective salary out-of-network	1.25% of effective salary in-network 2.50% of effective salary out-of-network
January 1, 2012	In-Network Office Co-pays	\$25 Primary Care Physician \$35 Specialist	\$25 Primary Care Physician \$45 Specialist
January 1, 2013	Annual Family Copayment Maximum	4% of effective salary in-network 12% of effective salary out-of-network	5% of effective salary in-network 15% of effective salary out-of-network

It should be noted that, despite these economic results, the *Book of Order* participation mandate for those teaching elders in installed positions (G-2.0804) continues to play a significant role in the relative stability of plan cost through the avoidance of adverse selection by members who might otherwise pick and choose coverage, based on their individual health needs.

The enrollment flexibility that characterizes the Affiliated Benefits Program (ABP) as well as size of the covered population creates a bit more volatility for this self-supporting component of the Medical Plan. Annual dues increases were approved for this program in both 2010 and 2011 for the 2011 and 2012 plan years respectively. Specifically, the board of directors approved an increase of 4.4 percent, effective January 1, 2011, and an additional increase of just under 7 percent, effective January 1, 2012. Affected employing organizations largely reported, though, that these increases were more modest than those imposed by insurance carriers on other small employers in their geographical markets, making this a reliable and stable plan choice for them. Enrollment in this program, which now stands at approximately 2,400 members, has been steadily increasing for the past several years.

The Medicare Supplement Dues have been modestly increased in each of the past three years—2.6 percent effective January 1, 2010; 3 percent, effective January 1, 2011; and 4.9 percent, effective January 1, 2012. Contributing to the ability to hold these costs at a relatively stable level, despite the erosion of vacancy dues and investment earnings, were decreasing prescription drug trends and continued qualification for federal subsidies.

Coverage costs for members who retire before achieving Medicare eligibility and rely on the Medical Continuation program increased by 7 percent each year during this same period.

#### b. *Healthcare Reform*

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), signed into law in March 2010, has resulted in both incremental design and administrative changes for the Medical Plan and has raised some practical and philosophical questions about the plan's future. Better known as Healthcare Reform, the act ushered in many changes that will take place over the next decade. At its foundation, the law was designed to provide all Americans with access to affordable quality health care, but in its final form, is likely to alter—in some cases significantly—the current employer-based system. Unlike predecessor laws affecting benefit programs, Healthcare Reform did not include any exemptions or exceptions for church plans. Regulations, which have been issued incrementally, required action by the board of directors at several of its meetings in 2010 and 2011. The specific regulations that have affected the plan are summarized below:

Provision	Description	Effective Date and Impact
Extension of coverage to adult children	Coverage for adult children to the age of 26 must be provided without regard to financial dependency or marital status.	Effective January 1, 2011. The Board assumed coverage responsibility for approximately 1,250 adult children not previously eligible. Did not result in increased dues for members.
Early Retiree Reinsurance Program	Government sponsored program providing reinsurance protection to plans covering pre-Medicare eligible retirees.	Established in June 2011. The Board qualified for over \$700,000, which will be used to offset this expense.

Pre-Existing Condition Exclusion	No pre-existing condition limitation may be imposed on dependent children under the age of 19.	Effective January 1, 2011. Plan amended and Board assumed additional liability with no corresponding dues adjustment.
Prohibition on Lifetime Dollar Maximums	A plan may not have lifetime limits on the dollar value of any benefits for any participant.	Effective January 1, 2011. Plan amended to remove the \$3.5 million lifetime limit. Corresponding liability insignificant.
Rescission of Coverage	Coverage may only be retroactively terminated under very restrictive circumstances.	Effective January 1, 2011. Administrative Practices altered and plan absorbed risk.
Preventive Care Standards	Plan must provide 100% coverage for prescribed preventive care services.	Effective January 1, 2011, for non-grandfathered plans; effective January 1, 2013, for all plans, coupled with expanded definition of preventive care services for women. Board's historical commitment to preventive care resulted in early compliance and no additional risk.
Appeals Process	Plan must have an internal claims appeal process that complies with Section 503 of ERISA and a federal external review process.	Effective January 1, 2011 with a non-enforcement grace period until July 1, 2011, for non-grandfathered plans. January 1, 2012, compliance date for Board.
Grandfather Status	Plans in effect on March 23, 2010, had option to establish grandfather status with more limited compliance obligations on a temporary basis.	Benefits Plan amended January 1, 2011, to reflect Grandfather status; reversed effective January 1, 2012.

In light of the impact of Healthcare Reform on Medicare and Medicare Part D (prescription drug benefits), the board of directors also approved the implementation of an Employer Group Waiver Program, effective January 1, 2012, with Express Scripts. Under this arrangement, which essentially establishes the prescription drug coverage offered as part of the Medicare Supplement as its own qualified Medicare Part D plan, the Board of Pensions is entitled to significantly higher federal subsidies. The estimated 2012 subsidy gain of approximately \$3 million was used as a direct offset in the dues calculation for the Medicare Supplement Program.

As the regulatory process continues to evolve, the focus of the Board of Pensions will be on both the additional incremental requirements and the longer term impact of a reformed healthcare system on the Benefits Plan. Staff will work collaboratively with other major denominational medical plans to develop and implement work plans, policies, procedures, and communication approaches that respond appropriately to the evolving rules and regulations. At the same time, the Board of Pensions will respond to the ongoing development of state-based health insurance exchanges by exploring the ways in which plan members might maximize the value of individual income-based subsidies.

Because communication with both members and employing organizations about the actual and potential impact of Healthcare Reform is so critical, the Board of Pensions has designed, developed, and launched a resource section on Pensions.org devoted exclusively to this topic. The communication challenge inherent in this period of uncertainty is exacerbated by both the political and judicial environment. A ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the law—expected in late June 2012—and the outcome of the November elections will likely have some ultimate impact on the work of the Board of Pensions.

### *c. Third Party Vendor Management*

The continued reliance of the Board of Pensions on Third Party Administrators (TPAs) to deliver an integrated benefit program to employing organizations and plan members makes it essential that rigorous performance standards for these vendors are contractually established and consistently measured. The internal audit team of the Board of Pensions, working in concert with specialized independent auditors, schedules regular audits for each of the TPAs to ensure their adherence to these standards. Annual vendor summits, held each summer since 2008 in the Philadelphia offices of the Board of Pensions, are designed to reinforce expectations about excellence of seamless service delivery that is entirely member focused. The 2010 summit concluded with a shared commitment by all Medical Plan third party partners to improve integration, which included, among other things:

- cross vendor training to ensure more complete knowledge of each others' capabilities;

- more intentional warm transferring from vendor-to-vendor, where a representative of one vendor who is transferring a call from a member to another vendor will stay on the line until the second vendor answers to facilitate a smooth transition;
- shared communications and common messaging; and
- scheduled webinars and teleconferences for information sharing throughout the year.

The 2010 work on vendor integration culminated in the gathering of the vendors of the Board of Pensions at the Church Benefits Association's annual conference in Austin, Texas, where they served as panel participants in a discussion on the benefits of clinical and service delivery integration. Led by an outside consultant, they individually and collectively acknowledged the leadership role of the Board of Pensions in creating a best practice model for high-quality and cost-effective service to members.

While much attention has been given to seamless and integrated service delivery, the protection of member data has remained a critical vendor management responsibility for the Board of Pensions. As relationships with business partners have expanded, the Board of Pensions has focused considerable attention on vendor adherence to and documentation of their data-protection practices. In addition to requiring written documentation of data security protection practices, the Board of Pensions made this a central focus of the 2011 Vendor Summit, seeking information about the practical ways in which each business partner ensures the safety and security of plan members' personal health information. All agreed that this topic should be a permanent agenda item for all future summits.

To ensure relative economic and administrative stability for the plan, the Board of Pensions seeks multiyear contractual relationships with these key business partners. The status and performance highlights of these contracts are summarized below.

- Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, with responsibility for adjudication of all medical claims (with the exception of behavioral health and prescription drug expenses), is operating under a three-year contract, scheduled to expire at the end of 2012. The efficacy of negotiated administrative fees is enhanced by the participation (and leadership) of the Board of Pensions in a purchasing coalition with other major denominations linked by their membership to the Church Benefit Association (CBA). As the host "Blue Card" plan, Highmark has consistently provided plan members with access to a high-quality and cost-effective national network of physician and hospital providers. The breadth and depth of the Blue Cross/Blue Shield network has resulted in an in-network utilization rate of over 97 percent and discount savings more than 58 percent in each of the last two years.

- Express Scripts, the Benefits Plan's Pharmacy Benefit Manager, offered new pricing terms to the CBA coalition, extending their contract through the end of 2013. These pricing terms have already resulted in reduced prescription drug cost trends, driven primarily by further discounts in generic drug ingredient cost and more aggressively negotiated manufacturer rebates. Plan members' increasing use of generic alternatives, deliberately driven through plan design, and their consistent use of the preferred home delivery distribution channel has contributed to more moderate trend increases for both the Traditional and Medicare Supplement prescription drug plans.

- Cigna Behavioral Health (CBH) has responsibility for managing and adjudicating behavioral health claims and for providing active plan members with an employee assistance plan (EAP). In concert with other CBA-member denominations, the Board of Pensions renegotiated its contract with CBH for two years, effective January 1, 2012, through December 31, 2013. This contract essentially represented an extension of a three-year contract that expired at the end of 2011. It included no increase to the in-force administrative fees, despite a rather substantial increase in utilization of behavioral health services in 2011, and an in-network paid claim rate of just over 56 percent.

- ActiveHealth Management (AHM), the health management partner of the Board of Pensions, is in the final year of a three-year contract. It is expected that a new multiyear contract will be negotiated and executed, effective January 1, 2013. In addition to providing disease and condition management support to the plan's most at-risk members, AHM clinicians provide case management services to the critically ill and are responsible for pre-certifying certain high-cost tests and screenings to ensure their clinical appropriateness. The AHM contract specifically ties a significant portion of their administrative fees to the achievement of clinical improvements by plan members who actively engage in health-improvement programs with AHM nurse coaches. A close look at the clinical impact of the ActiveHealth disease management program revealed that between 2010 and 2011 three clinical measures, including blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels, improved significantly among program participants. Because these results underscore the importance of member engagement, communication efforts have been and will continue to be targeted at building member understanding of health improvement opportunities and their value. The 2010 communications campaign focused on having members complete an online health assessment, which was designed to help AHM identify members who may benefit from one or more of their clinical support programs. While all communication materials included reminders about the importance of preventive care, claim data continued to reveal lower than expected rates of compliance with well-established standards of disease prevention. Consequently, the 2011 communication campaign, executed through a series of videos, was on the importance of routine care to overall health. The Board of Pensions will continue to monitor and measure the effectiveness of this messaging.

Adding to its already comprehensive array of fully covered preventive care services, the Benefits Plan was amended on January 1, 2011, to provide coverage to active plan members for routine eye exams. Through the execution of a four-year fully insured contract with VSP (Vision Service Plan), the plan now covers 100 percent of an in-network annual eye exam, subject to a \$25 co-pay.

The commitment of the Board of Pensions to member health, to service excellence, and to the financial stability of the Medical Plan will continue to drive and shape emerging priorities, even as the complexities of the full implementation of Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) evolve.

#### 5. *Assistance Program*

##### a. *Overview*

The Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions values the commitment and sacrifice of the men and women who are called to serve the church. The program acts as a safety net to meet the urgent and emergency financial needs of church workers and their families, consistent with the mission of the Board of Pensions in support of the ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Assistance Program is designed to help address the financial needs of employees and retirees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that are beyond the scope of the Benefits Plan.

No Benefits Plan dues are used for the Assistance Program. Support for this program includes gifts, legacies directed to the Board of Pensions, endowment income, and half of the Christmas Joy Offering.

The Assistance Program consists of several financial assistance programs and a small retirement housing program.

##### b. *Retirement Housing Program*

The Retirement Housing Program was initiated in 1883 to provide housing for eligible ministers. This program consists of the Homes Program, which offers affordable housing in properties owned by the Board of Pensions, and the Housing Supplement Program, which gives financial assistance to help retirees maintain their own homes or move to retirement communities.

##### (1) *The Homes Program*

Persons who have served in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for twenty years or more are eligible for the Homes Program, which presently consists of twenty-two houses in a cluster called El Sombroso Oaks in Los Gatos, California. The amounts individuals pay in this program are structured so that residents pay according to their ability, contributing the lesser of:

- thirty percent of their total annual income, excluding post-retirement earned income or
- an appraised fair rental value of the home.

##### (2) *Transition to the Housing Supplement Program*

In recent years, more ministers have purchased homes during the course of their ministry than in earlier generations. This reality has lowered the demand for church-related retirement housing. Recognizing this shift, the Board of Pensions requested permission from the 200th General Assembly (1988) to change the Homes Program from one based solely on homes owned by the Board of Pensions to one based on housing assistance supplements. The General Assembly approved this change in strategic direction and authorized the sale of properties then owned and received thereafter, with the proceeds going to the Housing Supplement Program. The General Assembly withheld approval for the sale of two housing communities operated by the Board of Pensions and instructed it to continue its “ownership and management of the clusters at Morganwood in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, and El Sombroso Oaks in Los Gatos, California, with no further sale of these clusters without General Assembly Approval” (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 97).

The 214th General Assembly (2002) approved the sale of Morganwood, a cluster of twenty-nine housing units. On October 29, 2003, an agreement of sale for Morganwood was signed with Swarthmore College, a Quaker-affiliated institution adjacent to the Morganwood property. The proceeds from the sale are used to support the Retirement Housing Program and to provide subsidies to current Morganwood residents. Under the agreement of sale, the current residents are entitled to continue living in their units until they choose to vacate them or at the expiration of twenty years from the closing date (January 14, 2004), whichever is earlier. The Board of Pensions provides subsidies to the continuing Presbyterian residents of Morganwood who are related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Board of Pensions. These subsidies totaled approximately \$122,000 for 2010 and \$107,000 for 2011. Each year, the Board of Pensions reviews the subsidies with the residents to determine their future needs.

Similarly, the 215th General Assembly (2003) approved an affiliation agreement between Southern California Presbyterian Homes (SCPH) and Westminster Gardens. The agreement was signed by all parties, and the certificate of authority was received from the Department of Social Services in California, effective May 4, 2004.

Westminster Gardens, Duarte, California, was established in 1949, by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., to care for retired missionaries. Since its founding, this retirement community has been available for retired church workers and their spouses. The denomination assigned responsibility for the oversight of the affairs of Westminster Gardens to the Board of Pensions in 1972.

Under the terms of the affiliation agreement, the Board of Pensions is providing rent subsidies to residents who are related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Board of Pensions. The total amount of the subsidy was \$98,000 in 2010 and \$65,000 in 2011. These payments were in addition to the direct assistance provided to qualifying residents under the Board of Pensions Income and Housing Supplements Programs.

*c. Financial Assistance Programs*

The financial assistance programs go to the heart of Christian discipleship: serving people in need in the name of Jesus Christ. They provide emergency and on-going financial aid for members of the pension and healthcare plans and, for some programs, other employees of Presbyterian churches. They also work to strengthen future leadership for the church by providing strategic assistance and support to pastors.

In recent years, the Board of Pensions has introduced a number of pilot programs as it seeks to be more proactive in addressing the needs of church workers. These pilot programs are intended to complement the traditional assistance programs.

The financial assistance programs have been organized under three overarching categories:

*(1) Caring for Church Workers: Urgent Financial Needs*

(a) Shared Grants: These grants are designed to meet the financial needs that an active or retired church worker is unable to afford. The objective is to help the person who has a financial problem with everyday needs or medical/dental costs not covered by the Benefits Plan or insurance. A grant is shared by a council and/or an employing organization and the Board of Pensions. Annual Shared Grants are usually approved for a calendar year but are disbursed monthly. Other Shared Grants are approved for a one-time payment or can be a monthly disbursement for a period of less than a calendar year.

(b) Emergency Assistance Grants: These grants are provided for one-time, special needs when no other financial resources are available. At times, members may have special needs that are beyond the scope of the Benefits Plan. Occasionally, councils and employing organizations are unable to participate in a Shared Grant because of insufficient funds.

(c) Adoption Assistance Grants: These grants are distributed to members of the Benefits Plan who adopted a child (under age 21) on or after January 1, 2006. One grant of \$3,000 is given for each eligible adopted child to help defray the cost of the adoption. The monies for these grants come from gifts to the Assistance Program and the receipts from the Relief of Conscience Program.

(d) Transition-to-College Assistance Grants: These grants are distributed to eligible members of the traditional Benefits Plan who have a child enrolled as a full-time freshman at an accredited college or university and whose adjusted gross income is below twice the churchwide median salary. The grants are meant to help mitigate transitional, one-time expenses, such as the purchase of a computer, dorm room furnishings, and other expenses that are not covered by traditional financial aid.

*(2) Caring for Retired Church Workers: Financial and Housing Needs*

(a) Income Supplements: These supplements are designed to raise the monthly income of retired church workers and their surviving spouses whose total annual income from all sources is below levels established by the Board of Pensions. The guidelines for the Income Supplement program are reviewed each year. The guideline levels for 2010 were \$26,760 for a single person and \$32,700 for a married couple. The guidelines were not increased in 2011 due to a reduction in Christmas Joy Offering receipts and adverse financial market returns.

(b) Housing Supplements: These supplements provide financial assistance to help eligible retirees and their surviving spouses remain in their own homes or move to a retirement facility in a location of their choice. Each year the guideline for the Housing Supplements program is reviewed. The maximum annual income level guideline for Housing Supplement eligibility in 2010 was \$39,450. This program is the financial assistance component of the Retirement Housing Program. The guidelines were not increased in 2011 due to a reduction in Christmas Joy Offering receipts and adverse financial market returns.

(3) *Caring for Pastoral Leadership: Leadership and Retention*

(a) Seminary Debt Assistance Grants: These grants are provided to teaching elders who have graduated from seminary or theological school and are serving in the first seven years of ministry after ordination. To be eligible, a teaching elder must be in a full-time, called, pastoral position in a PC(USA) church of fewer than 150 members. An eligible teaching elder may receive a grant of up to \$1,500 per year for up to four years to help repay loans incurred while pursuing education leading to a Master of Divinity degree.

(b) Sabbath Sabbatical Support Grants: These grants are designed to help pastors serving congregations of fewer than 200 members take sabbaticals that will strengthen their skills and renew their ministries. The grants are for \$3,000. This program is administered in cooperation with mid councils.

(c) Presbyterian CREDO: This program is modeled after a very successful program of the Church Pension Fund of the Episcopal Church. Its mission is to provide opportunities for clergy to examine significant areas of their lives and to prayerfully discern the future direction of their vocation as they respond to God's call in a lifelong process of practice and transformation. A Presbyterian CREDO conference provides time for clergy to step back from the non-stop pace of ordained ministry. It provides a foundation for participants to embrace wellness and prayerfully discern the direction of their personal and professional lives. Each participant commits to extensive reflection through pre-conference instruments and surveys that focus on personal and professional wellness. The eight-day curriculum is designed to trigger personal discovery through guided reflection, introspection, and dialogue. Thirty-three conferences have been held in the seven-year history of the program and more than 890 individuals have benefited from the experience of attending a CREDO conference.

d. *Financial Considerations*

The downturn in the financial and investment markets in recent years has had an adverse effect on the Assistance Program assets and spending formula. In addition, the Board of Pensions has also experienced a decline in Christmas Joy Offering receipts. In response to this situation, the Board of Pensions has evaluated and repositioned its programs in order to ensure the long-term financial health of the Assistance Program. Primary consideration has been given to maintaining the need-based (safety net) programs. Other programs will be evaluated based on the stated mission of the Assistance Program, the individual benefit to eligible participants, and the overall benefit to the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In addition, a number of specific cost reduction actions were taken: The Income and Housing Supplement guidelines were not increased in 2011, the Middle Governing Body Grant Program was discontinued, and the Presbyterian CREDO program postponed a planned expansion of the program until a future date.

e. *Funds Development*

In response to the continuing and emerging needs of ministry and the challenges facing those who serve the church, the Board of Pensions has begun a more deliberate phase in its funds development effort.

The Christmas Joy Offering remains a vital financial support to the Assistance Program, and the Board of Pensions continues to work with the Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges and the General Assembly Mission Council staff to promote this denomination-wide offering. However, since the receipts from the offering have declined over recent years and Benefits Plan dues are not used for the Assistance Program, the Board of Pensions has determined that additional financial support, beyond half of the Christmas Joy Offering, is required to meet the increasing demands on existing programs and to fund new programs to meet emerging needs.

To ensure communication with other national entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that are also seeking contributions, the Board of Pensions and the other national agencies developed the "Principles of Funds Development." In 2003, the agency heads agreed to use these principles as a basis for coordinating their efforts.

The Board of Pensions has selected a theme for funds development communications ("Keeping Our Promises") and established the online capability for contributions through the Board of Pensions Web site, Pensions.org. It also established a planned giving initiative to encourage deferred gifts. A Gift Acceptance Policy has been approved.

A major new initiative in this arena was undertaken in 2011. The Board of Pensions entered into a collaborative funds development relationship with the Presbyterian Foundation, which will allow the two organizations to take advantage of complementary synergies. The Board of Pensions' Chief Development Officer will commit part of his time to working with the Foundation to develop and train their Ministerial Relations Officers (MROs), communicate a vision, and implement the strategy for the MROs. It is envisioned that the Foundation's MROs will work with the Board's Regional Representatives to develop relationships and promote funds development in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Board of Pensions' Chief Development Officer will also be the Chief Ministerial Relations Officer of the Presbyterian Foundation. This collaboration will help avoid unnecessary duplication of expenses. The purpose of this initiative by the Board of Pensions and the Foundation is to work collaboratively on areas of common interest. It is anticipated that this collaboration will expand in the future to include other agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).



Through these efforts, the Board of Pensions' Assistance Program hopes to ensure that there will be sufficient resources in the future to "keep our promises" to provide assistance and leadership training to the men and women who have faithfully served the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).



## Item 21-01

[In response to Item 21-01, the assembly approved an alternate resolution. See p. 64.]

*On Instructing MRTI to Study and Report Corporate Practices of Health Insurance Companies and Possible Divestment of Same—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky.*

The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to instruct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report to the General Assembly Mission Council on the corporate practices of Cigna, Aetna, Humana, WellPoint, United Health Care health insurance companies—in particular as such practices compare with and relate to previous General Assembly actions relative to health care. The General Assembly Mission Council is authorized and encouraged to act on this information, and, as it deems appropriate, implement divestment procedures as well as encourage individual Presbyterians and congregations to divest of holdings in the said companies; and, in view of the urgency of the ongoing health-care crisis, to take action within six months of the approval of this recommendation. The General Assembly Mission Council is to report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on divestment actions.

**1. The MRTI Committee is instructed to request information and explanations of health insurance company policy and practice on: state and federal lobbying expenditures and political/campaign contributions, government subsidies and profit margins related to provisions of the healthcare ‘reform’ legislation, aggregate data on increases in premiums and deductibles over the past ten years, categories and percentages of claims denied, and percentages of profits used in compensating top executives in comparison with return to shareholders.**

**2. The MRTI Committee is instructed to be in conversation with the PC(USA) Board of Pensions to ensure the PC(USA) health plan submits to the same standards that PC(USA), through MRTI, asks of other insurers.**

**3. Based on this corporate engagement and analysis, a summary of which shall be posted, MRTI is asked to evaluate the variance between church principles of universal access and affordability and corporate objectives, to assess the likelihood of significant change in corporate behavior, and to recommend to the GAMC and General Assembly measures, including possible divestment, that would strengthen the integrity of the church’s practice.**

**4. The GAMC, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions, in turn, are requested to report on their actions (or request guidance) to the 221st and 222nd General Assembly (2014) and (2016), with an eye to guiding individual Presbyterians, congregations, and mid councils in relation to their own investment holdings in this major part of the economy.**

**5. The Office of Public Witness and other Presbyterian bodies are encouraged to continue to support cost-effective health coverage for all through the single payer (or expanded Medicare) model common elsewhere in the developed world, and, to support making health care affordable and transparent.**

### *Rationale*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has consistently called for fundamental reform of United States healthcare systems and in 2008 “endorse[d] in principle the provision of single-payer universal health care reform ... as the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel” (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, p. 1133).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors have long concerned itself with national health-care policy, seeking to promote healthier individuals in a healthier society. “For over 60 years, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies have been calling for reform of the U.S. health system, urging the establishment of a national medical plan that will ensure health coverage for all persons residing in the United States.”—2009 Communication of the PC(USA) Washington Office.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in its healthcare policy statements, has repeatedly pointed to issues of quality, equity, and accessibility.

These statements are based on several crucial theological points; and implicit in these is the conviction that health care is a human right—a conviction that is voiced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and in the World Religious Summit meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in June 2010.

Such statements, including the endorsement of the 218th General Assembly (2008) of a single-payer policy, are meant to inform and guide its total mission, and are meant to be reflected in the actions and pronouncements of the constituent parts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

One instrument for implementation of its mission is church investment policy with the corresponding option to divest from those companies that actively oppose its mission goals.

Violation of a basic human right, such as the right to health care, is one of several criteria by which corporate behavior may be evaluated. [See MRTI priority issues work plan and historical involvements relative to both health care and human rights at its web page—<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/mrti/>.]

Since the primary mission of for-profit insurance companies is to make a profit for their investors and since they are not themselves providers, by definition they decrease rather than increase access to health care.

For-profit health insurance companies consciously and deliberately oppose the above health-care principles and policy goals of the PC(USA) in order to fulfill their for-profit mission.

The actions of for-profit health insurance companies have brought untold suffering and hardship in both the private and public spheres, and have obstructed the development of healthier individuals in a healthier society.

Health-care reform legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress in 2010 only strengthens the decision-making role of for-profit health insurance companies in matters affecting individuals' access to health care.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has no obligation to support such companies through investment but, to the contrary, has a moral obligation to withdraw financially from them to the extent that they are detrimental to the goal of equal access to health care.

For-profit health insurance companies produce no product for the public good but instead increase exposure to the financial ruin of individuals and the society as a whole.

### ***Background Attachments***

Full text of the 218th General Assembly (2008) resolution:

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to do the following:

1. Endorse in principle the provision of single-payer universal health care reform in which health care services are privately provided and publicly financed.
2. Direct the General Assembly Council, through appropriate offices including the National Health Ministries, the Washington Office, and the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), to advocate for, educate about, and otherwise pursue the goal of obtaining legislation that enacts single-payer, universal national health insurance as the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel; monitoring progress toward this goal and reporting back to the next two General Assemblies (2010 and 2012).
3. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to send a copy of this resolution to the appropriate committee chairs of the U.S. Congress and to the Washington and United Nations offices of the PC(USA).
4. Direct that \$25,000 from the Mission budget of the PC(USA) be sent to the PACT Network of PHEWA for the purpose of holding ten regional, one-day seminars supporting single payer universal healthcare reform, moneys to be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 1133–34)

*Accessibility:* We believe that all people possess inherit worth as children of God, and that God's promise extends to all. Health coverage must be available to all persons living in the United States, "regardless of income, race or ethnicity, geography, age, gender, [employment status,] or health status" (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 574; cf. *Minutes*, 2002, Part I, p. 634).

*Equity:* "Because the right to acquire adequate health care springs out of our worth as living human beings, rather than out of any particular merit or achievement belonging to some but not to others, 'adequate' health care should be defined equally for all people" (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1976, Part I, p. 203, cf. pp. 203–207).

*Responsible Financing:* "Since society has an interest in the health of its people, those individuals and organizations who can pay should help to finance the care of those individuals and families who cannot pay" (*Minutes*, 1991, Part I, p. 817). While concerns for the costs of health care are appropriate, these concerns must continually be balanced against the objectives of adequate, quality care for all. The sacrifice of access and quality at the shrine of cost containment is too high a price to pay and should not be tolerated" (*Minutes*, 1988, Part I, p. 525.)

In August, 2009, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, responding to #3 (above), wrote: "Jesus Christ, who has reconciled us to God, healed all kinds of sickness (Mt. 4:23) as a sign of God's rule. Isaiah speaks God's word to say 'No more shall there be ... "an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime"'(Isa. 65:20a). We, as Reformed Christians, witness to Jesus Christ in word, but also in deed. As followers of our Great Physician Jesus, we have a moral imperative to work to assure that everyone has full access to health care. ... The U.S. spends nearly twice as much per capita than any other country on health care, but we rank poorly in the thirty-seven categories of health status measured by the World Health Organization. The rise in childhood obesity, asthma, diabetes, and other chronic diseases indicates that the overall health status of people of this country is declining. We are warned by the prophets not to heal the wounds of God's people lightly; yet in 2006 the aggregate profits of the health insurance companies in the United States were \$68 billion. During that same year more than 15,000 families were forced into bankruptcy because of medical expenses. ...

“Our federal government already operates efficiently and with low overhead the health delivery programs of Medicare and Medicaid; and yet at the same time insurance companies spend nearly one-third of every premium dollar on marketing and other administrative costs and in fact, several such companies spend less than 60 percent of premium dollars they receive on health services. The American College of Physicians, the nation’s second largest physician group, has endorsed a single-payer healthcare system. Only a single-payer system of national health care coverage (privately provided; publicly financed; not socialized medicine) can save what is estimated to be \$350 billion wasted annually on medical bureaucracy and redirect those funds to expanded coverage.”

In support of the above resolution at the 218th General Assembly (2008), our denomination’s Advisory Council on Social Witness Policy stated: “Commissioners may wish to reflect on whether the highest ever numbers of uninsured Americans (not including undocumented immigrants) and the data on increasing life expectancy among Americans confirm the need for a forthright new advocacy by the church.”

From The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25: (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy and same social protection.” From the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 12: “The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.” From the report of the World Religious Summit (June, 2010): “All countries must to their part...and put in place poverty reduction policies that ensure everyone has access to basic rights such as nutritious food, safe water, health care, education and economic opportunity.”

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) believes that church investment is more than a practical question. It is also ‘an instrument of mission and includes theological, social and economic considerations.’ This belief flows from our understanding of the stewardship of God’s resources entrusted to the church. Thus, ‘we confess that the Lord is really the acknowledged Master of our entire life—moral, physical and material’” (MRTI, *A Christian Call to Faith-Based Investing*).

For-profit health insurance companies opposition to health care as a human right:

Vis-à-vis patients:

By company policies and positions designed to support shareholder profits and exorbitant salaries of management personnel through denying coverage or denying funding of the treatment of patients, and by providing financial incentives to their employees to do so.

Vis-à-vis providers and patients:

By interfering in the doctor-patient relationship and preventing providers from treating patients on the basis of their informed clinical judgment through denial of treatment as well as the application of financial penalty and censure for “excessive-treatment.”

By constant upward pressure on patient premiums, deductibles and co-pays while applying downward pressure on provider reimbursement. (See Secretary Sebellius’ February, 2010 report, “Insurance Companies Prosper, Families Suffer – Our Broken Health Insurance System”.)

Vis-à-vis legislation:

By spending hundreds of millions of patient and taxpayer generated dollars to lobby in Washington and in state capitals, effectively buying unrepresentative power and influence to thwart efforts toward making affordable, comprehensive access for all a reality.

By donating directly and indirectly additional hundreds of millions of patient premium and taxpayer generated dollars to the election campaigns of candidates of both political parties in order to assure that legislators support maintenance of their power.

By undermining democratic processes through the infusion of billions of dollars into the deliberative process at every turn to override the well-documented majorities of citizens, physicians and nurses that prefer an improved “Medicare for all” solution to our health care crisis.

Vis-à-vis insurance company employees and investors:

By putting them in the morally and ethically untenable position of making the viability of their employment and investment dependent on subordinating the health care of millions to the profit-making of a few.

Vis-à-vis employers and their employees:

By making them less competitive in the global market place by the addition of exorbitant employee health care costs (that also discourage entrepreneurial initiatives on their part).

By being forced to reduce coverage for employees and their families in order to remain competitive in the domestic market as well.

By reducing the motivation to bring on new hires even when it would be advantageous to do so because of associated health care costs.

Untold suffering:

In the form of tens of thousands of deaths annually due to lack of accessibility to adequate health care.

In the form of workers inability to change jobs or move to jobs in other locations due to lack of portability of coverage.

In the form of pressure to under staff hospitals due to the instability of hospital revenue from for-profit insurance payments and forced early discharges, making those institutions themselves an increased threat to the health of patients from medical mistakes, increased infection rates and unmet patient needs.

In the form of lack of quality in overall health system performance

According to the World Health Organization the U.S. is ranked #37 in the world. In WHO's 2000 report, the U.S. ranked 30<sup>th</sup> in preventable deaths before age five – a terrible testimony to how poor the quality of our health system is. In the form of driving patients, both insured and uninsured, into bankruptcy and poverty due to health care costs.

In the form of fear, demoralization and distraction in the hearts and minds of millions of Americans due to financial ruin if they become injured or ill; suffering from untreated preventable diseases; suffering from diseases diagnosed too late; needless premature death and disability with all its pernicious effects on not just individuals but families, communities and our entire population.

Recently passed health care reform legislation:

Until the 1990s the U.S. health insurance market was dominated by nonprofit companies with essentially charitable missions. From 1990–2005 the industry underwent major consolidation and the near-eliminating of not-for-profits. This trend will continue under the Affordable Care Act. No other country has for-profit health insurance companies like the U.S. The only way for these companies to make a profit for their shareholders is to find ways not to pay for the care of the sick. This is the basic flaw in for-profit health insurance. Nor do they further medical research or innovation. They add no social value to justify their profits and the negative effects they inflict on the entire medical system.

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**Concurrence to Item 21-01 from the Presbyteries of Long Island, New York City, and West Jersey.**

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**Concurrence to Item 21-01 from the Presbytery of Albany (With Additional Rationale)**

***Rationale***

It is important that the PC(USA)'s practical response to significant social issues be consistent with our statements and positions on those issues. The Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky has provided ample background to demonstrate that our denomination's prior General Assemblies have been very clear on several points: (a) endorsement of a single-payer universal health-care reform; (b) the conviction that access to health care is a basic right and not a privilege reserved for the wealthy; and (c) that the for-profit health insurance industry impedes the provision of health care to all citizens by denying coverage and/or care to patients and by interfering in the doctor patient relationship. One of the ways in which the PC(USA) can stand against the injustices perpetrated by the for-profit health insurance industry is to refuse to participate financially in that system, which may include divestment from such companies and the encouragement to individuals and congregations to follow suit. This is consistent with practices of past General Assemblies in seeking to redress unjust situations.

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 21-01 calls for instructing MRTI to study and report corporate practices of health insurance companies and possible divestment of same.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises the approval of an alternate resolution, to read as follows:

“1. The MRTI Committee is instructed to request information and explanations of health insurance company policy and practice on: state and federal lobbying expenditures and political/campaign contributions, government subsidies and profit margins related to provisions of the healthcare “reform” legislation, aggregate data on increases in premiums and deductibles over the past ten years, categories and percentages of claims denied, and percentages of profits used in compensating top executives in comparison with return to shareholders.

“2. Based on this corporate engagement and analysis, a summary of which shall be posted, MRTI is asked to evaluate the variance between church principles of universal access and affordability and corporate objectives, to assess the likelihood of significant change in corporate behavior, and to recommend to the GAMC and General Assembly measures, including possible divestment and possible change of Board of Pensions providers, that would strengthen the integrity of the church's practice.

“3. The GAMC, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions, in turn, are requested to report on their actions (or request guidance) to the 221st and 222nd General Assembly (2014) and (2016), with an eye to guiding individual Presbyterians and congregations in relation to their own investment holdings in this major part of the economy.

“4. The Office of Public Witness and other Presbyterian bodies are encouraged to continue to support cost-effective health coverage for all through the single payer (or expanded Medicare) model common elsewhere in the developed world, and, particularly if provisions of the new healthcare legislation are struck down by the Supreme Court, to support a ‘public option’ and other measures to increase competitiveness, affordability, and transparency in health-insurance coverage.”

*Rationale*

The proposed alternate resolution rewords the overture in a manner consistent with the corporate engagement process outlined in the General Assembly comment. The categories for inquiry in Recommendation 1 are derived from the rationale to the overture itself and would overlap with information provided state insurance commissioners. The fourth recommendation reflects the public debate over healthcare, which represents more than an eighth of the U.S. economy.

Given the low cost-effectiveness of U.S. healthcare among developed nations and the likelihood of an ongoing healthcare crisis for millions of U.S. citizens, this resolution reaffirms the economic logic of the single payer system recognized by the 218th General Assembly (2008) and encourages informed, prompt, and forthright action by the church as an ethical investor. A recent article describes the continuing struggle of Americans with costs and coverage: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2012/05/07/147985/health-care-increasingly-out-of.html>.

*Additional Documentation*

214th General Assembly (2002), Resolution on Behalf of the Uninsured, *Minutes*, 2002, Part I, pp. 633–44.

218th General Assembly (2008), Item 10-06. On Supporting Single-Payer Universal Health Care Reform, pp. 58–59, 1133–34.

*Toward Universal Access to Health Care: An Emerging Issue Paper* (PC(USA), 1990).

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 21-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-01.

*Rationale*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns believes that access to healthcare is a human right and that every individual should have access to affordable healthcare. Because the level of profits of healthcare insurance companies are not regulated, profits from what we consider a human right are currently at record levels.

With today’s high level of profits and executive pay at these insurance companies, the group at the bottom of the ladder are finding it more and more difficult to purchase and maintain healthcare, which has led to close to fifty million Americans without healthcare insurance. The lion’s share of this fifty million are people from across the spectrum of the racial ethnic community who out of desperation, end up getting their healthcare needs met at hospital emergency rooms.

In today’s environment of gridlock in our government, ACREC believes that unless these corporations are pressured by shareholders to make available more affordable healthcare options, the current inefficient and inequitable system will not only persist, but will grow, especially in racial ethnic communities.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-01.

*Rationale*

The United States is suffering through an extended and deplorable crisis in health care that is inequitable and contentious. The 218th General Assembly (2008) recognized this crisis when it agreed that the single-payer system is the way to provide all residents with health care as a human right. Unfortunately, the for-profit health-care system that exists currently allows insurance companies to benefit financially from denying and dropping coverage for people. Profits are placed before people, and women typically bear the heaviest burden of this practice.

While the Affordable Care Act has and will continue to keep in check some of the unethical practices of insurance providers, those providers are and will continue to be making a profit off a basic human right—access to affordable health care. Further, the new law is ineffective in preventing certain industry practices, such as rescission, which allows insurance companies to systematically drop coverage of patients shortly after they are diagnosed with life-threatening conditions. One ex-

ample of this odious practice was reported in April of 2010 after federal investigators exposed the fact that WellPoint specifically targeted women with breast cancer “for aggressive investigation with the intent to cancel their policies.”<sup>1</sup> The practice of rescission is not uncommon among insurance companies. Unfortunately, many experts note that the new health-care legislation does not provide for enforcement or regulatory powers to substantially reduce or stop the practice.<sup>2</sup>

The continuation of this for-profit system ensures the continuation of high costs for medical care. Premiums have increased 50 percent in the past seven years, and more than six out of ten Americans currently live in states where their premiums use up a fifth or more of median earnings.<sup>3</sup> Women, who are more often unemployed, underemployed, and supporting children, are clearly most heavily affected by this.

As those who believe that health care is a basic human right and that providing universal access to such is the best response to the moral imperative of the gospel, we cannot continue to invest our money in places where practices such as those mentioned above go unchallenged. It is our responsibility as those who have been given much to see to it that our investments are not supporting practices that are in contradiction with what we believe as followers of Christ. Given the evidence we’ve seen that suggests unethical and immoral practices by insurance providers combined with our call to be faithful to the gospel, we agree that the corporate practices of health insurance companies in which the PC(USA) is invested should be studied.

#### Endnotes

1. Murray Waas, “Well Point routinely targets breast cancer patients,” *Reuters.com* (April 23, 2010) (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/04/23/us-wellpoint-breastcancer-idUSTRE63M5D420100423>)
2. *Ibid.*
3. National Nurses United, “Nurses: Health Care Crisis Will Continue No Matter How Court Rules,” (March 26, 2012) (<http://www.nationalnursesunited.org/press/entry/nurses-health-care-crisis-will-continue-no-matter-how-court-rules>)

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 21-01

*Comment on Item 21-01—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

By its very nature, the corporate engagement process takes time, often years, and works well the vast majority of the time without ever reaching the final step, which is divestment. In the opinion of the GAMC and MRTI, the customary corporate engagement process works best when given adequate time (that is, usually more than six months) and flexibility to achieve its primary goal—a change in corporate practices. We suggest that if the assembly wishes to lift up the issue raised in the overture, it would be preferable to commend them to MRTI for its work through the customary corporate engagement process.

This overture, if approved, would “instruct Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to report to the GAMC on the corporate practices of” five named health insurance companies as those practices “compare with and relate to previous General Assembly actions relative to health care.” The General Assembly is requested to authorize and encourage the GAMC to act upon the MRTI’s report as it deems appropriate, including initiating divestment procedures, within six months, and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on divestment actions.

The GAMC notes that the 116th General Assembly (1976) of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (*Minutes*, PCUS, 1976, Part I, pp. 513–18) adopted a policy on Social Responsibility and Investments that listed eight investor actions, including divestment that can be utilized to assess corporate practices, and if appropriate, promote a change in those practices. The 196th General Assembly (1984) (*Minutes*, 1984, Part I, pp. 193–94) affirmed the use of divestment as an ethical strategy for socially responsible investment, and outlined principles and criteria for its use. The following year, the 197th General Assembly (1985) (*Minutes*, 1985, Part I, pp. 282–32) adopted a process of “selective, phased divestment” built around a corporate engagement process of careful research, interaction with identified corporations, use of engagement tools available to shareholders (correspondence, dialogues, proxy voting, posing questions at corporate annual meetings, and filing of shareholder resolutions that may lead to further dialogue), and ecumenical consultation whenever possible. As a last resort, divestment may be recommended to the General Assembly if corporate engagement has not succeeded, and is unlikely to succeed in the future in changing corporate practices.

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## Item 21-02

[The assembly approved Item 21-02 with amendment. See pp. 64, 65.]

*On Instructing the General Assembly to Take Action to Implement the PC(USA)’s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area..*

**The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area respectfully overtures the 220th General Assembly (2012) to take the following actions to implement *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, the policy approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 919ff):**



**1. Affirm that persons with disabilities are distinct cultures within the rich multicultural makeup of the PC(USA).**

~~[2. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Board of Pensions to form a working group that includes human resources staff from each entity and representatives from Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) and the disability consultants in order to develop a plan for training all entity staff, commissioners to GAMC, and all commissioners to General Assembly in disability awareness and inclusion. The working group will meet three times before the 221st General Assembly (2014) and report back its plan at the 221st General Assembly (2014). The plan may include contracting with a third party if agreed to and approved by PDC and the disability consultants.]~~

**[2. Direct the Stated Clerk to form a working group that includes human resources staff from General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Board of Pensions to form a working group that includes human resources staff from each entity and representatives from Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) and the disability consultants in order to develop cost-effective training materials (web-based or otherwise) and to develop a plan for training all entity staff, commissioners to GAMC, and all commissioners to General Assembly in disability awareness and inclusion. In turn, advise and commend mid council staff and commissioners to take these training materials back to their presbyteries for use and implementation by each presbytery and its councils and mission entities. The working group will meet three times before the 221st General Assembly (2014) and report back its plan at the 221st General Assembly (2014). The plan may include contracting with a third party if agreed to and approved by PDC and the disability consultants.]**

~~3. [Direct the GAMC to fund, with new money, the disability consultants at a level that includes travel expenses and to fund, with new money, disability consultants and PDC volunteers for travel expenses for consulting with PC(USA) staff in developing the new training plan.]~~ **[Fund the working group with new financial resources of \$10,060 in 2013 and \$6,360 in 2014 to be designated as directed by the working group.]**

~~[4. Direct all entities in PC(USA) to use ‘people first’ language in all publications and official communications of the PC(USA) and to encourage church-wide study and use of ‘people first’ language.]~~

**[4. Direct the appropriate GAMC entity to place a link on the homepage of the PC(USA) to the policy of ‘Living Into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities’ and to encourage church-wide study and implementation of the policy.]**

**5. Instruct OGA to encourage event planners and committees on local arrangements to recruit and include people with disabilities in planning and to include people with visible disabilities and other disabilities in church-wide worship leadership.**

**6. Direct PC(USA) entities to report back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the progress that has been made since the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the plan that fulfills the recommendations in this overture.**

**[7. Ask the General Assembly to provide the necessary equipment for all disabled commissioners and delegates with disabilities for full participation.]**

**[Financial Implication: (2013) \$10,060, (2014) 6,360—GAMC—Unrestricted]**

### *Rationale*

All members of the body of Christ, including people who live with disabilities, have been given gifts for service<sup>i</sup> and are called to share them with the church for the glory of God.<sup>ii</sup>

The Old Testament prophets called God’s people to “do justice”<sup>iii</sup> and included people with disabilities in the gathered people of God.<sup>iv</sup>

Jesus called all people, including the marginalized of his society, to share in God’s great banquet.<sup>v</sup>

Jesus’ ministry of healing was ministry of inclusion that restored persons to their communities.<sup>vi</sup>

Persons who live with disabilities have gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and insight that have come out of their own faith experience as they have faced barriers and exclusion, and as the church is poorer without these gifts.

Including people with disabilities in leadership, including worship, is a powerful and visible witness to God’s love for all persons and God’s gifts to all persons.<sup>vii</sup>

The PC(USA) is called to be a prophetic witness and to model justice for all people in our society.<sup>viii</sup>

Persons with disabilities<sup>ix</sup> are a minority<sup>x</sup> culture within church and society<sup>xi</sup> and have in common the experience of facing barriers and exclusion in both church and society.

The Constitution of the PC(USA) instructs the church to “hear the voices of people long silenced,”<sup>xii</sup> and the voices of people who live with disabilities are not being heard in the church.

*Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities* calls the church to do justice for people with disabilities and offers a vision of God’s dream for the world and for Christ’s church.<sup>xiii</sup>

Person-first language affirms that persons with disabilities are created in the image of God and are persons first, not defined by their disabilities.<sup>xiv</sup>

*Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities* includes no call for disability inclusion training for staff of the six entities of the PC(USA), for members of the General Assembly Mission Council, or for commissioners to General Assembly.

Resources are available within the PC(USA) to work with human resources staff in developing a plan for training.<sup>xv</sup>

It is now time, in 2012, for the 220th General Assembly (2012) to follow the words of Scripture, the instruction in the Constitution of PC(USA), and the policy approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) in order to move the church forward toward full inclusion of people with disabilities.

#### Endnotes

i. “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Cor. 12:4–7)

ii. “... we are all called, regardless of our abilities or limitations, to grow and live into the body of Christ, with Christ as the head of the body of which we are members. No one is excused from this gladsome task of discipleship, being and becoming a disciple of Christ. We must all, individually and communally, ‘... grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ ... [promoting] the body’s growth in building itself up in love’ (Eph. 4:15–16, NRSV).” (*Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 927)

iii. “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Mic. 6:8)

iv. “See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.” (Jer. 31:8)

v. “Then the owner of the house .... said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’” (Lk. 14:21)

vi. Kathy Black, *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability* (Abingdon Press, 1996), p. 46.

“For first century people, it was one’s sense of *being* in the community that was most crucial ...”

vii. Sarah is a young woman who lives with disabilities. She “speaks” through assistive technology and needs accommodations because of her multiple disabilities. When she was a child, she could never learn to ride a bicycle. She could not believe that God really loved her. Finally as a young teenager, she saw and heard a person with a visible disability leading worship at a church-wide service. By seeing a person with disabilities leading worship, she discovered and understood what years of Sunday school had not demonstrated—that she is a beloved child of God, created in the Image of God.

viii. “Give prophetic witness regarding issues related to people with disabilities, recognizing that disability concerns are a matter of social justice.” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, p. 921; *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, II. 2, b, (1))

ix. “Persons with disabilities are a diverse group of individuals who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as relating, caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.” (This was the PC(USA) definition in 1990 and consistent with the ADA of 1990. In 2008, ADA was amended to cover a broader category of disabilities.)

x. According to ADA, people with disabilities are “a distinct and insular minority who have been faced with restrictions and limitations and subjected to a history of purposeful, unequal treatment, and relegated to a position of political powerlessness in our society ...” (This is a citation from ADA 1990. The 2008 law reaffirmed that people with disabilities continue to face barriers and discrimination.)

xi. It is estimated that at least 20 percent of the general population has some form of disability and that as many as 90 percent of this group are unchurched.

xii. *The Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, line 70.

xiii. “As the body of Christ, we are to welcome everyone to the banquet Feast of God’s love in this world. The feast of God’s love is open to all and fully inclusive of people from all pathways of life.

“We envision a church in which the designation or naming of a person’s disability is less important than who that person is as one of God’s people.

“We envision a church in which everyone welcomes and reflects diversity and inclusiveness in worship, education, fellowship, service, justice, leadership, and evangelism.

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“We envision a church in which all the members of the body of Christ honor, respect, nurture, and support the gifts, talents, and services of every other member.

“We envision a church in which every child of God can realize her/his full potential and through which society is consistently engaged and challenged to become more inclusive.

“We envision a church that embodies the creative movement from awareness, through accessibility and integration, to full inclusion, and thus bears healing witness to the world.

“We envision the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a leader in promoting and manifesting this vision of a just world, serving with and empowering people with disabilities to engage in this ongoing work.

“This vision of living into a fuller experience of the Body of Christ illuminates the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to the full inclusion of people with disabilities in every aspect of life; living into this vision draws us closer to the fulfillment of God’s redemptive will ‘on earth as in heaven’.” (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 920; *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities, II*)

xiv. Examples of Person First Language: The Power of Words (excerpts from the Policy on Disabilities, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area)

*In describing a person who lives with a disability, name the person first, not the disability. Using words that give dignity affirms our belief that all people are created in the Image of God.*

Say	Instead of
People with disabilities	The handicapped or disabled
The child is blind or visually impaired	The blind or visually impaired child
The Council member is deaf or hard of hearing	The deaf or hard of hearing Council member
Mary uses a wheelchair	-- confined to a wheelchair or wheelchair bound
The child with Down syndrome	-- mongoloid
The commissioner has a physical disability	-- crippled or lame
The commissioner has a learning disability	-- is learning disabled
Don needs an accessible room	-- a handicapped room
Charlie lives with mental illness	-- crazy, insane, emotionally disturbed

For more examples see Kathie Snow’s website: [www.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM](http://www.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM)

xv. The PC(USA) has disability consultants in the following areas: mobility, vision loss, hearing loss, and developmental disabilities. Consultants respond to questions and concerns across the denomination. In addition they work with Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) as advisors and they cooperate with PDC in developing print and on-line resources for the denomination. Their combined compensation is \$800 per month and includes no travel expenses. This funding will end in 2012.

The PDC is a network of Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association. Members of the leadership team are chosen for their experience and knowledge of disability issues. During the past year, mid 2010—mid 2011, team members reported six hundred volunteer hours of service directly related to their work as members of PDC/PHEWA.

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**Concurrence to Item 21-02 from the Presbyteries of Cincinnati, de Cristo, Detroit, and Ohio Valley, and the Synod of the Covenant.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 21-02 calls for the full implementation of the PC(USA)’s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities as expressed, in part in *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities* (approved by the 217th General Assembly [2006]).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 21-02 be approved.

*Rationale*

The recommendations of this overture are both consistent with that policy and appropriately call for a fuller implementation of the policy.

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-02.

*Rationale*

The ACREC approves this overture that identifies persons with disabilities as a cultural minority and establishes a working group that will provide training in disability awareness to all six agencies, GAMC commissioners, and to commissioners to the General Assembly. During the 219th General Assembly (2010), ACREC was directed by the General Assembly to obtain statistical information regarding the hiring of persons with disabilities in the Climate for Change assessment for cultural proficiency. The ACREC was later advised that collection of data in this manner may have been unlawful. The ACREC welcomes this overture as a means of addressing the concerns of representation of persons with disabilities in the PC(USA).

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON OVERTURE 21-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Overture 21-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve this item.

*Rationale*

In all governing bodies of the PC(USA) the voice, rights, and vote of the minority are valued and protected, and people who live with disabilities are, indeed, in most gatherings, a minority. This is one reason why as a denomination it is important that we are intentional about not only being inclusive of persons with disabilities, but also affirming and celebrating the distinct gifts and culture brought to the body of Christ by these sisters and brothers. The PC(USA) has a responsibility to make clear that we value persons with disabilities both within and outside the church, making obvious our witness to God's love for all persons. The church has a role in helping society recognize persons with disabilities for the gifts they bring to the body of Christ.

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 21-02**

*Comment on Item 21-02—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.*

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly respectfully advises the 220th General Assembly (2012) to approve Item 21-02 after amending Recommendation 2 to make clear that the responsibility for planning a General Assembly and decisions related to carrying out the assembly lies with the Stated Clerk.

*Rationale*

The issues of disability awareness and inclusion at meetings of the General Assembly are fundamental to the mission and ministry of the PC(USA) and we enthusiastically endorse anything that enables the meetings of the assembly to be greater witnesses of this vision. Recommendation 2 outlines a process for developing a "plan for training all ... commissioners to General Assembly in disability awareness and inclusion." The plan will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

The *Manual of the General Assembly* including the Standing Rules, identifies the Stated Clerk as "responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly ..." (Standing Rule H.2.a.(3)). As currently stated, Recommendation 2 may be interpreted as giving a separate working group, PDC and disability consultants, authority that supersedes that of the Stated Clerk and that requires the Stated Clerk to distribute the time and resources of the assembly at their discretion and not the discretion of the Stated Clerk.

Instead of creating a plan binding the work of the meetings of the General Assembly, Recommendation 2 might be amended to instruct the working group to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014), for their approval, an authoritative list of goals and objectives for ensuring disability awareness and inclusion, a list of best practices or other appropriate resources.

*The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is a committee of fifteen persons, elected by the General Assembly from across the church, made up of ruling elders and teaching elders who supervise the work of the Office of the General Assembly.*

**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 21-02**

*Comment on Item 21-02—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.*

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises that Item 21-02 be approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and offers this comment:

Persons with disabilities are underserved and underrepresented in the church's life, leadership, and ministries. This overture will provide helpful steps toward greater inclusion and involvement of persons with disabilities and their gifts. Some might argue that we all will be persons with disabilities if we are blessed to live long enough, that life stages and events may change our physical, mental, and/or emotional realities, sometimes in an instant. The work we do as a church to honor all persons with dignity and love is not wasted or extra. It is essential. The barriers that people with disabilities experience are profound and they often result in them being missing, tucked away from the gathered community, or invisible. When persons with disabilities are tenacious enough to gather with us, we often still create and maintain barriers to their full participation and silence their voices and gifts. This is an injustice to the church, to our own lived and expressed faith, and to those we fail to love in their fullness.

*Rationale*

People with Disabilities are an important part of God's family. The larger church in general and individuals in particular, exclude people with disabilities out of fear, lack of knowledge, and often lack of thought. People with disabilities have much to offer, have a wide variety of skills, gifts, and education, and are here waiting to have the opportunity to serve God in various ways.

Plans are in place to help the wider church learn more about various racial ethnic groups, about women and their needs and abilities. Such plans have helped the church grow in its rich diversity. Similar plans must be in place for people with disabilities to strengthen their position in the church and to increase the awareness of the entire membership of the church as to those gifts. People with Disabilities do not appear in large numbers in the leadership of our congregations, committees, councils, or at large events like the assembly. Therefore, a plan must be in place to move awareness of people with disabilities and their gifts to the forefront.

The Disability Consultants have long been an important part of the church, helping both councils and congregations address concerns raised and directly help people with disabilities and their families to overcome various hurdles placed before them by the church. The consultants should receive funding at a level that respects all they do, as should PDC volunteers who travel to help develop a plan to enrich the church with information and education concerning people with disabilities. This work has been tirelessly performed in the past and should be expanded to help both (1) people already in the church who have disabilities and (2) assist evangelism efforts to people outside the church who are seekers and are people with disabilities to find a place within the church to call home where they are genuinely loved and accepted for the people they are, complete with their gifts, talents, skills, and other offerings.

Updating internal and external communications standards to include "people first" language serves the entire church more faithfully by modeling inclusive expressions, influencing behaviors, and holding up the dignity of all persons as fellow children of God, created in love for love and service.

As an adviser to the General Assembly, GACOR welcomes this overture's support and advocacy for active leadership at General Assembly to include people with visible disabilities as embodied, non-verbal (and verbal) witness to the church's expression of Christ's love. We hope its leadership support of persons with disabilities will be included in the resources offered to support committees on local arrangements for host councils. We advocate for the inclusion of interpretation materials for General Assembly leadership so that leaders are prepared to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in every General Assembly. This content may be easily included in the Leader Briefing provided by the Office of the General Assembly for preparing the appointed commissioner leaders and volunteers that make up the assembly committee leadership teams. The GACOR reminds the assembly of its advisory and advocacy roles and offers its assistance to make these shifts and improve the access persons with disabilities have to an assembly and its leadership.

*The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of sixteen persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).*

**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 21-02**

*Comment on Item 21-02—From the General Assembly Mission Council.*

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) recognizes and affirms the continued importance of working towards full inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities in the church. Additionally, the GAMC commends to the attention

of the church the document, *Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, as approved by the General Assembly in 2006.

The GAMC suggests that the current training offered to its employees, with some adjustments, will be adequate to make staff cognizant of disability awareness and inclusion without the need and additional costs associated with a working group. Further, the current budget proposal is adequate to fund disability consultants through 2014. As such, the GAMC urges disapproval of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Item 21-02.

Staff members of the GAMC are required to attend a mandatory training session on the GAMC's anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies each year. That training is also offered throughout the year. A segment of the training touches on the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act and teaches employees not to harass co-workers with disabilities or to intermeddle about health conditions or accommodations granted to employees entitled to the protections of the ADA. Additional training on disability awareness and inclusion could be added. Staff trainers are working on training by video and computer training to reduce staff time and costs dedicated to training sessions.

The (GAMC) currently provides \$10,000 annually to support four disability consultants (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/phewa/disability-concerns-consultants/>). These consultants respond to requests for guidance and support from individuals, congregations, mid councils, and General Assembly agencies in the areas of developmental, hearing, mobility, and visual disabilities. Additionally, the GAMC currently provides \$2,500 annually to Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC), one of ten Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association networks to support their work. The PDC "welcomes those who affirm, support and advocate for the gifts, rights and responsibilities of persons with disabilities in the total life of the church." The PDC develops a resource packet for Disability/Inclusion Awareness Sunday, commemorated in June each year. The packet is distributed through the GAMC Social Witness Ministries Office and is available on the GAMC website for download (<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/phewa/pdfs/disability-inclusion-packet-2011.pdf>). The PDC and the Disability Consultants provide expertise, coaching, and opportunities for networking to those within our church seeking to be more welcoming of people with disabilities and support for those seeking guidance on engaging in ministry with, caring for and addressing the needs of people with disabilities and their families.

In terms of financial implications, there is funding to continue to support the consultants and PDC at its current level until 2014, but no new funds are available.

## Item 21-03

[The assembly approved Item 21-03 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 64, 65–67.]

*On Providing Just Access to Reproductive Health Care—From the Presbytery of Albany.*

**[Recognizing that women and men deserve full access to health care as a basic human right, whether or not medical insurance is available,]** [~~The Presbytery of Albany respectfully overtures]~~ **the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [seeks] to protect all women's and [men's] access to comprehensive health care, including access to health services that enable responsible family planning and honor the exercise of individual conscience [and the gift of human life], by**

1. **encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to [advocate for] [support] full access to reproductive health care for both women and men in both private and public health plans; [including, but not limited to, breast cancer screening, infertility testing, medically approved contraception methods (including 'Plan B' or 'morning after' medication), pap and HPV tests, prostate and testicular cancer screening, pre- and postnatal care and, in the case of problem pregnancies, adequate and legal access to abortion services when necessary.] and directing the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to support similar access through international aid organizations and programs;**

2. **protecting the integrity of individual conscience by affirming the ability of women and men to make good moral decisions in matters of reproductive health, including decisions about infertility, parenthood, and responses to problem pregnancies, in consultation with their families, pastors, health-care professionals, and scientifically accurate medical information;**

[~~3. opposing state and federal efforts to add coercive or demeaning language in regard to family planning or to defund or criminalize present laws for the purpose of denying or delaying access to family planning services, including abortion services;~~

**“[3. affirming the position of the 204th General Assembly (1992) Majority Report “Response to the Report of The Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion,” Item 3, pages 14–15, Items a. through h.:**

**[(a) The state has a limited legitimate interest in regulating abortions and in restricting abortions and in restricting abortions in certain circumstances.**

**[(b) Within this context of the state’s limited legitimate interest, no law should impose criminal penalties against any woman who chooses or physician who performs a medically safe abortion.]**

**[(c) Within this same context of the state’s limited legitimate interest, no law should deny access to safe and affordable services for the persons seeking to terminate a problem pregnancy.]**

**[(d) No law or administrative decision should provide for a complete ban on abortion.]**

**[(e) No law or administrative decision should**

**[(i) limit access to abortions;**

**[(ii) limit information and counseling concerning abortions; or**

**[(iii) limit or prohibit public funding for necessary abortions for the socially and economically disadvantaged.]**

**[(f) No law should prohibit access to, nor the practice of contraceptive measures.]**

**[(g) No law should sanction any action intended to harm or harass those persons contemplating or deciding to have an abortion.]**

**[(h) No law should condone mandatory or forced abortion or sterilization. Such laws should be abolished where they do exist:]**

**[And further affirming that no state or federal law should be enacted to defund or criminalize family planning for the purpose of denying or delaying access to family planning services:]**

~~[4. supporting effective public disclosure by “crisis pregnancy centers” of their affiliation with anti-contraception and/or anti-abortion religious or partisan groups, the ending of any public funding for such enterprises, and appropriate licensing and regulation to prevent deceptive practices and non-factual information being provided in the guise of education and support;]~~

**[4. supporting effective and full public disclosure of information regarding reproductive health care and opposing public funding of any organizations shown to provide misinformation concerning reproductive health issues;]**

5. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to advocate for more generous paid family and medical leave policies and corresponding policies that provide quality childcare and pre-school programs in order to strengthen the family life of working parents and promote the development of children.

6. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to identify and support programs that research shows to be effective in reducing unintended pregnancies and teenage pregnancy, thereby reducing the number of abortions in the U.S.

[Comment: The 220th General Assembly (2012) expresses its appreciation to the Presbytery of Albany for raising this matter in such a thorough and compassionate manner.]

### *Rationale*

Women’s access to health care, generally, and to reproductive health care in particular, is one of the bases of women’s equality, especially as women have entered the workforce. Since the 1970s, equal and adequate access to reproductive health care has been repeatedly supported by Presbyterian General Assemblies as essential to the exercise of our God-given responsibilities for family life. The church has encouraged marriage and parenthood as part of God’s covenant of life and family planning as integral to family wellbeing. It has understood that couples are better prepared and more likely to choose parenthood when there are adequate medical and economic bases for family life.

The PC(USA) has consistently sought the reduction of unplanned pregnancies and unmarried and often underage pregnancies because they too often result in abortion or child poverty, undermine women’s life opportunities and create additional family stress. The fact that the U.S. has the highest rates of abortion and child poverty of all modern nations is connected to the fact that almost half of the pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended and over 40 percent of them end in abortion.

However, the challenge of unplanned pregnancies and the difficult circumstances that may lead to consideration of ending a pregnancy are not experienced in the same way by all women. The rate of unintended pregnancies has plummeted for higher income women who are college educated and married: from 34 per 1,000 women in 1994 to 24 per 1,000 women in 2006. However, the rate of unintended pregnancies has sky rocketed for poor and low-income women: from 88 per 1,000 women in 1994 to 132 per 1,000 women in 2006. Among the factors accounting for this tragic escalation is poor women’s unequal access to health care.<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, increased legislative action at both the federal and state levels has restricted women's access, especially that of poor women, to comprehensive reproductive health care. Most of this legislation intends to limit women's access to abortion. However, since almost all abortion providers also provide family planning and contraception education, the result is an attack on women's and men's access to a full range of reproductive health care. Such recent legislation includes:<sup>2</sup>

- Laws dictating women's medical treatment in order to alter her decision to terminate her pregnancy or to delay its implementation, such as lengthening mandated waiting periods, requiring expanded medical counseling, and requiring a woman to undergo ultrasound;
- Laws treating health-care clinics that also provide abortions as surgery centers, requiring expensive reconstruction and surgical equipment;
- Laws denying coverage of abortion services in either private or public insurance plans, including through the state health exchanges anticipated under the 2010 Affordable Care Act, unless the woman's life is at stake;
- Laws to exclude emergency contraception from Medicaid coverage;
- Laws permitting pharmacies to refuse emergency contraception to women; and
- Laws to restrict state and federal monies from funding reproductive health providers if they also provide separately funded abortion services.<sup>3</sup>

At the national level, legislation was introduced to simply end Title X funding—the federal program that serves more than five million low-income women and men with annual exams, cancer screenings, and contraception. This was followed by the attempt to specifically defund Planned Parenthood, half of whose patients are Medicaid patients receiving annual physicals, mammograms, pap tests, family planning information and contraception, and cancer screenings.

The PC(USA) has wisely recognized that people of good faith can differ in their interpretation of Scripture, their understanding of when human life begins, and their decision about the morality of abortion. It has called upon Presbyterians to seek to decrease the number of unplanned pregnancies and, thus, to decrease the number of abortions through effective access to contraception for women and men and through medically accurate sex education that includes education about contraception. And it has opposed efforts to criminalize those seeking or providing abortions. Understanding the tragic dimensions that can accompany our reproductive lives, the church has stood for the freedom of adults to choose among hard choices with the best possible information and support. To restrict access to reproductive health care for individuals and families, especially to target the most vulnerable women and families, is an unjust exercise of governmental coercion. Such actions unjustly expose poor women and men and their families to a greater likelihood of unplanned pregnancies, serious illness detected too late, increased suffering, and earlier loss of life.

#### Endnotes

1. <http://www.gutmacher.org/media/nr/2011/08/24/>.
2. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20851226>.
3. <http://www.gutmacher.org/media/inthenews/2011/04/12/index.html>.

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

Item 21-03 requests that the 220th General Assembly (2012) protect all women's access to comprehensive health care, including access to health services that enable responsible family planning and honor the exercise of individual conscience.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-03 with the following amendment to Recommendation 1: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. encouraging the church, its members and councils, and directing the Office of Public Witness to advocate for full access to reproductive health care for both women and men in both private and public health plans, including, but not limited to, breast cancer screening, infertility testing, medically approved contraception methods (including “Plan B” or “morning after” medication); pap~~and~~<sub>[,]</sub> HPV<sub>[,]</sub> STD<sub>[,]</sub> and HIV/AIDS tests<sub>[,]</sub> prostate and testicular cancer screening, pre-and-post natal care and, in the case of problem pregnancies, adequate<sub>[,]</sub> affordable<sub>[,]</sub> and legal access to abortion services when necessary, and directing the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to support similar access through international aid organizations and programs;”



*Rationale*

The ACSWP commends the Presbytery of Albany for their careful attention and response to the current threats to women's reproductive health (For an analysis of the proposed restrictions, see ACSWP [Human Rights Update \(https://www.pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3989&promoID=244\)](https://www.pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3989&promoID=244) report to the 220th General Assembly [2012]). We advise that the STD, HIV/AIDS tests be added in order to complete the customary panel of tests that are administered.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-03.

*Rationale*

The ACWC is grateful for the work of the Presbytery of Albany in lifting up the issue of Just Access to Reproductive Health Care. This overture reinforces and promulgates the range of health-care issues and services addressed by the various reproductive health policies of the PC(USA). The ACWC is concerned that access to legal health-care services is being restricted by making the services inaccessible, unaffordable, misleading, and overly burdensome, in particular for poor, young, single, and marginalized women and girls. Reproductive health-care information should be factual, available, understandable, comprehensive, and reliable. Recognizing that Presbyterians of good conscience may disagree about when, if at all, certain health-care decisions are ethical and moral should not prevent the church from advocating for resources and services to be available so that opportunities for informed decision making exist without arbitrary barriers for all.

**Item 21-04**

[The assembly approved Item 21-04 with amendment. See pp. 64, 67.]

*Commissioners' Resolution. On Compassionate Treatment of Veterans Suffering from PTSD, TBI, and/or Other Mental Afflictions Rising from Military Service.*

The 220th General Assembly (2012) does the following:

1. Instructs the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to urge that all presbyteries ~~[provide]~~ **[offer]** training to ~~[facilitate]~~ ministers ~~[of their respective]~~ **[and]** churches ~~[to identify active or veteran military members of their churches who are at risk due to disorders resulting from injuries, visible and invisible, including Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)]~~ **[to recognize and intervene pastorally in instances of veteran military-related Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS)/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)],** and to be informed about **[community and Veterans Administration]** resources that are available to help these members and to urge all ministers of particular churches to participate in this training. **[To urge presbyteries to draw upon the resources of the Presbyterian Council on Military Chaplains in the provision of training to presbyteries, pastors, and particular churches.]**

2. Urges that in this training, pastors be instructed to reach out, not only to the members who are at risk, but to the family members as well as they are also greatly at risk to violence, mood swings, depression, and other symptoms of these combat-induced illnesses.

3. Asks that the OGA instruct both the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., and presbyteries to advocate for rights for veterans returning from Iraq/Afghanistan in their respective states. Specific advocacy should include but not be limited to

**[• Judicial/Legal Structures]**

~~[•—][ ]~~ **establishing veterans courts in the various jurisdictions throughout the country;**

~~[•—][ ]~~ **mandating sentencing guidelines requiring judges to incorporate treatment as part of the sentencing for veterans that suffer from these disabilities;**

**[• Psychiatric/Mental Health Structures]**

~~[•—][ ]~~ **requesting that military and veterans receive early intervention treatment for mental afflictions ~~[at the earliest possible time]~~ since it will be most effective if done early and not delayed;**

~~[•—][ ]~~ **holistic early intervention strategies that include veterans' families;**

~~[•][—strengthening PTSD/TBI-related transitional care military-to-civilian and hospital-to-community structures.]~~

**[• Retraining/Employment Transitional Structures**

~~[•][—]increasing funding for work programs to retrain vets as many of them are trained in skills that don't readily translate into a civilian workforce.~~

~~[•][—]increase funding for retraining and employment transitional counseling structures.]~~

With these items we hope to promote a welcoming home of our wounded veterans, helping them to connect or reunite with their families, adapting to their challenges through prayer, pastoral counseling, and church support; and to help them reintegrate as happy members of church life and society.

*Rationale*

“... to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness ...” (Isa. 42:7 NIV). The darkness can be in the mind and spirit as well as in the environment.

In a 2008 Rand report for the Veterans Administration they estimated that around 20 percent of the veterans returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan suffered from PTSD, TBI, and other mental health issues. This meant that from 2001 to 2007 more than 300,000 vets were such afflicted. A large number of these veterans then became entangled in legal issues, often directly associated with these mental illnesses.

The Veterans Administration, in recognition of the seriousness of this, in 2009 established Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) at many of the VA offices to assist vets who get in legal trouble but only after the legal issues are resolved. The VA, in the last few weeks, has also committed to the hiring of more than 19,000 mental health workers to cope with the influx of returning Afghan veterans as the war winds down.

California and Minnesota are the only states in the nation that have sentencing guidelines to provide assistance to veterans that meet the above service-related illnesses. Atlanta (Fulton County) has set up a special wing of the county prison to segregate vets so that they can receive mental health treatment. This is only a very limited response to an issue that poses large consequences to our country and these soldiers deserve better.

Robert D. Ward, Presbytery of Denver  
William J. Ward, Presbytery of Blackhawk

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM CR 21-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 21-04 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and underline.]

“The 220th General Assembly (2012) does the following:

“1. Instructs the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to urge that all presbyteries ~~[provide]~~ [offer] training to ~~[facilitate]~~ ministers ~~[of their respective]~~ [and] churches ~~[to identify active or veteran military members of their churches who are at risk due to disorders resulting from injuries, visible and invisible, including Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)]~~ [to recognize and intervene pastorally in instances of veteran military-related Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS)/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)], and to be informed about [community and Veterans Administration] resources that are available to help these members and to urge all ministers of particular churches to participate in this training. [It is further urged that pastoral and congregational informational resources be developed by PHEWA, in conjunction with the Mental Health Network, Presbyterian Council on Military Chaplains, and other appropriate agencies and entities of the PC(USA) to supplement the existing liturgical resources. To urge presbyteries to draw upon the resources of the Presbyterian Council on Military Chaplains in the provision of training to presbyteries, pastors, and particular churches.]

“2. [Recommendation 2 remains the same.]

“3. Asks that the OGA instruct both the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., and presbyteries to advocate for rights for veterans returning from Iraq/Afghanistan in their respective states. Specific advocacy should include but not be limited to

“[• Judicial/Legal Structures]

“—establishing veterans courts in the various jurisdictions throughout the country;

“—mandating sentencing guidelines requiring judges to incorporate treatment as part of the sentencing for veterans that suffer from these disabilities;

“[• Psychiatric/Mental Health Structures]

“—requesting that military and veterans receive [early intervention] treatment for mental afflictions [~~at the earliest possible time~~] since it will be most effective if done early and not delayed;

“[—holistic early intervention strategies that include veterans’ families;]

“[—strengthening PTSD/TBI-related transitional care military-to-civilian and hospital-to-community structures.]

“[• Retraining/Employment Transitional Structures]

“—increasing funding for work programs to retrain vets as many of them are trained in skills that don’t readily translate into a civilian workforce.

“—Increase funding for retraining and employment transitional counseling structures.

“With these items we hope to promote a welcoming home of our wounded veterans, helping them to connect or reunite with their families, adapting to their challenges through prayer, pastoral counseling, and church support; and to help them reintegrate as happy members of church life and society.”

#### *Rationale*

Existing resources should be drawn upon but need to be supplemented by pastorally and congregationally oriented education materials not currently available through the PC(USA).

The Presbyterian Council on Military Chaplains has expertise and resources that can be drawn upon by presbyteries and pastors.

While some structures are in place, in some states, to assist veterans with PTSD or TBI and their families, veterans have expressed fear of reprisal or labeling in using these resources, some veterans are going undiagnosed, intervention is not always early or timely, attention to families of affected veterans needs to be increased, transition to civilian life and community/family re-integration must be facilitated in ways that are comprehensive, coherent, consistent, compassionate and timely.

#### **GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 21-04**

*Comment on Item 21-04—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The GAMC is aware of this ministry opportunity and through the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel (PCCMP) provides links to resources online to assist pastors and others in this care. See <http://www.pccmp.org> “Support for Military Members.”

## **Item 21-05**

**[The assembly approved Item 21-05 with amendment. See pp. 64, 68.]**

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Funding for Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) for AIDS Competency Training.*

**The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) does the following:**

**1. Commends and encourages Johnson C. Smith Seminary for their prophetic witness in creating as a mission program of the seminary the “Certification of AIDS Competent Church and Church Leaders” program in response to the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010), “Becoming an HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 72–73, 400 of the print version; pp. 72–73, 1370 of the electronic version).**

**2. Commends the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN), a member network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA), for their continued prophetic witness on issues of HIV and AIDS, and, encourages PAN to work in partnership with Johnson C. Smith and other theological institutions to resource the PC(USA) to become an HIV and AIDS competent church.**

3. ~~[Provides \$25,000 to the Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) to be utilized to support the development of and expand participation in certification of AIDS competent church and church leaders programs.]~~ **[Create an Extra Commitment Opportunity Account to support the AIDS ministry, to be utilized to support the development of and expand participation in certification of AIDS competent church and church leaders programs and distribute information to the mid councils and congregations that better educate the church to the existence of this opportunity.]**

#### *Rationale*

General Assembly reports often end up on dusty shelves, forgotten by the church. In contrast, students, staff, and faculty at Johnson C. Smith Seminary have taken seriously the 219th General Assembly (2010) charge to create HIV/AIDS competent churches. Located in a zip code with the fourth highest incidence of HIV infection in Georgia, their community is immediately impacted by this pandemic. The presence of the International AIDS Conference in the United States in July offers the PC(USA) an appropriate time to again lift up and recommit ourselves to equipping church leaders and congregations to respond to the pandemic.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved the document “*Becoming an HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action*” in response to HIV and AIDS pandemic. Included in that document were the following actions:

- Challenge the PC(USA) to become an HIV and AIDS competent denomination at all levels of the church and in all its ministries.
- Call upon congregations to accept the challenge to become an HIV and AIDS competent church by studying the HIV and AIDS related policies and resources of the PC(USA).
- Develop denominational standards defining the marks of HIV and AIDS competent congregations and ministries, in accordance with PC(USA) policies and in collaboration with ecumenical partners in HIV and AIDS ministries.
- Call upon presbyteries to include pastoral training related to HIV and AIDS competency as part of a qualified candidate’s preparation for ministry.
- Commend Presbyterian theological seminaries that have incorporated HIV and AIDS education into their community life.

In response to this action by the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the release in 2010 of a new National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States, Johnson C. Smith Seminary has created as a two-year mission program: *A Program of Certification of AIDS Competent Church and Church Leaders*.

The purpose of this program is to gather, equip, and mobilize church leaders to develop the skills and resources for creating AIDS competent congregations. Without advancing a particular biblical or theological position, the goal is to work with church leaders to formulate and articulate biblical, theological, pastoral, and moral/ethical foundations, which are consistent with each church’s mission/vision. Throughout the two years, participants will actively work with their congregations to address HIV and AIDS systematically and to integrate the foundations from the program into the life and ministry of their congregations.

The Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) looks forward to working closely with Johnson C. Smith Seminary to strengthen program participation and involve the whole church building an HIV and AIDS competent church.

Emily Rose Proctor, Presbytery of Baltimore  
Ruth Lytle Hamilton, Presbytery of National Capital

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#### ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-05

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 220th General Assembly (2012) approve Item 21-05.

#### *Rationale*

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved this report and recommended that our churches develop ways to implement programs in our communities that helped in nurturing congregations and leaders in skills development in response to this pandemic health concern.

Both Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary and PAN should be commended for the development of leaders, and this work should be supported and shared with the whole church as a start in the Presbyterian response.

This is a continuation of work that ACREC has done in this area and our recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy commends the potential implementation of the PC(USA) policy, “Becoming an HIV and AIDS Competent Church: Prophetic Witness and Compassionate Action.” The expansion of a Program of Certification of AIDS Competent Church and Church Leaders should be encouraged and supported, if fiscally possible, as a component of PC(USA) domestic mission.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) rationale for approving Item 21-05 with additional rationale below.

*Rationale*

HIV AIDS is the leading cause of death for African American Women age 25–34. American Psychological Association: ([apa.org/about/gr/issues/hiv/women.aspx](http://apa.org/about/gr/issues/hiv/women.aspx))

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**GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 21-05**

*Comment on Item 21-05—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

The General Assembly Mission Council affirms Johnson C. Smith Seminary for creating the “Certification of AIDS Competent Church and Church Leaders” and appreciates the work of the Presbyterian AIDS Network for its faithful witness on HIV and AIDS.

However, the General Assembly Mission Council does not have adequate financial resources to provide a \$25,000 grant to Presbyterian AIDS Network. An Extra Commitment Opportunity account could be established to accept monetary gifts to support the General Assembly Mission Council’s ministry efforts related to AIDS.

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## **Item 21-06**

**[The assembly disapproved Item 21-06 with comment. See pp. 64, 68.]**

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Calling the Church to a New Way Forward on the Issue of Pregnancies and Abortion.*

The 220th General Assembly (2012), recognizing the deep and long-standing division in the church concerning crisis pregnancies and abortion, longing for a way the church can better reflect the love of God and caring concern of the church for women and their unborn children, and believing there is a better way forward with great hope for the unity of the church, does the following:

1. Directs the General Assembly Mission Council, through Theology and Worship, to do the following:
  - a. Conduct a study of Scripture and *The Book of Confessions*.
  - b. Write a foundational paper that includes
    - (1) the meaning and implications of being ‘created in God’s image’;
    - (2) implications of Christ’s sacrificial death for humankind for how we love one another;
    - (3) implications of the biblical prohibition against the taking of human life in our cultural context;
    - (4) how the church might live out an understanding of children as a blessing from God as part of our participation in the baptismal covenant;
    - (5) the role of the church’s ministry in caring for the vulnerable; and

(6) suggestions for congregational ministry that extends care for women and their unborn children.

c. Bring the foundational paper back to the 221st General Assembly (2014) for approval

2. Requests PC(USA) Research Services to conduct a new Presbyterian Panel survey on crisis pregnancies and abortion, in order to accurately reveal the current opinions of Presbyterians on these matters.

a. Questions shall be carefully crafted to avoid bias.

b. Since abortion is legal in the U.S.A., questions should assume legality and focus instead on the morality of abortion.

c. Questions should also ask about the church's role to counsel regarding abortion and to offer ministry and support for women who are pregnant in difficult circumstances.

3. Calls upon the Office of Public Witness, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns, and Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options to adopt

a. a framework for advocacy that includes empowering the voice of the church in areas of essential unity but leaves to individual advocacy areas of division;

b. a plan to empower our global mission partners to provide education, prenatal care, and healthcare for women that seeks the well-being of both mother and child, born and unborn.

**[Comment: Item 21-06 calls for "A New Way forward on the issue of pregnancies and abortion." Considering this resolution invited the committee to consider the 1992 report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion. This noteworthy study brought twenty years of relative peace on a matter that has been a source of intense conflict in the PC(USA) for many years prior to the study. The study accomplished no mean feat in setting forth common ground that Presbyterian can gather around; common ground that eschews partisanship on either side of the cultural divide. We found insight and guidance in this document that was both eloquent and relevant to our work; therefore we do not see the need for a new study but rather commend the existing study to our church.]**

#### *Rationale*

In 1992, the PC(USA) approved the Report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion. In its opening pages, it talks about why this study was being undertaken. One of those reasons was to "be an agent of healing in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." In fact the special committee found that struggle in their own deliberations: "Our committee was faced with a diversity of passionately held views on problem pregnancies and abortion both without our group and in the church at large. In fact, the struggles of our church over these issues have been reflected in the struggles in our committee."

The turmoil in the church between 1983 and 1988 that prompted the study that resulted in "Problem Pregnancies and Abortion," adopted in 1992 continues after twenty years. The 1992 policy and statements since that time have not moved us forward in united mission to provide solutions that reduce the high numbers of abortions in our society.

Our disagreement in this part of the Body of Christ over whether abortion is morally acceptable and therefore a choice a woman may make in certain circumstances, or whether the life of the unborn child must be valued and protected as a separate individual created in God's image and one for whom Christ died, has continued to be politicized. There is little hope that a new social witness policy would resolve our differences. At the same time the current policy is outdated and in some ways embarrassing to those among us with scientific and medical education. It does not seem good to us to suggest a new social witness policy for several reasons:

1. Our divisions are long-standing and our rhetoric entrenched. It does not seem likely or helpful to the church to enter a process of dialogue with a goal of establishing a platform from which to advocate.

2. Our advocacy, empowered by majority vote, only serves to divide us further.

We need a new way to address crisis pregnancy and abortion and we need a new result. We need a statement that is based in Scripture and provides a foundation for cherishing the life of mother and child equally. We need plans for ministry that flow out of those things we can say and do together. There is much "in the middle" that fits that category, if we are willing to lay down our rhetoric and explore the possibilities together.

A new poll will help us to find that place of common ground and areas of ministry we can initiate as a whole denomination. Since 1992, there have been many advances in technology, shedding new light on the development of the unborn baby. Ultrasound technology leaves no doubt that the life developing in the womb of a woman from the earliest days of pregnancy is alive and is a small and developing human being. New studies also offer new information and a greater understanding of the physical and emotional impact of abortion on women and men and their families.

Many of us are experiencing a yearning to move past the entrenched debate and find what we can say and do together. It is a compelling motive for our younger generation and there is much compassionate ministry the church can engage in together to help women and their unborn babies live and thrive.

We are a people of God and so the place to begin to do things differently as a people seems to logically point toward a foundational theological statement about human life that guides our decision-making as individuals. We have too long focused on advocacy. It is time to plan and move toward compassionate ministry that helps women make good decisions that affirm God's best for their lives and the lives of their children.

Carl Batzel, Presbytery of Lachawanna  
Sydney Roosa, Presbytery of Plains and Peaks

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### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 21-06 be disapproved.

#### *Rationale*

The 1992 Report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion is a comprehensive policy that includes an extensive study of Scripture and Reformed Theology. The members of the committee found themselves in substantial agreement with regard to “biblical and theological foundations”—such as those listed in Item 21-06—even as they found differences in the ways that Presbyterians interpret Scripture (I.D.6). Item 21-06 appears to believe that another study of Scripture and *The Book of Confessions* would result in agreement on the part of all Presbyterians that human life begins at the moment of conception, thus making abortion for any reason, or at any point in fetal development, immoral. This approach contradicts the body of PC(USA) policy developed over the past thirty years regarding problem pregnancies and abortion.

In contrast, the 1992 policy honors the diverse opinions of Presbyterians on this matter and urges respect for women and their capacity as individuals to make faithful moral decisions in complex situations involving crisis pregnancies.

c. We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies.

To preserve women's capacity to make such decisions, the policy calls for the church to advocate for keeping access to legal and medically safe abortions, as well as to all forms of effective contraception, available. It calls for support of adoption and for churches to develop support centers for women facing unintended pregnancies.

In contrast, Item 21-06 would deny that an action of the General Assembly represents the “voice of the church” for public advocacy whenever some Presbyterians disagree with that action. This position would essentially silence the church's public witness on many issues. Without such advocacy, as we have witnessed recently, attacks on women's access to contraception and abortion could severely limit women's actual choices.

In addition, Item 21-06 would limit the church's support of global partners to only those organizations that agree with the resolution's belief that human life begins at the moment of conception. It would, in essence, deny resources to those organizations whose services include providing women with knowledge of and access to abortion services.

Contrary to bringing healing and unity to the church, Item 21-06 would eliminate the church's consistent advocacy for women's access to a full range of reproductive medical care.

### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 21-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 21-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)*

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) in disapproving Item 21-06 with additional rationale below.

#### *Rationale*

The ACWC supports the current PC(USA) policy that states we trust women and their medical and spiritual advisors on issues related to problem pregnancies. The church is called to be an advocate for women who face these circumstances.

Although more study of uterine transplants, in vitro fertilization, stem cell research, and so forth would be helpful, it would not deviate from our current positions.

There are neither the funds nor the necessity for a new theological study nor a Presbyterian Panel on the topic.

We refer others to General Assembly Mission Council publications:

“When Pregnancy Involves Loss”

“When You Need Wisdom”

“There’s Always A Father,” and

“When No Choice is Easy”

(Reprinted and Revised in 2010)

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### GAMC COMMENT ON ITEM 21-06

*Comment on Item 21-06—From the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC).*

#### 1. *Comment on Recommendation 1.b.(6):*

Recommendation 1.b.(6) asks the General Assembly to direct the General Assembly Mission Council to write resources with “suggestions for congregational ministry that extends care for women and their unborn children.” The General Assembly Mission Council has recently published resources with suggestions for congregational ministry that extends care for women and their unborn children.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) directed the GAMC to develop congregational resources on problem pregnancy. The GAMC reported to the 220th General Assembly (2010) that four problem pregnancy resources were created:

*When You Need Wisdom: Helping Others Face Problem Pregnancies*, PDS# 27-526-10-004,

*When No Choice Is Easy: For the Pregnant Woman*, PDS# 27-526-10-001,

*When Pregnancy Involves Loss: Helping Others Face Pregnancy Loss*, PDS# 27-526-10-003, and

*There's Always A Father: Does the Father Have a Problem, Too?*, PDS# 27-526-10-002.

Page 1 of *When You Need Wisdom: Helping Others Face Problem Pregnancies* reads: “Pastors are called upon to be informed, compassionate, sensitive, and helpful when it comes to counseling. This is a major challenge, yet all of these skills are needed when it comes to dealing with a problem pregnancy.”

Page 12 of *When Pregnancy Involves Loss: Helping Others Face Pregnancy Loss* references a statement from the 217th General Assembly (2006), which reads, “Pastors have a duty to counsel with and pray for those who face decisions about problem pregnancies. Congregations have a duty to pray for and support those who face these choices, to offer support for women and families to help make unwanted pregnancies less likely to occur, and to provide practical support for those facing the birth of a child with medical anomalies, birth after rape or incest, or those who face health, economic, or other stresses.”

The General Assembly Mission Council refers commissioners to the problem pregnancy resources referenced above, as well as the policy statement and study paper, *The Covenant of Life and the Caring Community and Covenant Creation: Theological Reflections on Contraception and Abortion* (PDS# OGA-88-109), the Report of the Special Committee on Problem Pregnancies and Abortion: Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly (Micah 6:8) (PDS# OGA-92-017), and the 2006 policy statement of the General Assembly, Item 10-01, On Late-Term Pregnancy.

#### 2. *Comment on Recommendation 3.b.:*

Prophetic and biblical advocacy speaks truth in love to power. In many cases, this does not create the type of unity called for in this commissioners’ resolution. Biblical prophecy is not comfortable. A major concern for the Office of Public Witness (OPW) is the extreme level of compromise that would be imposed on advocacy mandated by this and previous General Assemblies. Given the overall purpose of the work of the OPW, it must necessarily take up controversial issues in some instances in order to be effective and to faithfully respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, the question of defining “essential unity” is problematic. At what point does the church define “essential unity”? If “essential unity” requires unanimity, this commissioners’ resolution will fundamentally change the way the PC(USA) engages in *all* public witness.



## **SECTION THREE**

### **SUPPLEMENT:**

Roll of the General Assembly,  
Standing Rules,  
Moderators and Clerks,  
Members of Entities Elected by the General Assembly



**ROLL OF COMMISSIONERS AND ADVISORY DELEGATES**

**ABINGDON**

Teaching Elder Brad Simpson  
Ruling Elder Grace Bradshaw

**ALASKA**

Teaching Elder George Pasley  
Ruling Elder Laura Achee  
YAAD Hunter Badgley

**ALBANY**

Teaching Elder Bonnie Orth  
Ruling Elder Sal Sceccitano  
YAAD Patrick Nelson

**ARKANSAS**

Teaching Elder Breck Castleman  
Ruling Elder Claire Rhodes  
Teaching Elder Jesse Gonzalez  
Ruling Elder Dick Freer  
YAAD Ryan Smith

**ATLANTIC KOREAN**

Teaching Elder Youngho Lee  
Ruling Elder SSaguck Lee  
YAAD Joshua Lee

**BALTIMORE**

Teaching Elder John Thomas  
Ruling Elder James H. Williams  
Teaching Elder Emily Proctor  
Ruling Elder JoAnn Ruther  
Teaching Elder Stephen Tisinger  
Ruling Elder David Hutton  
YAAD Marcus Webster

**BEAVER-BUTLER**

Teaching Elder Tony Catullo  
Ruling Elder David Householder  
Teaching Elder James Moran  
Ruling Elder Sally Pavlina  
YAAD Steven McCoy

**BLACKHAWK**

Teaching Elder Bill Ward  
Ruling Elder Suzanne Finefield  
Teaching Elder Jim McCrea  
Ruling Elder Chuck Stiles  
YAAD Thomas Pitkin

**BOISE**

Teaching Elder Marci Glass  
Ruling Elder John Hicks  
YAAD Mathew Eardley

**BOSTON**

Teaching Elder Ward Holder  
Ruling Elder Gary MacConnell  
YAAD Elizabeth Stanfield

**CARLISLE**

Teaching Elder Steven Gribble  
Ruling Elder Scott Penner  
Teaching Elder Russell Sullivan Jr  
Ruling Elder Chris Enck  
YAAD Madison Neimer

**CASCADES**

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Ruling Elder Janet Anderson  
Teaching Elder Bruce Cameron  
Ruling Elder Shawn Foster  
Teaching Elder Barbara Campbell  
Ruling Elder Garry Rawson  
YAAD Victoria Syhalath

**CAYUGA-SYRACUSE**

Teaching Elder Bob French  
Ruling Elder Roberta Richardson  
YAAD Pearl Fischer

**CENTRAL FLORIDA**

Teaching Elder Ferdi Brits  
Ruling Elder Larry Colleton  
Teaching Elder Helen DeBevoise  
Ruling Elder Jane Miller  
Teaching Elder Tim Womack  
Ruling Elder Barbara Newsome  
Teaching Elder Scott Worth  
Ruling Elder Don Wingate  
YAAD Kyle Worth

**CENTRAL NEBRASKA**

Teaching Elder Leanne Masters  
Ruling Elder Steve Miller  
YAAD Jacob Hild-Kearney

**CENTRAL WASHINGTON**

Teaching Elder Pat Thompson  
Ruling Elder Samuel Dechter  
YAAD Kalee Auvil

**CHARLESTON-ATLANTIC**

Teaching Elder Philip West  
Ruling Elder Kate Keep  
Teaching Elder Heather Prince Doss  
Ruling Elder Clarissa W. Whaley  
Teaching Elder James Rogers  
Ruling Elder Shirley Hendrix  
YAAD Meagan Miller

**CHARLOTTE**

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Ruling Elder Paulette Purgason  
Teaching Elder Eustacia Moffett  
Marshall

Ruling Elder Walter Neely, Jr.  
Teaching Elder James Shelton  
Ruling Elder Bob Remsburg  
Teaching Elder Kate Murphy  
Ruling Elder Tina Dean  
Teaching Elder Flo Watkins  
Ruling Elder Joel Aelick  
YAAD Clement Bowman II

**CHEROKEE**

Teaching Elder Ben Laughlin  
Ruling Elder Robert Smalley III  
Teaching Elder Carol Wade  
Ruling Elder Sue McConnell  
YAAD Na Shin

**CHICAGO**

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Ruling Elder Jim Davidovich  
Teaching Elder Debbie Paton  
Ruling Elder Sam Evans  
Teaching Elder Grayson Van Camp  
Ruling Elder Juanita Holley  
Teaching Elder Judy Watt  
Ruling Elder Arrie Jones  
Teaching Elder Reggie Weaver  
Ruling Elder Jim Shrigley  
YAAD Amanda Gregus

**CIMARRON**

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Ruling Elder Steve Fairbanks  
YAAD Samantha Pennington

**CINCINNATI**

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Ruling Elder Becky Gibbs  
Teaching Elder Clarence Wallace  
Ruling Elder Deborah Ramey  
YAAD Colleen Kennedy

**COASTAL CAROLINA**

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Ruling Elder Priscilla Brower  
Teaching Elder Mills Peebles  
Ruling Elder James McLeod  
Teaching Elder Rogers Randall  
Ruling Elder Carl Orndoff  
Teaching Elder Hannah Vaughan  
Ruling Elder Roger Simmons  
YAAD Natalie Gladden

**DAKOTA**

Teaching Elder Ronn Moccasin  
Ruling Elder Fern Cloud

**DE CRISTO**

Teaching Elder Larry DeLong  
Ruling Elder Steve Brownson  
YAAD Karen Schmidt

**DENVER**

Teaching Elder James Emig  
Ruling Elder Nancy Dixon  
Teaching Elder Robert Ward  
Ruling Elder Olivia Hudson Smith  
YAAD Mikayla Loseke

**DES MOINES**

Teaching Elder Jim Howland  
Ruling Elder Joyce Rash  
Teaching Elder Shamaine  
Chambers King  
Ruling Elder Leland Smith  
YAAD Esther Chol

**DETROIT**

Teaching Elder William Adams III  
 Ruling Elder Stanley Edwards  
 Teaching Elder Emma Nickel  
 Ruling Elder Elaine Terrell Ellis  
 Teaching Elder Jason Pittman  
 Ruling Elder Martha Nelson  
 Teaching Elder Jim Porter  
 Ruling Elder Dianne Bostic  
 Robinson  
 YAAD DJ Brausch

**DONEGAL**

Teaching Elder Ray Meute  
 Ruling Elder Melissa Matheson  
 Teaching Elder Michael Wilson  
 Ruling Elder Ed Martin  
 Teaching Elder Brynne Crowe  
 Ruling Elder Nan Best  
 YAAD Laura Chambers

**EAST IOWA**

Teaching Elder Faye Fedlam  
 Ruling Elder Karen Bartel  
 Teaching Elder Matthew Froeschle  
 Ruling Elder Dwight Miller

**EAST TENNESSEE**

Teaching Elder Emily Anderson  
 Ruling Elder Jack Danner, Jr.  
 Teaching Elder Michael Stanfield  
 Ruling Elder Connie Umbach  
 YAAD Jenny Carter

**EASTERN KOREAN**

Teaching Elder Hyung Kyoo Kim  
 Ruling Elder Francis Ryu  
 YAAD Tim Park

**EASTERN OKLAHOMA**

Teaching Elder Dale Scott  
 Ruling Elder Craig Hoster  
 Teaching Elder Jennifer Grantham  
 Ruling Elder Martha Wettstein  
 YAAD Kyle Elliott

**EASTERN OREGON**

Teaching Elder Roger Harwerth  
 Ruling Elder Ginger Rembold  
 YAAD Hannah Harwerth

**EASTERN VIRGINIA**

Teaching Elder Edward Hanawalt  
 Ruling Elder Rick Bainbridge  
 Teaching Elder Bob Melone  
 Ruling Elder Gail Pittman  
 Teaching Elder Addie Peterson  
 Ruling Elder William Thro  
 YAAD Will Merritt

**EASTMINSTER**

Teaching Elder Bonnie Dutton  
 Ruling Elder Judi Bender  
 Teaching Elder Benjamin Graves  
 Ruling Elder Chet Cooper  
 YAAD Rachael Herriman

**ELIZABETH**

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 Ruling Elder Linwood Bagby  
 Teaching Elder James F. Thomas  
 Ruling Elder Jack Paddon  
 YAAD Ngwa Numfor

**FLINT RIVER**

Teaching Elder Gerald Little  
 Ruling Elder Rick Thurman  
 YAAD Alice Crawford

**FLORIDA**

Teaching Elder Hugh Hamilton  
 Ruling Elder Henry Goode  
 YAAD Kara Copeland

**FOOTHILLS**

Teaching Elder Dottie Metropol  
 Ruling Elder Dick Christopher  
 Teaching Elder Beth Hoskins  
 Ruling Elder Belton Lane  
 Teaching Elder Al Masters  
 Ruling Elder Mary Strom  
 YAAD Colin Pettigrew

**GENESEEE VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Aaron Doll  
 Ruling Elder Cathy Foerster  
 Teaching Elder Sam Picard  
 Ruling Elder Rutha Williams  
 YAAD Jeremy Glidden

**GENEVA**

Teaching Elder Beverly Karr-Lyon  
 Ruling Elder Graham Wightman  
 YAAD Steven Joint

**GIDDINGS-LOVEJOY**

Teaching Elder John Goodwin  
 Ruling Elder Judy Pickett  
 Teaching Elder Dieter Heinzl  
 Ruling Elder Stephanie Knopf  
 Teaching Elder Mary Newbern-Williams  
 Ruling Elder Dale Dickerson  
 YAAD Daniel Anderson-Little

**GLACIER**

Teaching Elder S Allen Foster  
 Ruling Elder Peggie Oury

**GRACE**

Teaching Elder Stuart Baskin  
 Ruling Elder Jimmy Chapman  
 Teaching Elder Chris Campbell  
 Ruling Elder Dan Francis  
 Teaching Elder Cyprian Guchienda  
 Ruling Elder Peggy Kenny  
 Teaching Elder Michael Waschevski  
 Ruling Elder Jack Moore  
 Teaching Elder Stacy Ikard  
 Ruling Elder Mike Vaughn  
 Teaching Elder Nancy Ramsay  
 Ruling Elder Linda Willis  
 YAAD Hope Seggelink

**GRAND CANYON**

Teaching Elder Debra Avery  
 Ruling Elder Dick Coffelt  
 Teaching Elder Ken Page  
 Ruling Elder Susan Goe  
 YAAD Kara Casanova

**GREAT RIVERS**

Teaching Elder Charlotte Poetschner  
 Ruling Elder Gary Davis  
 Teaching Elder Rick Tindall  
 Ruling Elder Nora Johnson  
 Teaching Elder Susan Krummel  
 Ruling Elder Nicholas Nott  
 YAAD Eric Myers

**GREATER ATLANTA**

Teaching Elder Craig Goodrich  
 Ruling Elder Joe Brown  
 Teaching Elder Susan Haynes  
 Ruling Elder Carol Dunbar  
 Teaching Elder Dana Hughes  
 Ruling Elder Mary Evans  
 Teaching Elder Jonier Orozco  
 Usuga  
 Ruling Elder Frank Malcolm  
 Teaching Elder Winston Lawson  
 Ruling Elder John Shevlin  
 Teaching Elder Todd Speed  
 Ruling Elder Celestine Tory  
 YAAD Cameron Ross

**HANMI**

Teaching Elder Il June Kang  
 Ruling Elder Danny Cho  
 YAAD Samuel Song

**HEARTLAND**

Teaching Elder Chad Herring  
 Ruling Elder Cheryl Keimig  
 Teaching Elder Glenda Watts  
 Ruling Elder Bob Stikeleather  
 Teaching Elder Paul Gaug  
 Ruling Elder Avis Odenbaugh  
 YAAD Connor Clark

**HOLSTON**

Teaching Elder John Shuck  
 Ruling Elder Anna Maddox  
 YAAD Emily Morrell

**HOMESTEAD**

Teaching Elder Cathy Allen  
 Ruling Elder Gale Barnhill  
 Teaching Elder Darin Bentzinger  
 Ruling Elder Robin Hadfield  
 YAAD Jeff Herpolsheimer

**HUDSON RIVER**

Teaching Elder David Kingsley  
 Ruling Elder Rob Trawick  
 Teaching Elder Rhonda Kruse  
 Ruling Elder Margery Rossi  
 YAAD Benjamin Perry

**HUNTINGDON**

Teaching Elder Charles Curley  
Ruling Elder Matthew Waddell  
YAAD Emily Reichard

**INDIAN NATIONS**

Teaching Elder Jim Burns Jr.  
Ruling Elder Joe Charles  
Teaching Elder Tracy Evans  
Ruling Elder Tara Brown  
YAAD Taylor Fike

**INLAND NORTHWEST**

Teaching Elder Marcia Taylor  
Ruling Elder Eileen Hartzog  
YAAD Daniel Renz

**THE JAMES**

Teaching Elder Sylvester Bullock  
Ruling Elder Elsa Falls  
Teaching Elder Nancy Summerlin  
Ruling Elder Ayars Lore  
Teaching Elder Jim Goodloe IV  
Ruling Elder Zella Spiers  
Teaching Elder Zoly Phillips III  
Ruling Elder Jon Sweigart  
YAAD Tyler McPhillips

**JOHN CALVIN**

Teaching Elder Becky Schwandt  
Ruling Elder Bill Budnick  
YAAD Brandt Shields

**THE JOHN KNOX**

Teaching Elder Shirley Funk  
Ruling Elder Allen Hanson  
Teaching Elder Craig Howard  
Ruling Elder Carol Lee Iverson  
YAAD Evangeline Smith

**KENDALL**

Teaching Elder Kevin Anderson  
Ruling Elder Patricia Perry  
YAAD James Petzke

**KISKIMINETAS**

Teaching Elder Rick Hurley  
Ruling Elder Sydney Atherton  
Teaching Elder Lisa Lyon  
Ruling Elder Connie Powers  
YAAD Benjamin Gandolfi

**LACKAWANNA**

Teaching Elder Carl Batzel  
Ruling Elder Bob Bryden  
YAAD Quintin Klenchik

**LAKE ERIE**

Teaching Elder Mary Kathryn Crom  
Ruling Elder Doug Megill  
Teaching Elder Susan Speakman  
Ruling Elder Charlie Blanchard  
YAAD Becca Schuster

**LAKE HURON**

Teaching Elder Teresa Peterson  
Ruling Elder Shaun Hardimon  
Teaching Elder John Musgrave  
Ruling Elder Jon Baker  
YAAD Maggie Watters

**LAKE MICHIGAN**

Teaching Elder Jim Hegedus  
Ruling Elder Sharon Brinks  
Teaching Elder George Hunsberger  
Ruling Elder Ron Hayes  
Teaching Elder Jeff Garrison  
Ruling Elder Janet Magennis  
YAAD Teresa Larson

**LEHIGH**

Teaching Elder David Duquette  
Ruling Elder Maureen Christy  
Teaching Elder Susan Pizor Yoder  
Ruling Elder Moufid Khoury  
YAAD Rachel Shussett

**LONG ISLAND**

Teaching Elder Yvonne Collier-  
Pendleton  
Ruling Elder Kirk Dorn  
Teaching Elder Jeffrey Prey  
Ruling Elder Scott Williams  
YAAD Lydia Frenzel-Sulyok

**LOS RANCHOS**

Teaching Elder Lance Allen  
Ruling Elder Judith Porath  
Teaching Elder Jason Ko  
Ruling Elder Judy Johnson  
Teaching Elder Emily McColl  
Ruling Elder Edwin Bush  
YAAD Lydia Yamaguchi

**MACKINAC**

Teaching Elder Becky Chamberlain  
Ruling Elder Kristin Benghauser

**MAUMEE VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Adrian Doll  
Ruling Elder Marcy St. John  
Teaching Elder Jeanne Gay  
Ruling Elder Lynn Bova  
YAAD Emma Bosley-Smith

**MIAMI VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Tom Harmon  
Ruling Elder Hank Baust  
Teaching Elder Sandy McConnel  
Ruling Elder Jodi Craiglow  
YAAD Caitlin Culp

**MID-KENTUCKY**

Teaching Elder Donna Melloan  
Ruling Elder Marcus Long  
Teaching Elder Jim Garrett  
Ruling Elder Marianne Humphries  
YAAD Darby Witherspoon

**MID-SOUTH**

Teaching Elder Lee Clements  
Ruling Elder Bonnie Blair  
Teaching Elder Brian Henderson  
Ruling Elder Phil Shannon  
YAAD Jeanne Marie Cummings

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE**

Teaching Elder John Cheetham  
Ruling Elder Wanda Barr  
Teaching Elder Todd Jones  
Ruling Elder Sallie Guy  
Teaching Elder Ernest Newsom  
Ruling Elder Ed Keith  
YAAD Meagan Lamb

**MIDWEST HANMI**

Ruling Elder Eunkiung Hahm  
YAAD Andrea Kim

**MILWAUKEE**

Teaching Elder Ann Gibbs  
Ruling Elder Lee Tan  
Teaching Elder Deb Bergeson-  
Graham  
Ruling Elder Mary Carlin  
YAAD Travis Serebin

**MINNESOTA VALLEYS**

Teaching Elder Scott Prouty  
Ruling Elder Laurie Drake  
Teaching Elder Sarah Butler  
Ruling Elder Stan Menning  
YAAD Mindy VandeBrake

**MISSION**

Teaching Elder Dan Fultz  
Ruling Elder Scott Payne  
Teaching Elder Robert Lohmeyer  
Ruling Elder Joe Pat Nance  
Teaching Elder Lynne Myers  
Ruling Elder Tripp Stuart  
Teaching Elder Kate Rascoe  
Ruling Elder Linda Tyler  
YAAD Julia Vettters

**MISSISSIPPI**

Teaching Elder Charles Bowdler  
Ruling Elder Steve Puryear  
YAAD Cleo Stigger

**MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Lyle Franzen  
Ruling Elder Patricia Shipley  
Teaching Elder Nancy Ross-  
Hullinger  
Ruling Elder Bob Sieck  
YAAD Evan Graumann

**MISSOURI UNION**

Teaching Elder Terry Kukuk  
Ruling Elder Danny Yochum  
YAAD Ben Zinkel

**MONMOUTH**

Teaching Elder Gary Filson  
 Ruling Elder Robert Lee  
 Teaching Elder Theresa Swenson  
 Ruling Elder Thelma Sessions  
 YAAD Caroline Thompson

**MUSKINGUM VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Darrell Holmes  
 Ruling Elder Timothy Thomas  
 Teaching Elder John Lane  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Tartir  
 YAAD YAAD Muskingum Valley

**NATIONAL CAPITAL**

Teaching Elder Ruth Hamilton  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Allen  
 Teaching Elder Larry Hayward  
 Ruling Elder Jerry Brown  
 Teaching Elder Jeff Krehbiel  
 Ruling Elder Janis Summers  
 Teaching Elder Tara McCabe  
 Ruling Elder Melinda Thompson  
 Teaching Elder Stephen Smith-  
 Cobbs

Ruling Elder Richard Wong  
 YAAD Elizabeth Storey

**NEVADA**

Teaching Elder Hilda Pecoraro  
 Ruling Elder Lyla Dusing  
 YAAD Zachariah Sell

**NEW BRUNSWICK**

Teaching Elder Muriel Burrows  
 Ruling Elder Lynn McCarty  
 Teaching Elder Jeffrey Ugoretz  
 Ruling Elder Alison Young  
 YAAD Ellen White

**NEW CASTLE**

Teaching Elder Brad Martin  
 Ruling Elder Charlie Collier  
 Teaching Elder Laurel Loveless  
 Ruling Elder Jane Murray  
 YAAD Sarah Hoopes

**NEW COVENANT**

Teaching Elder Blake Brinegar  
 Ruling Elder Jim Allison  
 Teaching Elder Mary Currie  
 Ruling Elder Jennifer Carr  
 Teaching Elder Vicky Jones  
 Ruling Elder Gail Northern  
 Teaching Elder Bob Murphy  
 Ruling Elder Jason Reed  
 Teaching Elder Jeffery Smith  
 Ruling Elder Nell Schwartz  
 YAAD Jennifer Paden

**NEW HARMONY**

Teaching Elder Gloria Williams  
 Ruling Elder Henry McFaddin  
 Teaching Elder Judith Cettei  
 Ruling Elder George Hampton  
 YAAD Kellyn Colclough

**NEW HOPE**

Teaching Elder Jullo Ramirez-Eve  
 Ruling Elder Peggy Griffin  
 Teaching Elder Elizabeth Michael  
 Ruling Elder Billy Leggett  
 Teaching Elder Candace Worth  
 Ruling Elder John Etheredge  
 Teaching Elder Paul Lang  
 Ruling Elder Susan Mazzara  
 YAAD Wilson Kennedy

**NEW YORK CITY**

Teaching Elder Mieke Vandersall  
 Ruling Elder Annie Rawlings  
 Teaching Elder Lonnie Bryant  
 Ruling Elder Lloyd Johnson  
 Teaching Elder José González-  
 Colón  
 Ruling Elder David Ofori, Jr  
 YAAD Joshua Narcisse

**NEWARK**

Teaching Elder Doris Glaspy  
 Ruling Elder Laura Phillips  
 YAAD Byron Elam

**NEWTON**

Teaching Elder Judy Kolwicz  
 Ruling Elder Craig Barth  
 Teaching Elder David Widmer  
 Ruling Elder Wendy Doidge  
 YAAD Sean Curtis

**NORTH ALABAMA**

Teaching Elder Lyndall Hamlett  
 Ruling Elder Norm Helmts  
 YAAD Piper Madison

**NORTH CENTRAL IOWA**

Teaching Elder Gordon Moen  
 Ruling Elder Marylynn Aalderks  
 Teaching Elder Shelly Wood  
 Ruling Elder Dave McCalley  
 YAAD Samantha Heinen

**NORTH PUGET SOUND**

Teaching Elder Ann Lewis  
 Ruling Elder Brie Wentzel  
 Teaching Elder Philip Jang  
 Ruling Elder Lorrie Nelson  
 YAAD Sean Jankovic

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA**

Teaching Elder Bob Bohler Jr.  
 Ruling Elder Gloria Burns  
 Teaching Elder Alice T. Wood  
 Ruling Elder John Gregg  
 YAAD Kerry McGill

**NORTHERN KANSAS**

Teaching Elder Timothy Maguffee  
 Ruling Elder Melanie Hancock  
 YAAD Sydney Ho

**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

Teaching Elder Rebecca Strader  
 Ruling Elder Joanne Hardy  
 YAAD Liz Washington

**NORTHERN NEW YORK**

Teaching Elder Joann White  
 Ruling Elder Ronald Sinclair  
 YAAD YAAD Northern NY

**NORTHERN PLAINS**

Teaching Elder Keri Shelton  
 Ruling Elder Dixon Moorhead  
 YAAD Mekayla Shelton

**NORTHERN WATERS**

Teaching Elder Matthew Arneson  
 Ruling Elder Roger Anderson  
 YAAD Alex Tandberg

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

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 Ruling Elder William Foresman

**PRESBITERIO DEL NOROESTE**

Teaching Elder Veronica Soto-  
 Feliciano  
 Ruling Elder Federico Santiago-  
 Torres  
 YAAD Claudia Pagan-Guadalupe

**OHIO VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Jack Cormack  
 Ruling Elder Warren Ward  
 YAAD Taylon Wilkinson

**OLYMPIA**

Teaching Elder Thomas  
 Kirkpatrick  
 Ruling Elder Ruling Elder Olympia  
 Teaching Elder Melody Young  
 Ruling Elder Irene Van Arnam  
 YAAD YAAD Olympia

**THE PACIFIC**

Teaching Elder David Worth  
 Ruling Elder Tom Fleming  
 Teaching Elder Cathy Chisholm  
 Ruling Elder Brian Symonds  
 YAAD Jessica Ballard

**PALISADES**

Teaching Elder Debra Given  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Ryder  
 YAAD Michele Forbes

**PALO DURO**

Teaching Elder Randy Branson  
 Ruling Elder Ron Bender  
 Teaching Elder Mary D D'Alessio  
 Ruling Elder Sally Brantley  
 YAAD Nicole Molter

**PEACE RIVER**

Teaching Elder Chris Romig  
 Ruling Elder Roger Robinson  
 Teaching Elder Kathleen Weller  
 Ruling Elder James Padula  
 Teaching Elder Hope Lee  
 Ruling Elder Laura Miller  
 YAAD Peter Elsdon

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Teaching Elder Dale Brown  
 Ruling Elder Richard Claterbaugh  
 Teaching Elder David Etheridge  
 Ruling Elder Sarah Eller  
 Teaching Elder Catherine McCollough  
 Ruling Elder Elease Wilson  
 YAAD Erin Beard

**PHILADELPHIA**

Teaching Elder Randy Barge  
 Ruling Elder Harold Pugh  
 Teaching Elder Martha Bowman  
 Ruling Elder William Schuler  
 Teaching Elder Schaunel Steinnagel  
 Ruling Elder Catherine Adams  
 Teaching Elder Keith Roberts  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Geiger  
 Teaching Elder Joseph Steele  
 Ruling Elder Carolyn Jeffrey  
 YAAD Kristen O'Connell

**PINES**

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 Ruling Elder Brenda Jacobs  
 YAAD Taylor Blevins

**PITTSBURGH**

Teaching Elder Diana Harbison  
 Ruling Elder Tami Licht  
 Teaching Elder Peter Grosso  
 Ruling Elder Hutch Hutchison  
 Teaching Elder Dirk Lesnett  
 Ruling Elder Frank Hancock  
 Teaching Elder Lynn Portz  
 Ruling Elder Fred Shields  
 Teaching Elder Jeff Tindall  
 Ruling Elder Joyce Matthews  
 YAAD Amanda Wade

**PLAINS & PEAKS**

Teaching Elder Brad Gustafson  
 Ruling Elder Sydney Roosa  
 Teaching Elder Sue Spencer  
 Ruling Elder Sylvia Dooling  
 YAAD Julia Campfield

**PROSPECT HILL**

Teaching Elder Matthew Miller  
 Ruling Elder Matt Pearson  
 YAAD Clara Wulfsen

**PROVIDENCE**

Teaching Elder Douglass Key  
 Ruling Elder Frances Daniel  
 Teaching Elder James Platt  
 Ruling Elder Shirnetha Belk  
 YAAD Sally Horne

**PUEBLO**

Teaching Elder Tom Trinidad  
 Ruling Elder Barb Gilliland  
 YAAD YAAD Pueblo

**REDSTONE**

Teaching Elder Chris Enoch  
 Ruling Elder Harry Albert  
 Teaching Elder Carole Isley Corey  
 Ruling Elder Faye Springer  
 YAAD Shelly Edwards  
**REDWOODS**  
 Teaching Elder David Moon-Wainwright  
 Ruling Elder Ariel Mink  
 YAAD Alex Peterson

**RIVERSIDE**

Teaching Elder Ralph Mueller  
 Ruling Elder Jane Rousser  
 YAAD Jackie Anderson

**SACRAMENTO**

Teaching Elder Jeanie Shaw  
 Ruling Elder Anna Niemann Perrine  
 Teaching Elder Ivan Herman  
 Ruling Elder David Seung-il Rue  
 YAAD Taylor Tague

**ST. ANDREW**

Teaching Elder Frank Beck  
 Ruling Elder Benjamin Chiles Jr.  
 YAAD Joe Butler

**ST. AUGUSTINE**

Teaching Elder Tim Simpson  
 Ruling Elder Edd Norris  
 Teaching Elder Susan Takis  
 Ruling Elder Carol Waters  
 Teaching Elder Tara Thompson  
 Ruling Elder Jim Montgomery  
 YAAD Kaitlyn Fuller

**SALEM**

Teaching Elder Tempe' Fussell  
 Ruling Elder Mack Dagenhart  
 Teaching Elder John Johnson  
 Ruling Elder Emmy Floyd  
 Teaching Elder Timothy Bates  
 Ruling Elder George White  
 Teaching Elder Benton Trawick  
 Ruling Elder Annie Bates  
 Teaching Elder Kristi Rolison  
 Ruling Elder Eglá Garcia  
 YAAD Hannah Trawick

**SAN DIEGO**

Teaching Elder Jack Baca  
 Ruling Elder David Buck  
 Teaching Elder Chris Lenocker  
 Ruling Elder Frances Lin  
 YAAD YAAD San Diego

**SAN FERNANDO**

Teaching Elder Paul Clairville  
 Ruling Elder Beverly Stokes  
 YAAD Jessica Phoenix

**SAN FRANCISCO**

Teaching Elder David Brown  
 Ruling Elder Miriam Dolin  
 Teaching Elder Kim Nelson  
 Ruling Elder Joan Fong  
 Teaching Elder Gregory Roth  
 Ruling Elder Tony López  
 Teaching Elder Anne Amburgey Swanson  
 Ruling Elder Lois Zollars  
 YAAD Taylor Reno

**SAN GABRIEL**

Teaching Elder David Lutz  
 Ruling Elder Peter Chung  
 Teaching Elder Matthew Colwell  
 Ruling Elder Jane Douglass  
 YAAD Steven Watts

**SAN JOAQUIN**

Teaching Elder Jim Rogers  
 Ruling Elder Mark Vanciel  
 YAAD Trish Gabel

**SAN JOSE**

Teaching Elder Aimee Moiso  
 Ruling Elder Judi Johnson  
 Teaching Elder Tom Coop  
 Ruling Elder Pat Plant  
 YAAD Matthew Fackler

**PRESBITERIO DE SAN JUAN**

Teaching Elder Edwin González-Castillo  
 Ruling Elder Jose Rosa-Rivera  
 YAAD Alejandra Rosa

**SANTA BARBARA**

Teaching Elder David Berge  
 Ruling Elder Robert Nye Jr

**SANTA FE**

Teaching Elder Frank Yates  
 Ruling Elder Rickisue Daly  
 YAAD Lindsay Stansifer

**SAVANNAH**

Teaching Elder Eric Beene  
 Ruling Elder Charles Rogers  
 YAAD James Morgan

**SCIOTO VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Tracy Keenan  
 Ruling Elder Acheampong Boamah  
 Teaching Elder Charlotte O'Neil  
 Ruling Elder Betty Kennedy  
 Teaching Elder Janice Hilkerbaumer  
 Ruling Elder Dick Glass  
 YAAD Ella O'Neil

**SEATTLE**

Teaching Elder Scott Mann  
 Ruling Elder Thomas Forstall  
 Teaching Elder Janine Moriarty  
 Ruling Elder Irv Kellenberger  
 Teaching Elder Robert Bayley  
 Ruling Elder Brad Hurte  
 YAAD Jeremy Odden

**SHENANDOAH**

Teaching Elder Bob Osborne  
 Ruling Elder Linda Koogler  
 Teaching Elder Patrick Pettit  
 Ruling Elder Jim Johnston  
 Teaching Elder Sally Robinson  
 Ruling Elder Mary Lou McMillin  
 YAAD Logan McDonald

**SHENANGO**

Teaching Elder David Dobi  
 Ruling Elder Dale Deist  
 Teaching Elder Amy Na  
 Ruling Elder Karen Hudson  
 YAAD Caitlin Moss

**SHEPPARD & LAPSLEY**

Teaching Elder Mary Porter  
 Ruling Elder Lee Walthall  
 Teaching Elder Cody Watson  
 Ruling Elder Tommy Tillman, Jr.  
 YAAD Emily Jenkins

**SIERRA BLANCA**

Teaching Elder Norman Story  
 Ruling Elder Janell Kane  
 YAAD Linsey Ogden

**SOUTH ALABAMA**

Teaching Elder Joseph Johnson  
 Ruling Elder Robert McMillan  
 YAAD Madison Vaughn

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

Teaching Elder Valerie Putnam  
 Ruling Elder Gayle Janzen  
 YAAD A'Lece Boomsma

**SOUTH LOUISIANA**

Teaching Elder John Blewitt  
 Ruling Elder Tom Tucker  
 YAAD Susan Egbert

**SOUTHEAST ILLINOIS**

Teaching Elder Jan Hawkins  
 Ruling Elder Granger Odum  
 Teaching Elder Thomas Hawkins  
 Ruling Elder Mary Turner

**SOUTHERN KANSAS**

Teaching Elder Seth Svaty  
 Ruling Elder Howard Means  
 Teaching Elder Amy Dame  
 Ruling Elder David Grisham  
 YAAD Alley Lehman

**SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

Teaching Elder Steven Thayer  
 Ruling Elder Art Riihimaki  
 Teaching Elder Arthur Shippee  
 Ruling Elder Annette Goard  
 YAAD Christopher McCloskey

**PRESBITERIO DEL SUROESTE**

Teaching Elder Carmen Torres-  
 Cordero  
 Ruling Elder Sandra Marcial-  
 Ramirez

**STOCKTON**

Teaching Elder Robert Mitchell  
 Ruling Elder Charlie Brown

**SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Timothy Devine  
 Ruling Elder Joan Wise-Hostetter  
 YAAD Sarah Erckert

**TAMPA BAY**

Teaching Elder Jan Banker  
 Ruling Elder Helen Allen  
 Teaching Elder David Delph  
 Ruling Elder David Childs  
 Teaching Elder Frederick Terry  
 Ruling Elder Bob Fjellin  
 YAAD Shelby Dale

**TRANSYLVANIA**

Teaching Elder Fred Hood  
 Ruling Elder Marilyn Daniel  
 Teaching Elder Jennifer Johnson  
 Ruling Elder Nik Fegenbush  
 YAAD Brittany Bentine

**TRES RIOS**

Teaching Elder Katherine Norvell  
 Ruling Elder Martha Crump  
 YAAD Daniel Heare

**TRINITY**

Teaching Elder James Lee  
 Ruling Elder Kelley Brown  
 Teaching Elder Chris Leonard  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Clarkson  
 Teaching Elder Karen Newsome  
 Ruling Elder Steve Marshall  
 YAAD Brock McLeod

**TROPICAL FLORIDA**

Teaching Elder David Massey  
 Ruling Elder Marianne Shine  
 Teaching Elder Gwendolyn Magby  
 Ruling Elder Elizabeth Torres  
 YAAD Corinne Robertson

**TWIN CITIES AREA**

Teaching Elder Bill Davnie  
 Ruling Elder Jerry Ganfield  
 Teaching Elder Don Genereux  
 Ruling Elder Paul Harkess  
 Teaching Elder Joann Lee  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Lutter  
 Teaching Elder Stan Martin  
 Ruling Elder Kitty Martin  
 YAAD Rachel Hagen

**UPPER OHIO VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Larry Kline, Jr  
 Ruling Elder Gwen Scales  
 YAAD Paul Jancura

**UTAH**

Teaching Elder Ralph Clingan  
 Ruling Elder Dave Adamson  
 YAAD Christian Herman  
 Teaching Elder Victor McKusick  
 Ruling Elder George Whitton

**WABASH VALLEY**

Teaching Elder Mary Ann Banning  
 Ruling Elder Andrew Betts  
 Teaching Elder Jerry Egger  
 Ruling Elder Joe Hufford  
 YAAD J.T. Schwartz

**WASHINGTON**

Teaching Elder Louise Corbett  
 Ruling Elder Judy Mayer  
 Teaching Elder Peggy Shannon  
 Ruling Elder Homer Mounts  
 YAAD Eric Spangenberg

**WEST JERSEY**

Teaching Elder Debbie Cerra  
 Ruling Elder Doug Derry  
 Teaching Elder Phil Oehler  
 Ruling Elder Ed Slaughter  
 YAAD Jane Iheukwumere

**WEST VIRGINIA**

Teaching Elder Carl Pattison  
 Ruling Elder Joyce Armentrout  
 Teaching Elder Peter Vial  
 Ruling Elder Ken Bibbee, Jr.  
 YAAD Tory Parker

**WESTERN COLORADO**

Teaching Elder Steve Nofel  
 Ruling Elder Barb TerLouw  
 YAAD Mallorye Duran

**WESTERN KENTUCKY**

Teaching Elder John Guthrie  
 Ruling Elder Willee Cooper  
 YAAD Rachel Stevenson

**WESTERN NEW YORK**

Teaching Elder Justin Marple  
 Ruling Elder Connie Lockwood  
 Teaching Elder Bill Hennessy  
 Ruling Elder Allan Grimm  
 YAAD Brad Hahn



THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Teaching Elder Riley Covin  
 Ruling Elder Gayle Deas  
 Teaching Elder Margaret Torrence  
 Ruling Elder Barbara Ross  
 Teaching Elder Bill Campbell  
 Ruling Elder Jay Crane  
 YAAD Emma Frellick

WESTERN RESERVE

Teaching Elder Jessie MacMillan  
 Ruling Elder Jim Hart  
 Teaching Elder Meredith White-Zeager  
 Ruling Elder Marilyn Kornowski  
 YAAD Laurel Steinetz

WHITEWATER VALLEY

Teaching Elder Steve Ebling  
 Ruling Elder Miki Bean  
 Teaching Elder Rex Espiritu  
 Ruling Elder Martha McDonald  
 Teaching Elder Gretchen Schneider  
 Ruling Elder Bill Werling  
 YAAD Ben Busald

WINNEBAGO

Teaching Elder Randy Argall  
 Ruling Elder Anneliese Waggoner  
 YAAD Sarah Johanke

WYOMING

Teaching Elder Bob Garrard  
 Ruling Elder Carol Maloy  
 YAAD Lauren Trohklmoinen

YELLOWSTONE

Teaching Elder Jody McDevitt  
 Ruling Elder Caroline Fleming  
 YAAD Katherine Holland

YUKON

Teaching Elder Piper Cartland  
 Ruling Elder Curtis McNeill  
 YAAD Miles Green

OTHER ADVISORY DELEGATES

Theological Student Advisory Delegates

Laureen Suba	Austin
Allie Utley	Austin
Simone Adams	Columbia
Doug Friesema	Columbia
Leigh Benish	Univ of Dubuque
Michael Smith	Univ of Dubuque
Karey Poinsette	Johnson C. Smith
D'Jaris Canty-Wallace	Johnson C. Smith
Madison Munoz	Louisville
Nikki Cooley	Louisville
Angela Ryo	McCormick
Judith Riethmiller	Pittsburgh
Jo Ann Simonson	Pittsburgh
Jon Reinink	Princeton
Brittany Tamminga	Princeton
Jeffery Ferguson	San Francisco
Cameron Highsmith	San Francisco
Liz Wagner	Union Presbyterian
TJ Remaley	Union Presbyterian
Blair Moorhead	Union New York
Jose Robles-Rosario	Evangelical PR
Brian Bivin	Fuller
Stephen Hiemstra	Gordon Conwell
Deborah Mahaney	New York Theological

Missionary Advisory Delegates

Les Morgan	Bangladesh
Liz Searles	Poland
Tim Carriker	Brazil
Anne Dayanandan	India
Frank Dimmock	Lesotho
Sarah Henken	Bolivia
Nuhad Tomeh	Lebanon
Carolyn Weber	Ethiopia

Ecumenical Advisory Delegates

Miguel Fernando Estrada Salvador	Natl Ev Pres Ch Guatemala
David Riitho Gathanju	Presby Ch of East Africa
Victor Chilenje	Ch Cen Africa Pres, Zambia Synod
Kadarmanto Hardjowasito	Christian Ch. of Java (GKJ)
Wu Wei	China Christian Council
Dimitrios Boukis	Greek Evangelical Church
Pawel Wolski-Brodzinski	Ref Evang Church in Poland
Fadi Dagher	Nat Ev Syn of Syria & Lebanon
Mabel Gonnet	Waldensian Evan Ch River Plate
Jeffrey Japinga	Reformed Church in America
Jill Westbrook	Moravian Ch (North. & South. Syn)
H. Robert Rhoden	Assemblies of God
Tyrone Pitts	Progressive Nat Baptist Conv
Lina Moukheiber	Greek Ortho Patriarchate of Antioch

Ecumenical Representatives

Fadi Diab	The Episcopal Ch. of the Redeemer
James Foucher	United Church of Christ
Francisco Vicente	
Marrero Gutiérrez	Presby. Reformed Church in Cuba
Daniel Hamby	The Episcopal Church
Herman Harmelink III	International Council of Comm. Ch.
G. Lynne Herring	Cumberland Presby Chs in America
Tseliso Simeon Masemene	Lesotho Evangelical Church
Donald J. McCoid	Evangel Lutheran Church in America
John L. McCullough	Church World Service
Peter Nimmo	The Church of Scotland
We Kun Park	Presbyterian Church of Korea
Jerry Pillay	Uniting Presby Ch in South. Africa
William G. Johnson	Seventh Day Adventist
Natasha Klukach	World Council of Churches
Hong-Tiong Lyim	Presby. Ch. of Taiwan
Musa Adamu Manesseh	Ref Ch of Christ in Nigeria
Reuel Norman Ofilas Marigza	Unit. Ch. of Christ Philippines
Juan Bautista Rodas Flores	Presby Ch on Honduras
Michael Sharpe	Cumberland Presbyterian Ch
Stephen Sidorak	United Methodist Church
Leonard Vander Zee	Christian Reformed Church

**CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, Staff

Gradye Parsons  
 Loyda Aja  
 Kerry Clements  
 Tom Hay  
 Fred Heuser  
 Jill Hudson  
 Marcia Myers  
 Robina Winbush  
 Tim Cargal  
 Molly Casteel  
 Deborah Davies  
 Laurie Griffith  
 Joyce Lieberman  
 Jewel McRae  
 Martha Miller  
 Kay Moore  
 Christopher Nicholas  
 Kerry Rice  
 Valerie Small  
 Kris Valerius  
 Sharon Youngs  
 Andrew Black  
 Melissa Garrett Davis Gee

Advisory Committee on the Constitution

W. Keith Geckeler  
 Paul Hooker  
 Catherine MacDonald  
 Daniel Saperstein  
 Therese Howell  
 Heahwan Rim  
 Susan Evans  
 Stewart Pollock  
 Tim Read

Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

Bob Wilson  
 Ginny Rainey  
 Leah Johnson  
 Vincent Thomas  
 John Wilkinson  
 Eileen Lindner  
 Kent Grimes  
 Jerrod Lowry  
 Marcia Mount Shoop  
 Alejandra Spir-Haddad  
 Chris Rhodes  
 Dennis Hughes

Other Permanent and Special Committees

Scott Anderson	Comm on Ecumenical & Interreligious Relations
Catherine Purves	GA Nominating Committee
Alma-jean Marion	GA Committee on Representation
Susan Cornman	GA Permanent Judicial Commission
Paul Watermulder	Presbyterian Historical Society
Dennis Hughes	Stated Clerk Nomination Committee
Marcus Lambright	Comm to Review Biennial Assemblies,
Tod Bolsinger	Mid Council Commission,
Carol Merritt	Spec Comm - Nature of the Church 21st Cent,
Neal Lloyd	Spec Comm on Authoritative Interpretations,
David Stubbs	Special Comm on the Heidelberg Catechism,
Laurie Anderson	Monitoring Group on the Middle East,
Barbara Campbell Davis	Review Committee on PILP,
David Hintz	Review Committee on PPC

GAMC and Other Corporations

Clark Cowden	General Assembly Mission Council	Gloria Albrecht	Adv Comm on Social Witness Policy
Matt Schramm	General Assembly Mission Council	Stephen Hsieh	Adv Comm on Rac. Ethnic Concern,
Roger Gench	General Assembly Mission Council	Jan Martin	Adv Comm for Women's Concerns
Carolyn McLarnan	General Assembly Mission Council	Chandler Stokes	Committee on Theological Education
Alan Ford	General Assembly Mission Council	Robert Maggs	Board of Pensions
Michael Kruse	General Assembly Mission Council	Tom Paisley	Board of Pensions
Marta Rodriguez	General Assembly Mission Council	Tom Taylor	Presbyterian Foundation
Joyce Smith	General Assembly Mission Council	Doug McArthur	Presbyterian Foundation
Arthur Canada	General Assembly Mission Council	Jay Hudson	Presb Investment & Loan Program
David Crittenden	General Assembly Mission Council	Jim Rea	Presb Investment & Loan Program
Vince Patton	General Assembly Mission Council	Marc Lewis	Presb Publishing Corporation
Martha Clark	General Assembly Mission Council	Deborah Block	Presb Publishing Corporation
Linda Valentine	General Assembly Mission Council		
Joey Bailey	General Assembly Mission Council		
Roger Dermody	General Assembly Mission Council		

**Theological Institution Presidents**

Bill Carl	Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Jim McDonald	San Francisco Theological Seminary
Michael Jinkins	Louisville Theological Seminary
Steve Hayner	Columbia Theological Seminary
Ted Wardlaw	Austin Theological Seminary
Brian Blount	Princeton Theological Seminary
Katharine Henderson	Auburn Theological Seminary
Jeffrey Bullock	Dubuque Theological Seminary
Frank Yamada	McCormick Theological Seminary
Paul Roberts	Johnson C. Smith Seminary

**Moderators, Former Moderators**

Cynthia Bolbach	Former Moderator
Fahed AbuAkel	Former Moderator
Susan Andrews	Former Moderator
Robert Bohl	Former Moderator
Pat Brown	Former Moderator
John Buchanan	Former Moderator
Marj Carpenter	Former Moderator
David Dobler	Former Moderator
Freda Gardner	Former Moderator
Bruce Reyes-Chow	Former Moderator
Syngman Rhee	Former Moderator
Jack Rogers	Former Moderator
Rick Ufford-Chase	Former Moderator
Herbert Valentine	Former Moderator

**Synod Executives**

Phil Brown	Lakes and Prairies
Rob Brink	The Pacific
Gerry Tyer	The Sun
Carol McDonald	Lincoln Trails
David Ezekiel	The Rocky Mountains
Raafat Zaki	The Covenant
Terry Newland	Living Waters
Harold Delhagen	The Northeast
Joyce Emery	Alaska-Northwest
David McKee	Mid-Atlantic
Landon Whitsitt	Mid-America
Doska Ross	S. California and Hawaii
Conrad Rocha	The Southwest
Heahwan Rim	South Atlantic

**Assembly Assistants**

Tony Aja	Ellie Johns-Kelley
Chip Andrus	K. Joy Kaufmann
Phil Barrett	Howard Kim
Laura Cheifetz	Don Lincoln
Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri	Kathy Lueckert
Jim Collie	Jeff Moles
Bob Frasier	Conrad Rocha
Rhoda Frasier	Steve Smith
Glen Guenther	Carl James Sohn
Myung Han	Amaury Tanon-Santos
Robert Hay	Tamara Williams
Kevin Hay	Nathan Young
Ken Hockenberry	

**Committee Assistants**

Diana Barber	Sally Hinchman
Mary Gene Boteler	Dee Hoge
Linda Culbertson	Howard Jackson
Theresa Denton	Rebecca Kirkpatrick
Judy Fletcher	Rick Nutt
Amy Fowler	Kevin Porter
Arlene Gordon	Laura Stellmon
Steve Grace	Mary Lee Talbot
Bridgett Green	Sallie Watson
Vanessa Hawkins	Steve Yamaguchi

**Student Assistants**

Margaret Alsup	GINNA IRBY
Casey Carbone	Amy Kinkovsky
Nick Dougherty	Melva Lowry
Debbie Dyslin	Mike McCracken
Rachael Eggebeen	John McDonald
Karol Farris	Alycia Nelson
Mike Glisson	Jamieson Prevoznak
Rachel Helgeson	Dakota Santana-Grace
Tad Hopp	Daniel Williams

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Mid Council Staff and Stated Clerks**

Syn SC	Deb Grohman	The Northeast	Pby Exec	John Best	Lake Michigan
Syn SC	Lesley Shoup	The Trinity	Pby Ex/SC	Steve Shussett	Lehigh
Syn SC	Douglas Tracy	Lincoln Trails	Pby Staff	Tom Cramer	Los Ranchos
Syn SC	David Bartley	The Covenant	Pby Exec	Pat Megregian	Mackinac
Syn SC	Muriel Brown	Alaska-Northwest	Pby Exec	Susan Meier	Maumee Valley
Syn SC	Antonio Roldan	Boriquen En Puerto Rico	Pby Exec	Dennis Piermont	Miami Valley
Act. SC	Katherine Cunningham	Palisades	Pby Exec	Betty Meadows	Mid-Kentucky
Act. SC	Sarah Donnelly	Baltimore	Pby Exec	Jimmie Lancaster	Mid-South
Pby Exec	David Dobler	Alaska	Pby Exec	Linda Becker	Middle Tennessee
Pby Exec	Cass Shaw	Albany	Pby Exec	Hilary Shuford	Mission
Pby Exec	Bill Galbraith	Arkansas	Pby Exec	Steven Plank	Missouri River Valley
Pby Exec	Peter Nord	Baltimore	Pby Exec	Joan Erickson	Missouri Union
Pby Ex/SC	Alan Adams	Beaver-Butler	Pby Exec	Wendy Bailey	Monmouth
Pby Ex/SC	John Rickard	Blackhawk	Pby Exec	Deborah Rundlett	Muskingum Valley
Pby Exec	Edward Dunn	Boise	Pby Exec	G. Wilson Gunn Jr.	National Capital
Pby Exec	Wayne Parrish	Boston	Pby Exec	James Moseley	New Castle
Pby Exec	Mark Englund-Krieger	Carlisle	Pby Exec	Mike Cole	New Covenant
Pby Ex/SC	Marianne Rhebergen	Cayuga-Syracuse	Pby Ex/SC	Bruce Ford	New Harmony
Pby Ex/SC	Bob Houser	Central Nebraska	Pby Ex/SC	Ted Churn	New Hope
Pby Exec	David Lambertson	Central Washington	Pby Exec	Tony De La Rosa	New York City
Pby Ex/SC	Donnie Woods	Charleston-Atlantic	Pby Exec	Kevin Yoho	Newark
Pby Exec	Timm High	Charlotte	Pby Exec	Warner Durnell	North Alabama
Pby Exec	Bob Reynolds	Chicago	Pby Exec	David Feltman	North Central Iowa
Pby Exec	Jim Bellatti	Cimarron	Pby Exec	Corey Schlosser-Hall	North Puget Sound
Pby Exec	James DiEgidio	Cincinnati	Pby Exec	Ken Meeks Jr.	Northeast Georgia
Pby Ex/SC	Charles Elliott	Coastal Carolina	Pby Ex/SC	Ed Thompson	Northern Kansas
Pby Ex/SC	Sue Westfall	de Cristo	Pby Exec	Cindy Kohlmann	North. New England
Pby Exec	Phil Barrett	Des Moines	Pby Exec	William Knudsen	Northumberland
Pby Exec	Al Timm	Detroit	Pby Exec	Susan McGhee	Ohio Valley
Pby Exec	Erin Cox-Holmes	Donegal	Pby Exec	Lynn Longfield	Olympia
Pby Exec	Harry Olthoff	East Iowa	Pby Exec	Bruce Tischler	Palisades
Pby Exec	Judd Shaw	East Tennessee	Pby Exec	Joseph Faragalla	Palisades
Pby Exec	Samuel Kim	Eastern Korean	Pby Exec	Richard Schempp	Palo Duro
Pby Exec	Greg Coulter	Eastern Oklahoma	Pby Exec	Graham Hart	Peace River
Pby Exec	Linda Toth	Eastern Oregon	Pby Exec	Lucy Rupe	Philadelphia
Pby Exec	Dan Schomer	Eastminster	Pby Exec	Joe Hill	Pines
Pby Exec	Greg Albert	Elizabeth	Pby Exec	Sheldon Sorge	Pittsburgh
Pby Exec	Paul Luthman	Flint River	Pby Exec	Daniel Saperstein	Plains And Peaks
Pby Ex/SC	George Wilkes	Foothills	Pby Ex/SC	John Pehrson	Prospect Hill
Pby Exec	Amy Fowler	Genesee Valley	Pby Ex/SC	Mark Verdery	Providence
Pby Ex/SC	Joelle Davis	Geneva	Pby Exec	Ronald Anderson	Pueblo
Pby Exec	Craig Palmer	Giddings-Lovejoy	Pby Exec	Steve Benz	Redstone
Pby Exec	Jan DeVries	Grace	Pby Ex/SC	Anita Hendrix	Riverside
Pby Exec	Dave Wasserman	Grand Canyon	Pby Exec	Jay Wilkins	Sacramento
Pby Exec	Penny Hill	Greater Atlanta	Pby Exec	Clark Cowden	San Diego
Pby Exec	In Yang	Hanmi	Pby Exec	Ken Baker	San Fernando
Pby Exec	Charles Spencer	Heartland	Pby Exec	Ruth Santana-Grace	San Gabriel
Pby Ex/SC	Rich Fifield	Holston	Pby Ex/SC	Sandy Brown	San Joaquin
Pby Exec	Richard Wyatt	Homestead	Pby Exec	Joey Lee	San Jose
Pby Exec	Susan Andrews	Hudson River	Pby Exec	Jan Armstrong	Santa Barbara
Pby Exec	K. Joy Kaufmann	Huntingdon	Pby Exec	Sallie Watson	Santa Fe
Pby Exec	Aaron Carland	Indian Nations	Pby Ex/SC	Russell Gladding Jr.	Savannah
Pby Exec	Susan Rosenbaum	John Calvin	Pby Exec	Jeannie Harsh	Scioto Valley
Pby Exec	James Kennedy Jr	Kendall	Pby Exec	David Dawson	Shenango
Pby Exec	Wayne Yost	Kiskiminetas	Pby Exec	Becky Burton	Sheppards & Lapsley
Pby Exec	Barbara Smith	Lackawanna	Pby Ex/SC	Samford Turner	South Alabama
Pby Exec	David Oyler	Lake Erie	Pby Ex/SC	Ron Sutto	South Louisiana
Pby Exec	Louise Brokaw	Lake Huron	Pby Exec	Dana Lindsley	South. New England

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pby Ex/SC	Gregory Goodwiller	St Andrew	Pby SC	David E. Meerse	Heartland
Pby Exec	Alisun Donovan	St Augustine	Pby SC	Raymond Meester	Homestead
Pby Ex/SC	Paul Hooker	St Augustine	Pby SC	Harriet Sandmeier	Hudson River
Pby Exec	Julia Leeth	Stockton	Pby SC	Ginny Rainey	Huntingdon
Pby Exec	Cheryl Ann Elfond	Susquehanna Valley	Pby SC	Carol Waters	Indian Nations
Pby Exec	Nancy Kahaian	Tampa Bay	Pby SC	Melana Scruggs	John Calvin
Pby Exec	John Mahon	Cascades	Pby SC	Theodore McCulloch	Lake Huron
Pby Exec	Hugh Anderson	Cascades	Pby SC	Shirley Russell	Long Island
Pby Exec	Aleida Jernigan	Cascades	Pby SC	W. Keith Geckeler	Los Ranchos
Pby Exec	Sheryl Kinder Pyle	The Inland Northwest	Pby SC	Doris Arnett Whitaker	Miami Valley
Pby Ex/SC	Carson Rhyne	The James	Pby SC	Ken Hockenberry	Mid-Kentucky
Pby Exec	Linda Culbertson	The Pacific	Pby SC	Therese Howell	Middle Tennessee
Pby Exec	Nancy Dawson	The Peaks	Pby SC	Pamela Prouty	Minnesota Valleys
Pby Exec	Robert Conover	The Redwoods	Pby SC	Karen Stocks	Mission
Pby Exec	Liza Hendricks	The Western Reserve	Pby SC	Michael Herrin	Mississippi
Pby Exec	Richard Smith	Transylvania	Pby SC	Carl Wilton	Monmouth
Pby Exec	Jose Luis Casal	Tres Rios	Pby SC	Paula Lane	Muskingum Valley
Pby Exec	Danny Murphy	Trinity	Pby SC	Joyce Butcher	Nevada
Pby Exec	Amalie Ash	Tropical Florida	Pby SC	D Paul La Montagne	New Brunswick
Pby Exec	Chaz Ruark	Twin Cities Area	Pby SC	Reid Beveridge	New Castle
Pby Exec	Laura Stellmon	Utah	Pby SC	Lynn Hargrove	New Covenant
Pby Exec	Frank Vardeman	Wabash Valley	Pby SC	Warren McNeill	Newark
Pby Exec	Craig Kephart	Washington	Pby SC	Diane Curtis	Newton
Pby Exec	Deborah Brincivalli	West Jersey	Pby SC	Toby Mueller	North Alabama
Pby Exec	Forrest Palmer	West Virginia	Pby SC	Cliff Creel	North. New England
Pby Exec	Jim Cory	Western Colorado	Pby SC	Piet Visscher	Northern New York
Pby Exec	Rich Cooper	Western Kentucky	Pby SC	Michael Lochow	Northern Plains
Pby Exec	Bronwen Boswell	Western New York	Pby SC	Larry Jackman	Ohio Valley
Pby Exec	Bobbi White	Western N. Carolina	Pby SC	Tammy Stampfli	Olympia
Pby Exec	Alan Thames	Whitewater Valley	Pby SC	Ruth Clendenin	Palo Duro
Pby Exec	Steve Shive	Wyoming	Pby SC	Clinton Cottrell	Peace River
Pby Exec	Kathy Goodrich	Yellowstone	Pby SC	Bruce Barstow	Philadelphia
Pby Exec	Curt Karns	Yukon	Pby SC	Dan Hignight	Pines
Pby SC	Kevin Campbell	Abingdon	Pby SC	Lynn Smit	Plains And Peaks
Pby SC	Dan Rogers	Albany	Pby SC	Gary Close	Redstone
Pby SC	Cathy Ulrich	Arkansas	Pby SC	Sue Berry	Riverside
Pby SC	David Byers	Beaver-Butler	Pby SC	Nancy Clegg	Sacramento
Pby SC	Ruth Hicks	Boise	Pby SC	Kathy Runyeon	San Francisco
Pby SC	Catherine MacDonald	Boston	Pby SC	Bob Wendel	San Gabriel
Pby SC	Jim Speedy	Carlisle	Pby SC	John Kelso	San Jose
Pby SC	Frank Allen	Central Florida	Pby SC	Michelle Holmes	Santa Barbara
Pby SC	Michael Nixon	Central Washington	Pby SC	Rick Hays	Scioto Valley
Pby SC	Tamara Williams	Charlotte	Pby SC	Kevin Nollette	Seattle
Pby SC	Barbara Bundick	Chicago	Pby SC	Dennis Hughes	Seattle
Pby SC	Deborah Meinke	Cimarron	Pby SC	Dan Williams	Shenandoah
Pby SC	Janis Adams	Cincinnati	Pby SC	Bev Dodson	Sheppards & Lapsley
Pby SC	Anne Bond	Denver	Pby SC	Evelyn Reynen	South Dakota
Pby SC	Ed Koster	Detroit	Pby SC	Cindy Bean	Southeastern Illinois
Pby SC	Bill Netting	Donegal	Pby SC	Bill Thomas	South. New England
Pby SC	Rebecca Blair	East Iowa	Pby SC	Keith Drury	Stockton
Pby SC	Bonnie Smith	Eastern Oklahoma	Pby SC	James Martin	Susquehanna Valley
Pby SC	Pete Wells	Eastern Oregon	Pby SC	Ginny Ellis	Tampa Bay
Pby SC	Linda Smith	Eastern Virginia	Pby SC	Cathy Quackenbush	Cascades
Pby SC	Dale Riley	Eastminster	Pby SC	Forrest Claassen	The Inland Northwest
Pby SC	Paul Rack	Elizabeth	Pby SC	Alyson Janke	The John Knox
Pby SC	Jerry Watts	Flint River	Pby SC	Wendy Tajima	The Pacific
Pby SC	Val Fowler	Genesee Valley	Pby SC	Jody LeFort	The Western Reserve
Pby SC	Terry Epling	Giddings-Lovejoy	Pby SC	Jim Rucker	Transylvania
Pby SC	Connie Tubb	Grace	Pby SC	Tom Armstrong	Upper Ohio Valley
Pby SC	Tony Cook	Grand Canyon	Pby SC	Harry Young	Utica
Pby SC	Donna Wells	Greater Atlanta	Pby SC	Jim Robinson	West Virginia
Pby SC	Paul Kang	Hanmi	Pby SC	Charlie Evans	Western Kentucky

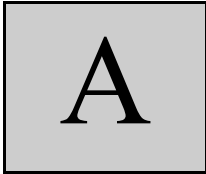
THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pby SC	Bert Sigmon	Western N. Carolina
Pby SC	Fred Feth	Wyoming
Pby SC	Sharon Rayt	Yukon

# Standing Rules of the General Assembly

[AS AMENDED BY THE 220TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2012).]

## STANDING RULES FOR MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY



### Sources of Business for the Meeting

1. **Papers in General**
  - a. Papers to Be Considered
  - b. Received Less Than 60 Days Prior to General Assembly
2. **Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees**
  - a. Reports Deadline
  - b. Budget Consultation
  - c. Appropriate Background Information
  - d. Report Length
3. **Overtures**
  - a. Definition
  - b. Writing Overtures
  - c. Submitting Overtures
  - d. Distributing Overtures
  - e. Overture Advocate
4. **Communications and Resource Material**
  - a. Provide Comment or Advice
  - b. Forty-five Day Deadline
  - c. Resource Materials
  - d. Advice and Counsel Memoranda
5. **Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report**
  - a. Report
  - b. Presented Directly to General Assembly
6. **Entity and Synod Minutes**
  - a. Submit for Review
  - b. Review Process
7. **Presbytery Reports**
8. **Commissioners' Resolutions**
  - a. Who May Propose
  - b. Deadline
  - c. Existing General Assembly Policy
  - d. May Not Amend *Book of Order*
  - e. Already Before Assembly
  - f. Same Issues as Previous Assembly
  - g. Referral
  - h. Referral Declined

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#### 1. Papers in General

##### Papers to Be Considered

a. The General Assembly shall consider only those papers delivered to the Stated Clerk in compliance with Standing Rule A and any other papers whatsoever that have been delivered to the Stated Clerk. Ordinarily, such papers shall have been forwarded to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.

##### Received Less Than 60 Days Prior to General Assembly

b. All papers intended for consideration by the General Assembly that are forwarded to the Stated Clerk and postmarked less than sixty days, but no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be reviewed by the Stated Clerk, who shall determine whether or not to refer them to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The Stated Clerk shall report to the committee regarding those papers not referred.

## 2. Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees

### Reports Deadline

a. All reports from entities, commissions, and committees of the General Assembly shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk on or before 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall publish these reports (print or electronic) and distribute them so that they shall reach the commissioners thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly.

### Budget Consultation

b. An entity, commission, or committee submitting a report with a recommendation that affects the work or budget of another entity(ies) shall submit evidence that a consultation has been held with the affected entity(ies).

### Appropriate Background Information

c. Committees, agencies, or corporations presenting reports shall provide the appropriate background information necessary to interpret or understand the recommendations or responses to referrals to the members of the General Assembly committees to which the business is referred. Any and all documents or publications referred to in these reports that require approval by the assembly for publication and distribution to the church, including but not limited to curriculum, study papers/guides, position papers, and program resources, shall be made available to commissioners at the time the reports are published.

### Report Length

d. All reports shall be limited to ten thousand words except the report of the General Assembly Mission Council, the length of which shall be determined by the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council. A request for an exception to the length of a report shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no later than forty-five days prior to the deadline for the submission of the report and shall include the anticipated length of the report. The Stated Clerk may assess a fee of the entity or committee whose report exceeds ten thousand words for the costs incurred in printing and distributing the excess pages. Payment of the fee shall be submitted to the treasurer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. If the Stated Clerk and the representatives of any body are unable to agree, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the length of the report.

## 3. Overtures

### Definition

a. Overtures are items of business that must have been approved by a presbytery or a synod and shall request the General Assembly to take a particular action, or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution. (See *Book of Order*, G-3.0302d.)

### Writing Overtures

b. The stated clerk of a presbytery or synod considering an overture to the General Assembly shall:

(1) Examine the most recently published *Minutes of the General Assembly* to determine if a similar overture has already been passed.

(2) Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether the desired action has been voted by any previous General Assembly.

(3) Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether a similar overture has already been proposed in order that the presbytery or synod may concur with the existing overture.

(4) Draft the overture in the following form:

“The Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_ overtures the [# of the assembly] General Assembly [(year)] of the PC(USA) to [state the specific action the General Assembly is asked to take].”

To this shall be appended a rationale, stating the reasons for submitting the overture.



**Submitting  
Overtures**

## c. Submitting Overtures

(1) Overtures proposing an amendment to the Constitution or requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order* (see *Book of Order*, G-6.04a and G-6.02) must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, and shall be promptly referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (see *Book of Order*, G-6.02 and G-6.04).

(2) All overtures that have financial implications for current or future years' budgets must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. Overtures with financial implications not received within the designated time limit shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating council.

(3) All other overtures intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.

(4) Overtures not received within the designated time limits shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating council for reconsideration.

(5) Presbyteries or synods submitting overtures with a recommendation(s) that affects the work or budget of a General Assembly entity(ies) shall submit evidence that the affected entity(ies) has (have) been consulted. If such evidence is not submitted, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the overture be received and referred to a future session of the General Assembly so that consultation may take place.

(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (excluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that existing overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided by the overturing body. The concurrence and any additional rationale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture shall be received up to 45 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture with constitutional implications shall be received up to 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.

**Distributing  
Overtures**

d. Overtures that do not propose constitutional amendment or interpretation, and that are postmarked at least sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be published (print or electronic) in the reports distributed by the Stated Clerk. Overtures received in the same manner, postmarked no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be distributed to the commissioners before the convening of the General Assembly.

**Overture  
Advocate**

## e. Overture Advocate

(1) Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of a commissioner or some other person in attendance at the General Assembly who has been designated as the advocate for the overture. The overture advocate shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

(2) In the event that the assembly refers an overture to a General Assembly entity for further consideration (and not simply for implementation), the presbytery or synod submitting the overture shall be invited by the Stated Clerk to designate an overture advocate for the assembly meeting at which the entity's response to the overture is presented. The overture advocate shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

**4. Communications and Resource Material****Provide  
Comment or  
Advice**

a. Communications and resource material provide comment or advice on business already under consideration by the assembly and shall neither contain nor constitute business to be considered by the assembly. Communications may be directed to the General Assembly

(1) by entities of the General Assembly that desire to comment on a single item of business coming before the General Assembly from any source other than their own entity, but which do not introduce new business,

(2) by organizations in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership, and

(3) by other denominations in correspondence with the General Assembly.

**Forty-five Day  
Deadline**

b. All communications intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.

**Resource  
Materials**

c. Resource material (except for previously published books), including advice and counsel memoranda from advocacy and advisory committees, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly meeting, who shall then publish (print or electronic) and distribute the material to all commissioners prior to the assembly.

**Advice and  
Counsel  
Memoranda**

d. Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of providing information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly.

**5. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report**

**Report**

a. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report to the General Assembly its findings along with its recommendations on all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order*, including proposals for constitutional change. The General Assembly shall vote on the recommendations, and may amend or decline to approve them (*Book of Order*, G-6.02). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report any editorial changes made to the *Book of Order* since its last report to the General Assembly.

**Presented  
Directly to  
General  
Assembly**

b. The report of the committee shall be presented directly to the General Assembly. The General Assembly may take action on the recommendations immediately, or it may refer them to an assembly committee for consideration by that committee and report to the General Assembly for action later during the same session of the General Assembly.

**6. Entity and Synod Minutes**

**Submit for  
Review**

a. Entities and synods required to submit minutes for review by the General Assembly shall submit such minutes on a calendar year basis so as to present minutes of all meetings for the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31) preceding the year in which is held the session of the General Assembly to which such minutes are submitted. The minutes shall contain the attestation that they have been approved by the entity or synod submitting them in the manner regularly in use within that body.

**Review Process**

b. Minutes of General Assembly entities will be reviewed in accordance with the “Guidelines for Preparation of Minutes of Agencies” as printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*. Minutes of the synods will be reviewed in accordance with “Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records” as printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*.

**7. Presbytery Reports**

Each presbytery shall act upon all papers sent to the presbytery to be voted upon in ample time to permit the stated clerk of the presbytery to mail the results to the Stated Clerk so that they are received no later than two weeks before the convening of the General Assembly. The response of the presbytery shall be mailed to the Stated Clerk by certified mail.

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## 8. Commissioners' Resolutions

- Who May Propose**            a. An item of new business, in the form of a commissioners' resolution, must be signed by commissioners representing at least one other presbytery. Such resolutions must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk's designee. No commissioner may sign more than two such resolutions.
- Deadline**                b. The Stated Clerk shall determine and announce at the first meeting at which business is conducted the deadline for receipt of commissioners' resolutions. The deadline shall not be earlier than twenty-four hours after the assembly has convened.
- Existing GA Policies**        c. In the preparation of a resolution, commissioners are urged to be aware of existing General Assembly policies relevant to their proposal and, where appropriate, to make reference to these policies.
- May Not Amend *Book of Order* Already Before Assembly**        d. Commissioners' resolutions shall not contain business that requires an amendment to or interpretation of the Constitution (see *Book of Order*, G-6.04a).
- e. The Stated Clerk shall not transmit as new business any resolution that deals with matters of business already before the General Assembly, nor transmit any resolution whose purpose can be achieved by the regular process of amendment and debate.
- Same Issues as Previous Assembly**        f. Should the commissioners' resolution deal with substantially the same issue considered by one of the two previous sessions of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures take one of the following actions on the commissioners' resolution: "refer to a subsequent assembly," "decline for consideration," or "take no action."
- Referral**                    g. If the proposed resolution does deal with new business, the Stated Clerk shall transmit it to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures with a recommendation for its referral.
- Referral Declined**            h. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may decline to refer proposed items of new business if it decides that the matters proposed are already before the assembly or that the purpose of the proposals can be reached by the process of amendment and debate. Proposed items of business not referred, whether declined by the Stated Clerk or the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall be identified in the first report of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures distributed to commissioners after the period docketed for committee meetings, with a brief description of the content and a statement of the reasons for declining the proposed business. Twenty-five percent of commissioners present and voting is required to overturn action of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to decline, take no action, or refer a commissioners' resolution to a subsequent assembly. If a commissioners' resolution affects a substantial change in an existing social witness policy, the Stated Clerk should recommend to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures that it be referred to the next General Assembly.





# Commissioners, Delegates, and Other Participants at the Meeting

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  - b. List Delivered by 120 Day Deadline
  - c. Able to Attend
  - d. Entitlements, Expenses
  - e. Newly Created Presbytery's Commissioners
  - f. Missionary Advisory Delegate
  - g. Ecumenical Advisory Delegate
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  - b. Categories
  - c. Voting Privileges
  - d. Young Adult Advisory Delegates
  - e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates
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## 1. Commissioners

### Election

a. Each presbytery shall elect commissioners to the General Assembly in accordance with *Book of Order*, G-3.0501. The number of commissioners attending General Assembly will be based on the number of active members, including resident clergy members of presbytery. The figures for active members will be taken from the information recorded in *Minutes of the General Assembly*, Part II, *Statistics* of the year in which per capita apportionment is assessed for the year in which General Assembly meets.

### List Delivered by 120 Day Deadline

b. Presbyteries shall elect commissioners in sufficient time to permit the list of commissioners to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.

### Able to Attend

c. Teaching elders and ruling elders considered for election as commissioners must be able to be in attendance for the duration of the General Assembly.

### Entitlements, Expenses

d. Commissioners shall be entitled to speak under the rules, and to vote and present motions in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees to which they are assigned. Commissioners shall be reimbursed for approved expenses.

### Newly Created Presbytery's Commissioners

e. In the case of a newly created presbytery, the presbytery shall be entitled to elect commissioners to the General Assembly if the qualifying enrollment of teaching elders and congregations in that presbytery shall have been completed by December 31 of the year preceding the assembly meeting (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0501).

<b>Alternates</b>	<p>f. Presbyteries may elect alternates in number up to, but not exceeding, the number of commissioners to which the presbytery may be entitled. Such alternates shall be seated with other visitors to the assembly.</p>
	<p><b>2. Advisory Delegates</b></p>
<b>Definition</b>	<p>a. Advisory delegates are persons who are active members in one of the constituent churches or councils of the General Assembly (or, in the case of ecumenical advisory delegates, of a denomination of Christians designated by the General Assembly) who are selected to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in an advisory role so that the assembly may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints.</p>
<b>Categories</b>	<p>b. There shall be four categories of advisory delegates: youth, theological student; missionary, and ecumenical. The expenses of each advisory delegate shall be paid by the General Assembly (see Standing Rule I.3.) on the same basis as the expenses of commissioners (see Standing Rule B.2.f.(2) below for exception).</p>
<b>Voting Privileges</b>	<p>c. Advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees as voting members and shall have the privilege of the floor of the General Assembly without vote. Only voting members shall have the privilege of proposing or seconding a motion. When certain issues come before a plenary session of the General Assembly, the advisory delegates may be polled prior to the vote of commissioners to determine their advice.</p>
<b>Young Adult Advisory Delegates</b>	<p>d. Young Adult Advisory Delegates</p> <p>(1) Each presbytery shall appoint an active member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who shall be between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three years on the date the General Assembly convenes, to be a young adult advisory delegate.</p> <p>(2) Each presbytery will request each candidate for young adult advisory delegate to submit an application/questionnaire and be interviewed by an appropriate presbytery committee in order to ensure the selection of the best qualified person to serve as young adult advisory delegate. The youth ministries staff shall prepare and distribute to each presbytery a sample/suggested questionnaire for use in reviewing candidates for election as young adult advisory delegates.</p> <p>(3) Presbyteries shall elect young adult advisory delegates in sufficient time to permit the list of advisory delegates to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected.</p>
<b>Theological Student Advisory Delegate</b>	<p>e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates</p> <p>There shall be a delegation of theological student advisory delegates each year: two from each of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); one from each of the theological institutions in a covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and one each from three selected other theological seminaries. The selection process for these delegates is as follows:</p> <p>(1) Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. Two of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.</p> <p>(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. One of these students shall be</p>

designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

(3) All non-Presbyterian theological schools represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

(4) Nominated students shall have at least one more year of study following the assembly remaining in their degree program. The Stated Clerk shall forward the name of the nominated students to the presbyteries of jurisdiction for election and confirmation.

**Missionary  
Advisory  
Delegates**

f. Missionary Advisory Delegates

(1) There shall be eight missionary advisory delegates who shall be chosen by the Worldwide Ministries Division from persons who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and mission personnel assigned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in another country in which this church is engaged in mission. To the degree possible, the selection shall provide a global geographical representation with no two delegates representing the same country or geographical area and rotating the geographical representation. The Worldwide Ministries Division shall notify the Stated Clerk at the time these persons are named.

(2) The expenses to the General Assembly of each missionary advisory delegate shall include transportation only from the point of entry or domicile of the delegate in the United States and return.

**Ecumenical  
Advisory  
Delegates**

g. Ecumenical Advisory Delegates

There shall be up to fifteen ecumenical advisory delegates. Ten of these delegates shall be from churches outside of the United States. No more than five shall be from member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Ecumenical advisory delegates shall be selected by the highest ecclesiastical authorities of their churches, in response to the invitation of a previous General Assembly. The assembly shall extend such invitations at the recommendation of the General Assembly Mission Council upon nomination by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

**3. Corresponding Members**

**Definition**

a. The following persons shall be corresponding members: Moderators of earlier General Assemblies; the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other members of the staff of the Office of the General Assembly as designated by the Stated Clerk; the members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly; the members of the GAMC Executive Committee and staff of the General Assembly Mission Council, and of the divisions and related entities designated by the council; all members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution; the executives of synods; one person designated by each entity reporting directly to the General Assembly, including permanent, special, and advisory committees (additional persons may be designated by such bodies if authorized by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly); and the presidents (or their designee) of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and seminaries related by covenant agreement.

**Entitled to  
Speak, Not Vote**

b. Corresponding members shall be entitled to speak, under the rules, in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees on matters related to the work of the body represented, but they may neither vote nor present motions.

**4. Advisory Committee on the Constitution**

During the General Assembly, three or more members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution [this committee] shall be present at the session of the General Assembly to advise the General Assembly and its Moderator on constitutional matters.

**5. Other Participants**

**Special Guests**

a. The assembly, out of honor, courtesy, recognition, and the need for information and resource material, may recognize other persons as guests or observers. As such, they may be invited by the General Assembly to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing enlightenment or information germane to the decision-making process. An assembly committee may extend a similar invitation at its own meeting.

**Ecumenical  
Representatives**

b. Ecumenical representatives are individuals sent at the initiative of another church to be the official representative of that church. The Stated Clerk shall announce to member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches the date and place of the next meeting of the General Assembly. When officially certified through appropriate ecclesiastical channels at least forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, these persons shall be welcomed as guests of the General Assembly and introduced to the council through the report of the assembly committee addressing ecumenism. The assembly shall assume the expense and housing of such guests on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

**Resource  
Persons**

c. The assembly may welcome persons invited by the General Assembly Mission Council or another entity of the General Assembly for the purpose of establishing or affirming particular ecumenical, mission, or program relationships, or assisting the entity in the presentation of particular items of business. Any expense reimbursement shall be the responsibility of the inviting entity.

**Presbytery Staff**

d. The presbytery's executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery's stated clerk shall be supplied with all reports and materials related to the General Assembly, but shall not be entitled to speak in plenary meetings or in meetings of assembly committees unless called upon by a moderator to provide information.

**Ecumenical  
Visitors**

e. Ecumenical visitors are individuals attending a session of the General Assembly at their own initiative. These persons are welcomed to the assembly as unofficial visitors. The assembly shall assume no expenses for these ecumenical visitors.

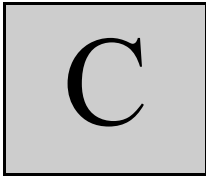
**Interfaith  
Representatives**

f. Interfaith Representatives—Three observers of other faiths or religious traditions, who shall be representatives chosen by recognized religious bodies of non-Christian religious traditions and/or faith communities shall be present at the assembly at the invitation of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. The interfaith representatives shall be present with the church in its deliberations, and to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing information germane to the decision-making process. The assembly shall assume the expense of housing and on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

**6. List of Participants**

Upon request, the Stated Clerk shall make available the list of participants registered for a session of the General Assembly to entities of the General Assembly, councils of the denomination, educational institutions, teaching elders, ruling elders, and independent organizations composed primarily of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A fee will be charged for lists or mailing labels to cover the costs incurred for printing, postage, and handling.





## Formation of Committees and Referral of Business

1. **Assembly Committee Structure**
  - a. Number and Designation of Assembly
  - b. Committee Assistants
  - c. Assembly Committee Moderator and Vice Moderator
  - d. Assembly Committee on Business Referral
  - e. Orientation
2. **Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees**
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  - b. Notification of Assignment
  - c. Assignment List Provided
  - d. Random Selection Process
3. **Referring Business**
  - a. Recommendation for Referral of Business
  - b. General Assembly Action on Referrals
  - c. How Referred
  - d. Referral Considered by One Committee
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4. **Tentative Docket**

### Number and Designation of Assembly Committees

### Committee Assistants

### Assembly Committee Moderator and Vice Moderator

### Assembly Committee on Business Referral

#### 1. Assembly Committee Structure

a. The Stated Clerk shall propose the number and designation of assembly committees to the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall present the proposed committee structure to the General Assembly for consideration and ratification at the first assembly meeting at which business is transacted. In making these proposals, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities, and may consult with other persons.

b. The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly for appointment the names of persons to serve as committee assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before recommending persons to serve as committee assistants. Persons proposed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly or any person who is a member of the General Assembly Mission Council or any person who is a member of any other entity of the General Assembly. A committee assistant shall be appointed to provide staff services to each assembly committee. The appointments shall be made in accordance with *Book of Order*, F-1.0401.

c. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall appoint a commissioner to be moderator and a second to be vice moderator of each committee. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusivity mandated in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods shall be equitably represented.

d. The moderators and vice moderators of the assembly committees, as a group, shall function as the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall function as the moderator and vice moderator of this committee as well. This committee shall report to the assembly for its action at the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.

**Orientation**

e. The Stated Clerk shall conduct an orientation for moderators, vice moderators, and committee assistants of assembly committees no less than three weeks prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The orientation shall include information regarding business likely to be referred to each committee; suggested procedures for dealing with business referred to committees, especially the use of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*; utilization of available resources, both persons and materials; and preparation and presentation of assembly committee reports. The Stated Clerk, following consultation with the General Assembly Mission Council, may invite persons designated by the council as General Assembly resource coordinators to participate in the orientation. During this orientation, the Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall meet and carry out the duties given it by these rules. The Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall also meet, if necessary, just prior to the convening of the assembly and its function shall end at the convening of the assembly.

**2. Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees****Committee Assignments**

a. Forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner and advisory delegate to one of the assembly committees by the random selection process described in this standing rule.

**Notification of Assignment**

b. No later than thirty days before the convening of the assembly, commissioners shall receive the number and designation of committees. At the same time that the number and designation of committees is communicated, the Stated Clerk shall notify each person of the assignment, the time of their first meeting, and the necessity to confirm appropriate housing and travel arrangements.

**Assignment List Provided**

c. The Stated Clerk shall provide a list of the assignments to those who need it to facilitate the work of the General Assembly.

**Random Selection Process**

d. Commissioners and advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees by random selection as follows:

(1) The Stated Clerk shall divide the presbyteries into six regional districts. Each district shall be composed of one or more presbyteries so arranged that, insofar as possible, the presbyteries in the district have contiguous boundaries and the numbers of commissioners in the several districts are approximately equal. Within each district the presbyteries shall be arranged alphabetically. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be listed alphabetically in two parallel lists: the first containing the names of the teaching elders; the second, the ruling elders. In those cases where the presbytery has not designated commissioners, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified. The names of moderators and vice moderators of assembly committees shall be removed from the list and the names below them shall be moved up to fill the vacated positions. The teaching elder commissioners and vacant positions for teaching elder commissioners shall be numbered in sequence. The list of ruling elder commissioners in each district shall be rotated downward so that no ruling elder commissioner is opposite a teaching elder commissioner from the same presbytery. Separate lists of groups identified in *Book of Order*, F-1.0403, shall be prepared, insofar as it may be practical, to assure the most equitable distribution of such commissioners to the various committees in accordance with *Book of Order*, F-1.0403.

(2) The Stated Clerk shall list the young adult advisory delegates in one list arranged in the alphabetical order of the presbyteries that designated the delegates. In any case where the presbytery has not designated a young adult advisory delegate, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified.

(3) The Moderator shall pick by lot a number from one to ten. This number shall identify the number of the name in the first column of names in each district in which the assignment will begin. It will also identify the number of the young adult advisory delegates in which assignment will begin.

(4) The Moderator shall then pick by lot a second number equal from one to the number equaling the total number of committees. This number shall identify the assembly committee in the order in which the committees are arranged in the standing rules to which the first assignment of members shall be made.

(5) The assignment of members of the assembly committees shall then proceed in sequence. When initial assignments have been made to all committees in sequence so that the committees with the fewest number of commissioners are full, additional assignment shall be made to the other committees in the same manner, until all commissioners and young adult advisory delegates have been assigned to committees.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall assign missionary advisory delegates and ecumenical advisory delegates to assembly committees in consultation with those delegates. Ordinarily not more than two persons in each of these categories shall be assigned to any one assembly committee.

(7) Theological student advisory delegates will be assigned to committees at the same time and in the same way as are commissioners to ensure their full participation and attendance.

(8) Names of commissioners and advisory delegates received after these assignments have been made shall be inserted in the appropriate position in the original list and assigned to the committee to which that position was assigned.

### **3. Referring Business**

#### **Recommendation for Referral of Business**

a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a recommendation for the referral of all items of business coming before the General Assembly.

#### **General Assembly Action on Referrals**

b. After making any necessary changes, this committee shall present the prepared referrals to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend referrals to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business. Ordinarily, this committee shall recommend referrals to the General Assembly for its action. When the General Assembly is not scheduled to meet in time to act on its recommendation, the committee may refer business. Such referrals shall be reported to the General Assembly at its next business meeting.

#### **How Referred**

c. Items of business to be considered by the General Assembly shall be referred in one of the following ways:

(1) for consideration by an assembly committee and recommendation for action by the General Assembly;

(2) for consideration and action by an assembly committee with a report of the action to the General Assembly;

(3) for consideration by the General Assembly through its inclusion in a consent agenda;

(4) for consideration by the General Assembly in a plenary business session.

#### **Referral Considered by One Committee**

d. Each item of business referred to a committee shall ordinarily be considered by only one assembly committee, but in no case should there be more than one committee making a recommendation on an item of business. Business of a related nature shall be assigned to a single committee insofar as possible.

#### **Referring Overtures to Committees**

e. The Stated Clerk shall present such items of business to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with a recommendation for their referral. In the event that the presbytery or synod disagrees with the referral recommendation, this procedure shall be followed: The presbytery or synod shall be entitled to submit a written statement regarding

the background and intent of the overture at the time the overture is initially being considered for referral by the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. If, after that committee makes its recommendation, the presbytery or synod still disagrees with the referral recommendation, the presbytery or synod shall notify the Stated Clerk, in writing, of its disagreement. The overture advocate will then be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture at a special meeting of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral that shall be held no more than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the convening of the assembly.

#### **4. Tentative Docket**

a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a tentative docket. After making any necessary adjustments, this committee shall present a proposed docket to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend the docket to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.

b. The reports and recommendations of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly regarding the initial docket of the General Assembly and referrals of business shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with any items of business not included in them (see Standing Rules I.4.b.(3) and I.4.b.(4)). Review of the minutes of the synods pursuant to G-3.0502c and of statement(s) of compliance with decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission by councils, reported by the Stated Clerk pursuant to IV.B.2.d. of the *Organization for Mission*, shall be assigned to the same assembly committee. Following the convening of the assembly, such matters shall be directed to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.



## Beginning of the General Assembly Meeting

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Registration and Seating</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Registration of Commissioners and Delegates</li> <li>b. Commissioners with Disabilities</li> <li>c. Assigned Seats</li> <li>d. Alternates</li> <li>e. Ecumenical Representatives</li> <li>f. Presbytery Staff Seating</li> <li>g. Access to Commissioner and Advisory Delegate Seating</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Quorum</b></li> <li>3. <b>Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting</b></li> </ol> |
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### 1. Registration and Seating

#### Registration of Commissioners and Delegates

a. The Stated Clerk shall enroll commissioners and delegates on the opening day of the General Assembly and at such other times as may be necessary. The Stated Clerk shall determine any question that may arise regarding registration of commissioners and delegates. Any complaints regarding such decision shall be received by the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

#### Commissioners with Disabilities

b. A commissioner certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be entitled to designate a person to function as an assistant without vote during all proceedings of the General Assembly, including executive sessions and committee meetings, in order that the commissioner may fully participate in those proceedings. The expenses of the assistant shall be paid for by the General Assembly on the same basis as expenses of commissioners. The Stated Clerk shall also enroll assistants to commissioners who have been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance.

#### Assigned Seats

c. The Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner, advisory delegate, and corresponding member to a seat in advance of the meeting. They shall occupy the assigned seats during each meeting of the General Assembly at which business may be transacted. An assistant to commissioner who has been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be assigned a seat adjacent to the commissioner. The Stated Clerk shall assign seats to commissioners and delegates in a manner that shall assure that the most favorable seats, with regard to the platform, will be assigned to delegations from the various presbyteries in turn through an annual rotation of space assignments.

#### Alternates

d. When a principal commissioner is replaced by an alternate prior to or during the course of an assembly session, whether for the remainder of the session or for a period of time during the session, the alternate shall assume that assembly committee position and seat assignment.

#### Ecumenical Representatives

e. Ecumenical representatives shall be seated on the floor of the assembly in a section clearly designated for such guests.

#### Presbytery Staff Seating

f. The presbytery's executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery's stated clerk shall be provided assigned seating in proximity to the area that corresponding members are seated.

**Access to  
Commissioner  
and Advisory  
Delegate Seating**

g. The only persons who shall be permitted access to the commissioner and advisory delegate seating area during plenary sessions are commissioners, advisory delegates, assistants enrolled by the Stated Clerk to assist commissioners having a disability warranting assistance, the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other staff and assembly assistants who are assigned responsibilities that require access to this area, including assisting at the floor microphones, delivery of official messages to commissioner and advisory delegates, and locating commissioners who are needed on the platform. The Stated Clerk will provide special credentials for the particular staff and assembly assistants who are authorized to enter the commissioner/advisory delegate seating area. Registered presbytery staff may have access to the seating area to contact their commissioners and advisory delegates during breaks in business.

**2. Quorum**

At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the General Assembly that the roll call of commissioners be established by registration. Alternately, the Stated Clerk may call the roll of commissioners and advisory delegates by calling the names of absentees as they appear on the roll. After any needed corrections have been made, the Stated Clerk shall announce whether or not a quorum is present (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0503). When commissioners and advisory delegates subsequently register, they shall be seated by the General Assembly. A commissioner who has not registered may not be seated and may not vote.

**3. Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting**

The Office of the General Assembly shall, on the first business day of the assembly, before committees meet to consider business, organize a forum where assembly committee moderators shall meet with overture advocates to discuss procedures for participation in committee discussion of business related to the overture that they are advocating.

# E

## Committee Meetings

- 1. Committee Leadership and Support**
  - a. Moderator and Vice Moderator
  - b. Recorder
  - c. Committee Assistant
- 2. Procedures for Assembly Committees**
  - a. Open Meeting
  - b. Parliamentary Procedures
  - c. Use of Resources
  - d. Preparation of Resource Material
  - e. Privilege of Floor
  - f. Overture Advocates/ Signer of Commissioners' Resolution
  - g. Responsibilities of Overture Advocate
- 3. New Business**
  - a. Consider Only Matters Referred
  - b. Proposing Amendment to Constitution
  - c. Constitutional Matters
  - d. Approval Requirement
  - e. Presentation of
  - f. Referral to Advisory Committee
- 4. Organizational Meeting**
- 5. Public Hearings**
  - a. Schedule
  - b. Time Limits for Presentations
  - c. Hearing Form
- 6. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures**
  - a. Responsible for Referral of Business
  - b. Coordination Between Committees
  - c. Distribution of Materials
  - d. Requests to Schedule Event
- 7. Reports of Assembly Committees**
  - a. Writing the Report
  - b. Content
  - c. Fiscal Implications
  - d. Identify Entity
  - e. GAMC to Determine Entity
  - f. Votes Recorded
  - g. Confer with Entity Affected by Action
  - h. Minority Report

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### 1. Committee Leadership and Support

#### **Moderator and Vice Moderator**

a. The moderator shall preside over the committee's deliberations. The moderator may request the vice moderator to preside and to assist in the work of the committee.

#### **Recorder**

b. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a recorder appointed by the Stated Clerk. The recorder shall be appointed from a pool of individuals who will already be attending the General Assembly, including staff members, local volunteers, and others. The recorder shall keep an accurate record of the actions of the committee with the votes on each indicating the number of committee members voting in the affirmative, or negative, or those abstaining; and shall assist in drafting the committee report.

#### **Committee Assistant**

c. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a committee assistant. The committee assistant may address the committee offering suggestions regarding procedure, but shall not participate in its deliberations on any issue before the committee as an advocate of one position or view regarding its action. The committee assistant shall assist the committee in securing desired resources.

## 2. Procedures for Assembly Committee Meetings

### Open Meetings

a. Meetings of assembly committees shall be open to the public (as space permits) provided, however, that the committee may go into executive session at any time in accordance with the Open Meeting Policy, printed in the *Manual of the General Assembly*. Ordinarily, the committee assistant will be expected to remain with the committee in executive session.

### Parliamentary Procedure

b. The deliberations of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

### Use of Resources

c. Each committee shall determine the use to be made of the resource material or resource persons available to assembly committees. Each assembly committee shall determine whether or not to permit the distribution of particular materials to the committee members.

### Preparation of Resource Material

d. Resource material (except for previously published books or interpretive brochures), including advice and counsel memoranda, that provides background or advice on items of new business, including commissioners' resolutions, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the assembly committee leadership team prior to presentation to the assembly committee to which the business has been referred. A hard copy of this resource material, accompanied by a disk copy, shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consider any request that is made to distribute this resource material to the full assembly.

### Privilege to Speak

e. During the deliberations of the committee, in contrast to public hearings, only the following persons, having been recognized by the moderator, may speak:

- (1) Members of the committee;
- (2) Committee assistant;
- (3) Persons with special expertise, including elected members or staff members of General Assembly entities;
- (4) Overture advocates and signers of commissioners' resolutions;
- (5) Persons invited by the committee through a majority vote of the committee; and
- (6) Representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, who may speak to overtures, commissioners' resolutions, or other business on which the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has presented advice or recommendations, or matters that propose amendments to the Constitution, or that affect compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution.

(7) In the event that business being considered by an assembly committee has been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for advice, representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall be entitled to speak.

(8) The committee moderator shall provide that the total time allotted to persons, other than members of the committee, who speak for or against a recommendation be equal so far as possible.

### Overture Advocates/Signer of Commissioners' Resolution

f. Overture advocates and one signer of each commissioners' resolution shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by any assembly committee considering the matter. The overture advocate or one of the signers of a commissioners' resolution shall be entitled to speak, as an individual (or in cooperation with other overture advocates in a pre-arranged presentation), to the background and intent of the overture or resolution immediately after the motion is made and seconded, placing the overture or resolution on the floor of the committee or subcommittee.



Responsibilities of Overture Advocate

g. Overture advocates who have been designated by their presbytery or synod to speak to the response from a General Assembly entity to a referral of an overture shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by the assembly committee considering the response. The overture advocate shall be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture” or as asked for clarification by the committee concerning the original intent of the overture.

### 3. New Business

#### Consider Only Matters Referred

a. Each assembly committee shall consider only matters referred to it by the General Assembly. No assembly committee may initiate new business except as it relates to the business of the particular assembly committee.

#### Proposing Amendment to Constitution

b. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-6.04b and G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

#### Constitutional Matters

c. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter so referred and report its findings and recommendations, which may include proposals for constitutional change, to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The assembly committee shall vote on the recommendations and may amend or decline to approve them. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.

#### Approval Requirement

d. Recommendations and reports to the assembly regarding such new business must be approved in assembly committees by three-fourths of the committee members voting on the matter.

#### Presentation of

e. New business, other than that described in this standing rule, must be presented in accordance with Standing Rule A.8.

#### Referral to Advisory Committee on the Constitution

f. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution (*Book of Order*, G-6.04) or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter referred and report its findings and recommendations (which may include proposals for constitutional change) to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.

### 4. Organizational Meeting

a. Ordinarily, the initial meeting of each assembly committee shall be an organizational meeting in private session for up to one hour for the purpose of developing intergroup dynamics and determining procedural matters, such as approval of the committee’s agenda and consideration of the style in which the committee plans to operate.

b. During this executive session, business items before the committee shall not be discussed or acted upon.

## **5. Public Hearings**

### **Schedule**

a. Each committee, with the exception of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall schedule at its convenience one or more public hearings on matters before it.

### **Time Limits for Presentations**

b. The committee may limit the time for the presentation by any person during a public hearing, including an elected member or staff member of an entity of the General Assembly. If the time allotted for the public hearing is not sufficient to accommodate all the persons wishing to speak, a method shall be approved by the assembly committee that ensures that an equal number of persons on each side of an issue have an opportunity to speak. Any person denied the right to speak at the hearing may appeal to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures on the basis that the method employed in selecting speakers was not fair.

### **Hearing Form**

c. Any person who wishes to be heard in a public hearing shall sign up on a hearing form, posted in a public place in the building in which the assembly is being held, no later than the close of business on the second day of the General Assembly or one hour after the subsequent referral of business to the committee by the General Assembly. The location of hearing forms shall be announced during the first session of the assembly. In the event that an issue is expected to be controversial, those wishing to speak shall be asked to indicate whether they wish to speak for or against the recommendation.

## **6. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures**

### **Responsible for Referral of Business**

a. This committee shall neither retain any items of business for its own consideration, nor suppress any matter that comes before it. However, business that substantially duplicates matters already before the assembly may be declined by this committee and reported to the assembly with a statement of the committee's action.

### **Coordination Between Committees**

b. This committee shall keep itself informed of the subjects being considered by the other assembly committees, and, when any subject is taken up by more than one committee, this committee shall advise the moderators of those committees regarding ways to avoid redundant or inconsistent recommendations.

### **Distribution of Materials**

c. This committee shall determine whether or not particular materials may be distributed to the commissioners and delegates to the General Assembly, and specify the time and manner of distribution of any authorized by it. Particular materials distributed in assembly committees shall not be distributed to the full assembly without the approval of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, including the time and manner of distribution.

### **Requests to Schedule Event**

d. The committee shall review requests from entities of the General Assembly, councils, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate, to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.

## **7. Reports of Assembly Committees**

### **Writing the Report**

a. The moderator, vice moderator, committee assistant, and recorder, together with such other persons as the moderator may designate, shall draft the report of the committee following the sample form provided by the Stated Clerk.

### **Content**

b. The reports of assembly committees shall contain only (1) the recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly, and, where necessary, a brief statement of the committee's reasons for such recommendations, and (2) the actions taken by the committee on items referred to the committee for action. Material necessary to identify the item of

business and brief explanations may be included in the report. Extensive background information and detail contained in other documents in the hands of the commissioners shall not be included.

**Fiscal Implications**

c. Each assembly committee shall include with each recommendation or action in its report statements advising the General Assembly whether or not the recommendation or action has fiscal implications affecting any budget under consideration by the assembly.

**Identify Entity**

d. Recommendation for assembly action, or action taken by the committee, shall identify the entity that is directed to carry out and report back to the General Assembly regarding the matter dealt with by the recommendation or action.

**GAMC to Determine Entity**

e. When the entity to which an assembly action is directed is a part of the General Assembly Mission Council, such as a division or related entity, the Stated Clerk shall automatically amend the language so that the action is directed to the General Assembly Mission Council. The council shall determine which entity shall carry out the responsibility and report to the assembly on the matter.

**Votes Recorded**

f. The votes recorded in the assembly committee on each recommendation or action shall be included in the report for the information of the commissioners, but shall be omitted from the *Journal* of the General Assembly.

**Confer with Entity Affected by Action**

g. If the report of an assembly committee proposes or records an action affecting the interests of an entity of the General Assembly or of a council other than the General Assembly, it shall be the responsibility of that assembly committee to confer with the representative(s) designated by the entity or council concerned before proposing such action to the General Assembly or taking such an action.

**Minority Report**

h. Minority Report

(1) A minority of the members of an assembly committee, or an individual member of an assembly committee, may submit in writing views that differ from those in the committee report. If the moderator of the committee shall affirm in writing that the positions expressed as recommendations for action by the assembly in a written minority report were presented to the whole committee during its consideration of the matter, the Stated Clerk shall reproduce the minority report and distribute it with the report of the committee.

(2) A minority report must be appropriate for consideration as a substitute motion (see *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, 2011, p. 527).



# F

## General Assembly Plenary Meeting

- 1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports**
  - a. Report at Beginning of Each Meeting
  - b. Limits on Debate/Changes in Docket
  - c. Review Minutes
  - d. Requests for Communicating with Assembly
  - e. Referral of Protests
- 2. Reports of Assembly Committees**
  - a. Distribution
  - b. Adequate Docket Time
  - c. Committee Moderators
  - d. Financial Implication
- 3. Minority Reports**
  - a. Must Stand as Full and Complete Substitute
  - b. Reasons Supporting Committee's Recommendation
- 4. Committee Reports on the Budget**
  - a. Per Capita Budget
  - b. Amended Per Capita Budget
- 5. Plenary Meeting Procedures**
  - a. Debate
  - b. Voting Methods
  - c. Mindful of Effort Required to Fulfill Recommendations
  - d. Constitutional Questions
  - e. Cellular Telephones
  - f. Emergency Messages
  - g. Confidentiality
- 6. General Assembly Nominating Committee**
  - a. Presentation of Nominations
  - b. May Decline to Submit Nomination
  - c. Nominating from the Floor
- 7. Docket Time for Special Greetings**
  - a. Head of Communion
  - b. Assignment of Docket Time
- 8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials**
  - a. Approval for Announcements
  - b. Nonofficial Printed Material
- 9. Distributing Study Documents**
  - a. Distribution
  - b. Responsible Entity Identified
- 10. Forming Social Policy**
- 11. Peaceful Demonstrations**
  - a. Where Allowed
  - b. Prohibited in Building

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### 1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports

#### Report at Beginning of Each Meeting

a. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall report at the beginning of each meeting, recommending any necessary changes in order of business and any referrals it may have considered since its last report.

#### Limits on Debate/Changes in Docket

b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may, at any time, recommend limits on debates or changes in the docket to facilitate the handling of business. The reports of the committee shall take precedence over any other business, including orders of the day.

**Review Minutes**

c. This committee shall review the minutes of the General Assembly daily, report to the General Assembly any suggested corrections, and recommend approval of the minutes. The minutes shall be posted on the church's website and two printed copies of the minutes shall be posted in different places during the following day for examination by commissioners. The minutes of the meetings of the General Assembly during the last two days of its session shall be submitted for review and approval within ten days after the adjournment of the General Assembly to a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

**Requests for Communicating with Assembly**

d. Requests for the privilege of communicating with the General Assembly shall be referred to this committee, which shall confer with persons making such requests about the time and the manner in which their concerns may be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall recommend to the General Assembly a response regarding any possible presentation to the assembly. At the time any such recommendation is acted upon, any commissioner may request that an opposing view be heard, and the assembly shall consider and act upon the matter.

**Referral of Protests**

e. Protests expressing disagreement with an action or failure to act on the part of the General Assembly shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall decide whether or not the protest is decorous and respectful. Should the committee decide the protest is decorous and respectful, the protest shall be entered in the Minutes. The committee may prepare an answer to be printed with any protest so entered (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0105b).

**2. Reports of Assembly Committees****Distribution**

a. Copies of the reports of assembly committees (print or electronic) shall ordinarily be distributed to commissioners no later than the close of the meeting prior to the one at which they are to be considered. The Stated Clerk shall arrange for the reproduction and distribution of reports.

**Adequate Docket Time**

b. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, shall docket adequate time for the reports of committees, including ample time for debate and action. If a report requires more time than docketed, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consult with the committee for additional time to complete consideration of the report.

**Committee Moderators**

c. Committee moderators should move the approval of recommendations with minimum comment, and material in the commissioners' printed resources shall not be read.

**Financial Implication**

d. The financial effect of each recommendation on budgets previously approved or under consideration shall be clearly presented at the time that the recommendation is considered by the assembly.

**3. Minority Reports****Must Stand as Full and Complete Substitute**

a. In order to be considered by the assembly, a minority report shall not only set aside the majority report but also be able to stand as a full and complete substitution for the majority report recommendations. A minority report shall be moved as a substitute only after the majority report has first been moved. When this happens, the assembly shall first consider (and may amend) the majority report. When consideration of the majority report is completed, the assembly may then consider (and may amend) the minority report. Further efforts to perfect each report shall be held to a minimum in order that the assembly can concentrate instead on the issue of whether to make the proposed substitution.

**Reasons Supporting Committee's Recommendation**

b. The moderator of the committee, or another member of the committee, shall present reasons supporting the committee's recommendation. They may be presented before any minority report is moved or presented during the narrative report of the committee, or presented during debate on the question of whether or not the substitution shall become the main motion. (See also Standing Rule E.7.h.)

#### 4. Committee Reports on the Budget

##### Per Capita Budget

a. At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business following the meetings of assembly committees, the assembly shall hear a report on the per capita budget from the committee that has reviewed that budget.

##### Amended Per Capita Budget

b. On the final day of the assembly, an amended per capita budget that incorporates the financial implications of actions taken by the assembly shall be presented to the assembly for approval.

#### 5. Plenary Meeting Procedures

##### Debate

a. In debate on any pending matter, no commissioner or delegate shall be allowed to speak more than three minutes until all other commissioners or delegates who desire to speak on the pending matter have been heard.

##### Voting Methods

b.(1) The General Assembly shall ordinarily decide questions by electronic voting. The Moderator may also call for unanimous consent by voice vote or show of hands. All decisions made by assembly standing committees by a three-quarters (supermajority) vote shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda to be considered as the first order of plenary business following committee meetings. Any actions requesting constitutional change must be considered in plenary.

(2) In addition to all consent items from assembly committees, the following items shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda:

(a) All unchallenged nominations from the General Assembly Nominating Committee.

(b) Unanimous recommendations from assembly agencies and entities for confirmations of those offices that, according to the Manual of the General Assembly, require General Assembly confirmation.

(3) In all cases, the right of any commissioner to remove any item from the plenary consent agenda or to call for one of the other forms of voting shall be preserved.”

##### Mindful of Effort Required to Fulfill Recommendations

c. In view of the relative ease in which studies and programs may be approved, commissioners and other assembly committee members are cautioned to be mindful of the effort required of staff and elected members to carry out the General Assembly’s instructions.

##### Constitutional Questions

d. When the General Assembly is in plenary session, questions that touch upon constitutional matters, including rulings on questions of order involving constitutional matters requested by the Moderator, shall be handled by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. These questions shall be referred in writing by the Moderator to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall consider each matter referred and make recommendations directly to the General Assembly through the Moderator.

##### Cellular Telephones

e. Use of cellular telephones is prohibited during meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the assembly committees. During these meetings, pagers may be used only in the silent mode.

##### Emergency Messages

f. Emergency messages will be relayed to a commissioner or advisory delegate during plenary meetings by way of a written message delivered by one of the Stated Clerk’s designated staff or assembly assistants.

##### Confidentiality

g. Any person permitted to remain during any executive session is expected to agree to be bound by the confidentiality required of commissioners.

## **6. General Assembly Nominating Committee**

### **Presentation of Nominations**

a. Unless the General Assembly shall have made some other provision, the nominating committee shall present to each session of the General Assembly a nominee for election to each vacancy on the entities of the General Assembly that shall exist because of a scheduled end of term, resignation, death, incapacity to act, change of residence, or any other reason.

### **May Decline to Submit Nomination**

b. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may decline to submit a nomination(s) to a particular vacancy(s) when requested to do so by the affected entity because of an expected merger of entity or a transfer of duties between entities in order to reduce the number of persons serving on a particular entity(s).

### **Nominating from the Floor**

c. Nominating from the Floor

(1) Nominations by commissioners shall be in order unless the vacancy is required to be filled upon nomination from some other source.

(2) When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly, with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented, as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk. The availability of the pertinent information provided by the person challenging the nominating committee’s nominee shall be announced to the assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor.

(3) In the event that there are nominations from the floor, the election shall proceed as follows:

(a) The General Assembly will deal with one challenged position at a time.

(b) The name of the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s nominee shall be placed in nomination by its moderator. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall call upon the commissioner who is placing a nomination from the floor to put that name in nomination.

(c) Once the names are placed in nomination, the order of speaking shall be first, the commissioner or a designee speaking on behalf of the floor nominee and second, the General Assembly Nominating Committee member or a designee speaking to its nominee. Both the commissioner (or designee) and the General Assembly Nominating Committee member (or designee) shall speak from the platform. Such speech shall not exceed three minutes in length. There shall be no other speeches seconding the nomination of any nominee.

(d) Without further discussion or debate, the General Assembly will move to vote.

## **7. Docket Time for Special Greetings**

### **Head of Communion**

a. When the Head of Communion of a member church of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, or the National Council of Churches is in attendance at a session of the General Assembly as an ecumenical advisory delegate or as an ecumenical representative, and proper notice is provided, the assembly shall provide up to five minutes of docket time to each such Head of Communion to present a greeting to the assembly.

### **Assignment of Docket Time**

b. The placing of this greeting on the docket will be assigned by the Stated Clerk.



<b>Approval for Announcements</b>	<p><b>8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials</b></p> <p>a. Only announcements connected directly with the business of the General Assembly shall be read from the platform and all notices shall be submitted either to the Moderator or the Stated Clerk for approval. Telegrams and special letters shall be reported to the General Assembly only at times to be designated by the Moderator.</p>
<b>Nonofficial Printed Material</b>	<p>b. Printed materials that are not official business before the General Assembly may be distributed at authorized booths in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall. Other distribution is permitted in the mailboxes provided for commissioners and advisory delegates, and also can be handed out twenty-five feet or more from entrances to the building in which the General Assembly meets.</p>
<b>Distribution</b>	<p><b>9. Distributing Study Documents</b></p> <p>a. Whenever the General Assembly itself shall require the distribution of a document for study (whether the proposal originates through the recommendation of an entity, the presentation of an overture or resolution, or arises during the conduct of the assembly's business) with a request for a response (whether the response is sought from individuals, congregations, councils, organizations of any kind, or any combination of these), the study document shall be accompanied by resource materials, bibliography, and aids as set forth in the document "Forming Social Policy," Section 5, printed in the <i>Manual of the General Assembly</i>. Along with a response instrument and the resource materials, bibliography, and aids, the document shall be distributed on a schedule that provides for the study guide and all accompanying material to be in the possession of the proposed respondents for a minimum of twelve months before the due date of the response.</p>
<b>Responsible Entity Identified</b>	<p>b. The entity to be responsible for receiving the responses and reporting to the General Assembly the summary of the responses shall be identified in the material. The report on the responses to the study may be presented no earlier than to the General Assembly that convenes in the second year after the session of the General Assembly that approves the study.</p>
<b>Where Allowed</b>	<p><b>10. Forming Social Policy</b></p> <p>The entities of the General Assembly, including its committees, commissions, and special committees, shall be governed by the document, "Forming Social Policy" printed in the Manual of the General Assembly, when that entity is considering making a social witness policy.</p>
<b>Where Allowed</b>	<p><b>11. Peaceful Demonstrations</b></p> <p>a. Peaceful demonstrations shall be allowed twenty-five or more feet outside of the entrances to the building in which General Assembly meets.</p>
<b>Prohibited in Building</b>	<p>b. Spontaneous or planned demonstrations by individuals or groups are prohibited inside the building where the General Assembly meets. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall declare all demonstrations that occur in plenary session out of order and, if demonstrators fail to immediately disband and desist, may recess the General Assembly to a fixed time and place. This rule does not prohibit the spontaneous or planned celebration of an action of the General Assembly or of any event in the life of the church.</p>





## General Assembly Meeting Worship

### Services of Worship

- a. Moderator of Preceding General Assembly Responsible for Planning
- b. Ecumenical Worship
- c. In Conformity with Directory for Worship

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### Services of Worship

#### **Moderator of Preceding General Assembly Responsible for Planning**

a. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall plan daily worship at the General Assembly, and a worship service including the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and shall provide, in advance, suitable leadership for these periods of worship. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at the first service of worship of the General Assembly session, and the Moderator shall preside on this occasion and preach a sermon or deliver an address. The Moderator shall seek advice to ensure inclusivity in the planning of appropriate daily worship periods. The Moderator shall assure adequate transmittal of information about the planning of worship periods to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

#### **Ecumenical Worship**

b. The Stated Clerk shall plan an ecumenical period of worship and provide, in advance, suitable leadership for this period of worship.

#### **In Conformity with Directory for Worship**

c. The various acts of worship planned for the session of the General Assembly shall be in conformity with the requirements of the Directory for Worship, and shall be developed and led according to the guidance of the document, "Presbyterians at Worship in Mass Assemblies." In the preparation and conduct of all worship services, care shall be taken that all language, sight, hearing, accessibility, and other barriers be eliminated so that there can be full participation of all attendees. [Example: That printed orders of service also be printed in braille and that signing be available.]





## Persons in Ordered Ministry and Elections

1. **Moderator of the General Assembly**
  - a. Title/Functions
  - b. Election
  - c. Vice Moderator
  - d. Vacancy

2. **Stated Clerk of the General Assembly**
  - a. Title/Functions
  - b. Election
  - c. Acting Stated Clerk
  - d. Associate Stated Clerks

### 1. Moderator of the General Assembly

#### Title/Functions

- a. Title and Functions of the Moderator at the General Assembly

(1) The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical person in ordered ministry, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of ruling elders and teaching elders.

(2) The title of the Moderator is “The Moderator of the [number] General Assembly [(year)] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

(3) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly.

(4) When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church’s life and upholding the people of God through prayer.

(5) The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the council (*Book of Order*, G-3.0104).

(6) The Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.

#### Election

- b. Election of the Moderator

(1) Each person nominated to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly must be a commissioner to the General Assembly. Action by presbyteries to endorse candidates for Moderator of the General Assembly shall not take place until after the adjournment of the immediately preceding assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall provide resourcing and orientation for Moderatorial candidates.

(2) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the assembly, the Moderatorial candidates will announce the name of a commissioner each has selected to offer to the assembly to confirm as Vice Moderator.

- (3) The following campaign procedures shall be observed:

(a) Candidates should budget campaign spending of no more than \$1,500, excluding travel and meeting expenses related to their candidacy. Each candidate shall submit

to the Stated Clerk an itemized statement of expenses, including travel and meeting expenses related to his/her candidacy and in kind contributions. This statement shall be submitted to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly prior to the convening of the General Assembly. This information shall be distributed to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the election of the Moderator. The statement of expenses of all candidates shall be kept on file in the Office of the General Assembly following the meeting of the General Assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall not reimburse a candidate for campaign expenses, but shall assume expenses involved in printing and distributing material submitted for information packets as outlined in Standing Rule H.1.b.(3)(e).

(b) In order to encourage reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Moderator, no candidate shall send a mailing of any campaign materials, print or electronic, to commissioners and/or advisory delegates or permit such a mailing to be sent, nor shall candidates or their advocates contact commissioners and/or advisory delegates by telephone.

(c) Distribution of written campaign materials at General Assembly shall be limited to the public distribution area.

(d) Candidates are encouraged to meet and make themselves available for conversation with commissioners and advisory delegates within the scope of these procedures.

(e) Not less than fifteen days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish for commissioners and advisory delegates an electronic information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Moderator who is known to the Stated Clerk and who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate that includes a statement regarding the candidate's sense of call to the ordered ministry,

(ii) A written presentation by the presbytery having jurisdiction over the candidate, if that council has endorsed the candidate,

(iii) An announcement of the commissioner each candidate has selected to be presented to the assembly for confirmation as Vice Moderator if the candidate is elected,

(iv) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the Stated Clerk.

The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but all material including photographs submitted for each presentation shall be provided in electronic format as well as print. The material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no less than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution, and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Moderator, if elected.

Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate who wishes to be included may send biographical information and a photograph in electronic format.

(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected in the following manner:

(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, each candidate shall be nominated by a commissioner to the assembly in the following manner: the commissioners making nominations shall be recognized at microphones on the assembly floor. Upon recognition by the assembly Moderator, the nominator shall say, "Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the \_\_\_ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_ from the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_." The nominator shall then return to his/her seat on the plenary floor. No seconds to nominations are required.

(b) After nominations are closed, each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the

concerns that nominee feels to be the most important for the church. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly

(c) At the conclusion of all the presentations by the nominees, they shall respond to questions from the floor. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who spoke first in the original presentation, and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they spoke earlier. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly.

(d) Where there is only one nominee for Moderator, the election may be by acclamation. Where there is more than one, the election may be by secret ballot in one of the following ways:

(i) Each commissioner shall vote by means of an electronic voting system. The Stated Clerk shall advise the Moderator of the totals. The Moderator shall announce the result of the vote as tabulated. If no nominee has received a majority of the whole vote, another vote shall be taken in the same manner. When one nominee shall have received a majority, the Moderator shall announce the result and declare the nominee to be elected.

(ii) If the assembly votes to use paper ballots, the Stated Clerk shall provide ballots and assign no fewer than ten commissioners to act as tellers, collecting and counting the ballots. The results shall be given to the Stated Clerk who shall report the totals to the Moderator who shall announce them to the assembly.

(5) The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Moderator as the last item of business at the session in which the Moderator is elected. The family of the newly elected Moderator and all present previous Moderators shall be invited to the platform. The service shall use the order of service for “Installation of Governing Body Officers and Staff” from the *Book of Occasional Services*. The processional banner of the Moderator shall precede the newly elected Moderator into the assembly. The Moderator’s cross and stole shall be presented by the most recent serving Moderator. A representative of the presbytery of the Moderator’s membership shall ask the questions of installation. The newly elected Moderator invites a person to lead the prayer of installation. The most recent serving Moderator gives the charge, a hymn is sung by the assembly, and the newly elected Moderator gives the benediction.

#### **Vice Moderator**

##### c. Vice Moderator

(1) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly, a Moderatorial candidate shall announce the selection of a commissioner who will be proposed to serve as Vice Moderator. At the next business session of the assembly following the election of the Moderator, the Moderator shall propose to the assembly the name of the commissioner for Vice Moderator. After a brief speech by the person selected, the assembly shall immediately proceed to vote on his or her confirmation. Should there be no confirmation, the Moderator shall bring another commissioner’s name for confirmation to the next business session of the assembly. The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Vice Moderator.

(2) The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

(3) The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.

#### **Vacancy**

##### d. Vacancy in the Office of the Moderator or Vice Moderator

(1) Should the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly become vacant, the Vice Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator. In such circumstance, all

constitutional obligations and functions as prescribed by the Standing Rules of the General Assembly and the *Book of Order* shall be incumbent upon the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly.

(2) Should the office of the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly also become vacant, the most recent living Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator as specified in the Constitution of the church.

## 2. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

### Title/Functions

#### a. Title and Functions of the Stated Clerk at the General Assembly

(1) The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

(2) The Stated Clerk is accountable, through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, to the General Assembly for the performance of the duties of the office, and shall present to each meeting of the General Assembly a report on the state of the church.

(3) The Stated Clerk is responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly for which no other assignment has been made.

(4) The Stated Clerk shall also be responsible for guidance of the procedures for candidates seeking the office of Moderator, and for supervision of the election of each Moderator.

(5) In accordance with directives from previous General Assemblies and in consultations with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, and other General Assembly agencies, the Stated Clerk is authorized to decide on matters pertaining to facilities and special events that must be established before the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall receive all reports, communications, overtures, and any other materials appropriate for General Assembly consideration. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for presentation to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, a referral of such items of business coming before the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.3.e.).

(7) The Stated Clerk shall prepare for consideration of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a proposed docket for the General Assembly’s consideration of its business (Standing Rule C.4.a.). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall present the proposed docket to the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures so that it may recommend a docket to the commissioners at the first business session. The docket presented to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall provide a time early in the General Assembly for a report by the Stated Clerk on the state of the church, and for a report by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

(8) The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly the number of assembly committees and a name for each committee after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities (Standing Rule C.1.). The Stated Clerk shall present the committee structure to the General Assembly for ratification at the first business session. Each commissioner and advisory delegate shall be assigned by random selection to one assembly committee at least forty-five days before the opening date of the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.2.).

(9) The Stated Clerk shall provide opportunity for orienting the commissioners, advisory delegates, and others taking part in the session of the General Assembly. The use of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, sources of parliamentary advice, and the availability of resource persons and materials to facilitate their work should be part of the orientation.



(10) The Stated Clerk shall be the parliamentarian for the meetings of the General Assembly, or arrange for the service of a professional parliamentarian.

(11) The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the councils and agencies of the assembly, persons who presented business to the assembly, and others affected by the assembly's actions, a report on actions of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to their concerns. The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the presbyteries all assembly actions on which the presbyteries are requested to take action.

(12) As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly's proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk.

## Election

### b. Election of the Stated Clerk

(1) The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) requires the election of a Stated Clerk and the standing rules describe the procedures for the election. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected for a term of four years and is eligible for reelection to additional four-year terms. The Stated Clerk is accountable to the General Assembly for the performance of the assigned functions.

(2) The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected in the manner described in this standing rule. No member of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly or other persons involved in this procedure as a member of the search committee or as a person providing staff services to the committee may be considered for nomination as Stated Clerk. The incumbent Stated Clerk may not participate in any way in the election process described in this standing rule. In the year there is an election of a Stated Clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk during the period of the election at the General Assembly.

(3) The General Assembly that meets prior to the end of the term of a Stated Clerk shall elect a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(a) The slate of nominees for the review/nomination committee shall consist of the following: three members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (nominated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, one of whom shall serve as moderator of the committee), one member of the General Assembly Mission Council (nominated by the General Assembly Mission Council), and five at-large members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee in the following categories: one council stated clerk and four persons (two ruling elders and two clergy) from among commissioners who have attended an assembly in the past six years. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall present to the assembly for election the slate of nominees for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. The slate presented shall reflect the denomination's commitment to inclusiveness.

(b) Nominations from the floor for the nomination committee shall be in order following the distribution of the printed list of proposed nominees by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and a declaration by the Moderator that the names are in nomination. Names placed in nomination from the floor shall be in opposition to a particular name of an at-large member placed in nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and must be in the same category (H.2.b.(3)(a)). More than one person may be placed in nomination from the floor in opposition to an at-large nominee.

(c) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for providing the nomination committee with an up-to-date position description.

(d) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will ensure that an adequate budget for the nomination process is provided in the Office of the General Assembly and shall designate staff services for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(e) The nomination committee shall begin its work no later than 300 days before the start of the assembly that will elect the Stated Clerk.

(f) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for conducting the end-of-term evaluation of the Stated Clerk.

(g) The nominating committee shall announce that persons seeking the position of Stated Clerk shall file a completed application form and a resume or personal information form (PIF) with the committee 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly.

If the incumbent wants to be considered, he or she will notify the committee in writing and submit a current resume or PIF 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall provide a copy of the end-of-term evaluation to the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee.

(h) Additional written material may be requested by the committee. No one may be nominated to serve as Stated Clerk who has not provided an application to the committee.

(i) The committee shall review and evaluate all applications to determine the constitutional eligibility of the candidates. Any candidate who is determined to not be eligible will be notified in writing within forty-five days of receipt of their resume or PIF.

(j) The committee shall interview all eligible candidates using the same methodology and select one as the committee's recommendation. All members of the committee shall ordinarily participate in the interview. The committee shall declare its nominee no later than sixty days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(k) Any of the applicants for the position of Stated Clerk, including the incumbent Stated Clerk if not the nominee of the committee, who wish to be placed in nomination against the nominee of the committee shall declare their intention to the committee to do so no later than forty-five days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(l) At the convening of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly shall distribute to commissioners and advisory delegates an information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Stated Clerk who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate, including a statement regarding the candidate's sense of call to the ordered ministry,

(ii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the committee based upon issues that will be before the church as presented in business to be considered by the General Assembly.

(iii) The material submitted shall be typewritten on paper 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size. The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but the copy submitted for each presentation shall be provided in one color on one side of one sheet. The material shall be submitted to the Office of the General Assembly no less than thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(m) The candidates may not distribute any other materials, print or electronic, including flyers, buttons, tokens or other objects that would denote a campaign for the office of Stated Clerk.

(n) Other organizations supporting the candidacy of a particular candidate may not distribute materials electronically, through the mail, or at the General Assembly with the knowledge, support, or permission of that candidate. Should a candidate discover that an organization is advocating or campaigning for him or her, it is expected that the candidate will request that organization to cease its activities. The same expectation will be true of organizations that are critical of a particular candidate for Stated Clerk.

(o) Each candidate will be provided a place to meet and talk with commissioners and advisory delegates two days before the election. Only information provided by the Office of the General Assembly may be distributed in those rooms. Other materials, apart from that packet, are not permitted. Each candidate for Stated Clerk will be allowed to post the times when he/she will be available for conversation in that room.

(p) Any questions concerning interpretation of the election process outlined in H.2.b. shall be determined by the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(4) The General Assembly, by majority vote, shall elect the Stated Clerk in the following manner:

(a) Within forty-eight hours of the convening of the assembly, the Stated Clerk Review/Nomination Committee shall place in nomination a single nominee.

(b) The Moderator shall then invite other nominations from those who have completed the nomination process. Only one speech, made by a commissioner or a member of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee not to exceed five minutes in length, shall be made to nominate each nominee. There shall be no speech seconding any nomination. Each person nominated from the floor shall reaffirm a willingness to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(c) In the event there are no other nominations, the election shall proceed immediately as follows:

(i) The nominee for Stated Clerk shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee's views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

(ii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. Time allocated shall not exceed fifteen minutes. The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominee for Stated Clerk. The time allocated should not exceed fifteen minutes, after which the voting shall take place.

(d) In the event there are other nominations, the election shall proceed as follows:

(i) The election of the Stated Clerk shall take place as the first order of business on the next to last day of the assembly's session.

(ii) Each nominee shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee's views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The nominees shall speak in the same order as the presentation of nominating speeches.

(iii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominees for Stated Clerk. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who was nominated first and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they were nominated. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly, after which the voting shall take place.

(5) Should there be a vacancy in the office of the Stated Clerk, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall propose to the assembly, if the assembly is in session, members for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee, or shall propose to the Moderator for appointment, if the assembly is not in session, to a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. This committee shall be composed of members as outlined in Standing Rule H.2.b. and begin the process of a search for a candidate for Stated Clerk. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an acting Stated Clerk until such time as a Stated Clerk is elected.

(6) The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee shall be dismissed at the adjournment of the session of the General Assembly at which the committee presents a nominee for Stated Clerk.

(7) A new Stated Clerk shall normally assume office thirty days after the adjournment of the assembly. A longer period of transition between Stated Clerks may be negotiated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, but shall not exceed ninety days.

**Acting Stated Clerk**

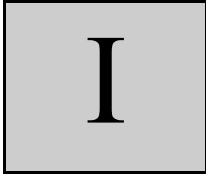
c. Acting Stated Clerk

In case of the incapacity, resignation, or death of the Stated Clerk, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an Acting Stated Clerk until such time as the Stated Clerk is able to resume the duties or the General Assembly elects a new Stated Clerk. The person so designated may be one of the Associate Stated Clerks or another person eligible for election as Stated Clerk.

**Associate Stated Clerks**

d. Associate Stated Clerks

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The term of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly.



## General Assembly Arrangements

1. **Date and Place of Meeting**
    - a. Determining Date and Place
    - b. Presbytery Invitations
    - c. Criteria
    - d. Rotating the Place of the Meeting
  2. **Meeting Arrangements**
    - a. Arrangements and Housing
    - b. Assembly Assistants
    - c. Simultaneous Interpretation
    - d. Sponsorship of Events
  3. **Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses**
    - a. Reimbursement/Per Diem
    - b. Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner
  4. **Assembly Meeting Work Group**
    - a. Membership
    - b. Responsibilities
- 

### 1. Date and Place of Meeting

#### Determining Date and Place

a. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall meet on the date and at the place fixed by the preceding General Assembly for a period, which shall be known as a session of the General Assembly, preferably between May 15 and July 31, subject to the possibility of change (see Standing Rule I.4.b.(10) and *Book of Order*, G-3.0503, for exceptions). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall recommend to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any necessary changes in dates and places of meetings previously set. Should action regarding date or place of meeting become necessary at a time when the General Assembly is not in session, this committee is empowered to fix a new date or place of meeting.

#### Presbytery Invitations

b. The host body for any session of the General Assembly shall be a presbytery(s) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any presbytery that desires to invite the General Assembly to meet within its bounds shall forward an invitation to the Stated Clerk no later than May 1 of the year that is seven years prior to the earliest effective date of the invitation.

#### Criteria

c. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the criteria that render a place an eligible site for a meeting of the General Assembly, including the requirement that all meeting arrangements shall be made to facilitate full participation by persons with disabilities. These criteria may be obtained from the Office of the General Assembly.

#### Rotating the Place of the Meeting

d. In order to distribute the benefits experienced from hosting a General Assembly meeting throughout the church, the place of meeting shall be rotated among the following four areas (unless prevented by financial or other practical considerations):

- Area A: Synod of Alaska/Northwest, Synod of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Synod of the Rocky Mountains, Synod of the Southwest;
- Area B: Synod of the Sun, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Synod of Mid-America;
- Area C: Synod of Living Waters, Synod of Lincoln Trails, Synod of the Covenant;
- Area D: Synod of South Atlantic, Synod of Puerto Rico, Synod of the Northeast, Synod of the Trinity, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

## 2. Meeting Arrangements

### Arrangements and Housing

a. The Stated Clerk shall oversee all arrangements for the meeting and housing of the General Assembly, including: the assignment of time and place for all special events and public meetings connected with or scheduled at the time of the General Assembly; the assignment of time and place for exhibits at the General Assembly; and the assignment of commissioners, advisory delegates, and others to hotels and other accommodations.

### Assembly Assistants

b. The Stated Clerk shall appoint persons to serve as assembly assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. Persons appointed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly. Assembly assistants shall be assigned to particular tasks to facilitate the work of the General Assembly. The appointments shall be made in accordance with *Book of Order*, F-1.0403.

### Simultaneous Interpretation

c. The Stated Clerk shall arrange for the simultaneous interpretation of proceedings into Spanish and Korean languages for any participant during plenary meetings of the General Assembly. This service shall also be provided during assembly committee meetings, services of worship, and other events during the assembly for commissioners, advisory delegates, ecumenical guests, and, when possible, for other participants.

### Sponsorship of Event

d. An event scheduled before, during, or immediately following a session of the General Assembly and extending an invitation to any or all participants of the assembly shall clearly identify the sponsor or sponsoring organization(s) in any invitations, announcements, or other publicity about the event.

## 3. Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses

### Reimbursement/ Per Diem

a. The approved reimbursement for the travel expenses, food, lodging, and other approved expenses of commissioners at the sessions of the General Assembly shall be paid by the treasurer or the treasurer's designee. The treasurer shall have the authority to deposit funds for such purposes in a bank or trust company where the General Assembly is to be in session. Commissioners shall be reimbursed by means of individual checks upon receipt of a voucher on a form provided by the treasurer. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly the amount of any per diem. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall set the per diem, and the Stated Clerk shall publish such per diem in the materials (print or electronic) provided to the commissioners. The treasurer shall determine the manner in which such checks shall be distributed and shall announce the place or places where such checks may be cashed.

### Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner

b. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse an alternate commissioner for cost of meals (as specified in the per diem expenses for the particular session of the assembly to which the person is commissioned) during the period in which the alternate is actually seated as a commissioner. The total of the payments to the two persons shall not be larger than payment to a single commissioner attending the full assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse either the original commissioner or the alternate who replaced the original commissioner for the costs of transportation and other approved expenses, but not both. It shall be the responsibility of the two individuals, with the assistance of the presbytery that elected them, to determine an appropriate division of the costs, whether reimbursement was in cash or a prepaid ticket was provided. Both persons shall be listed in the *Journal* as commissioners, with an indication of the period during which they served.

## 4. Assembly Meeting Work Group

### Membership

a. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall establish a work group on assembly arrangements to be composed of designated members from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council. The

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moderator of the Committee on Local Arrangements, and the moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (when selected) shall be nonvoting members of the committee at all meetings in which matters will be considered that affect their particular work. This work group shall be assigned responsibilities (1) through (10) in this Standing Rule I.4.b.

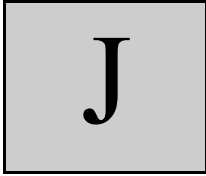
**Responsibilities**

## b. Responsibilities

- (1) Review the evaluation of each General Assembly session secured by the Stated Clerk.
- (2) Outline the programs for future General Assemblies sufficiently in advance to ensure an orderly progression of themes and emphases and to ensure the appointment of significant speakers and other program participants.
- (3) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed docket for the next session of the General Assembly.
- (4) Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk's proposed referral of each item of business to an appropriate assembly committee.
- (5) Assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee.
- (6) Consult with the Moderator regarding the planning of all worship at the General Assembly.
- (7) Coordinate the programmatic aspects of each General Assembly session, ensuring that adequate time is provided for the business that must be transacted.
- (8) Review requests from entities of the General Assembly, councils, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.
- (9) Prepare a report, including recommendations on the docket and the referral of assembly business, to be printed and distributed with other materials provided to commissioners.
- (10) Review and present to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any changes in dates and places of meetings previously set.







## Special Meetings of the General Assembly

### 1. Method of Calling

- a. Petition's Subject Matter
- b. Resolution Form
- c. Not Called for Discussion Only
- d. Resolved 1 or 2 Days
- e. Full Text on Each Page of Petition
- f. Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- g. 120-day Requirement

### 2. Signatures

- a. Verification of PC(USA) Membership
- b. Verification of Signature
- c. Removal Request
- d. Failure to Reply
- e. Verification Process Report

### 3. Date and Location

- a. Report of Decision to Call Meeting
- b. COGA Sets Date and Place
- c. Expense Plan
- d. Letter of Notification

### 1. Method of Calling

The *Book of Order* permits the calling of special meetings of the General Assembly (G-3.0503). The method of calling a special meeting is the required number of commissioners submitting a petition with the full text of the resolution to the Moderator of the General Assembly.

#### Petition's Subject Matter

a. A special meeting may be called providing the petition's subject matter falls within the General Assembly's responsibilities. (G-3.0501).

#### Resolution Form

b. The urgent matter shall be brought in the form of a resolution or resolutions, stating the specific action proposed to be taken by the commissioners at the special meeting and shall include the reasons for proposing the decision to be made.

#### Not Called for Discussion Only

c. A special meeting may not be called for the purpose of discussion only.

#### Resolved in 1 or 2 Days

d. The matters should be able to be resolved in a session of one or two days.

#### Full Text on Each Page of Petition

e. The full text of the resolution shall appear on each page of the signed petitions.

#### Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures

f. The Moderator may consult with the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution meets the criteria for a called meeting or concerning the specific actions in the proposed resolution. This may take place by conference call.

#### 120-day Requirement

g. Resolutions requiring or proposing constitutional interpretation are subject to the 120-day requirement in G-6.02. The 120-day requirement begins upon receipt of the petition by the Moderator. The Moderator may consult with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution requires a constitutional interpretation.

## 2. Signatures

The *Book of Order* establishes the minimum number of signatures to require a called meeting. The Moderator, upon receipt of the petition, shall ask the Stated Clerk to complete the following within thirty days:

### Verification of PC(USA) Membership Verification of Signature

a. Send each presbytery stated clerk or clerk of session a letter verifying the current Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) membership of the individual signatory to the petition.

b. Send each signatory to the petition a letter of verification asking the commissioner to verify the signature on the petition and if the commissioner concurs with the purpose of the request as stated in the resolution.

### Removal Request

c. During the verification process, a commissioner may request removal of his or her name from the petition by notifying the Stated Clerk.

### Failure to Reply

d. After all reasonable efforts to establish contact have been made, the name of a commissioner failing to reply to the letter of verification shall be removed from the petition.

### Verification Process Report

e. The Stated Clerk shall report to the Moderator the results of the verification process.

## 3. Date and Location

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly has the responsibility to fix the date and place of a meeting of the General Assembly when the General Assembly is not in session.

### Report of Decision to Call Meeting

a. Upon receiving certification from the Stated Clerk that the petition has met the requirements of the *Book of Order* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the Moderator shall report to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) the decision to call the meeting.

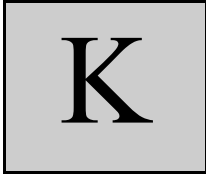
### COGA Sets Date and Place Expense Plan

b. The COGA shall set the date and place of a called meeting.

c. The COGA shall submit to the called meeting a plan to pay for its expenses. This plan shall be considered to be part of the business of the special meeting.

### Letter of Notification

d. The letter of notification of the called meeting will be mailed to the commissioners no later than sixty days before the start of the meeting.



## Commissions, Special Committees, and Special Administrative Review

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Commissions and Special Committees</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Purpose</li> <li>b. Considerations for Creating</li> <li>c. Appointed by Moderator</li> <li>d. Length of Existence and Reports</li> <li>e. Review</li> <li>f. Representation at General Assembly and Funding</li> <li>g. Coordination</li> <li>h. Staff Services</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Special Administrative Review of Synods</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Three Ways to Review</li> <li>b. Written Request for Review</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
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### 1. Commissions and Special Committees

**Purpose**

a. Unless otherwise specified in the assembly’s action, any body or group established by the General Assembly to carry out decisions of the assembly, or instructed to report to the assembly, or make recommendations to the assembly, or both, shall be known as a commission or special committee (see *Book of Order*, G-3.0109). The purposes of a special committee must be ones that cannot be undertaken by the work of an existing corporation or entity under its assigned responsibilities. Due to the financial and staffing implications, before authorizing the establishment of a special committee, the assembly shall hear a report from the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall have consulted with the most closely related entity and a member designated from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, as to whether the work to be assigned to the special committee could more effectively and economically be assigned to that entity.

**Considerations for Creating**

b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall be notified by any assembly committee whenever there is discussion about the creation of a special committee. In discussing the possible creation of a special committee, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall hear from related corporation or entity representatives as well as representatives from the assembly committee considering the proposal. Financial implications of special committees should accompany any recommendation for action by the assembly. The written comment of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures must be incorporated as background in the report of the assembly committee containing a recommendation to create a special committee.

**Appointed by Moderator**

c. Any commission or special committee authorized by the General Assembly, unless otherwise designated, shall be appointed by the Moderator in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The Moderator is also authorized to fill by appointment any vacancies that may occur in any of such commissions or committees. No teaching elder, ruling elder, or other person shall be appointed to serve on more than one such commission or committee except by consent of the General Assembly.

**Length of Existence and Reports**

d. Special committees shall complete their work within two years unless the General Assembly that authorized its establishment specifies a different period. Special committees shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that shall include a recommendation to extend its existence (if beyond the period authorized), or, at the conclusion of its work, a

recommendation for dismissal. Special committees shall also publish interim reports, no less than annually, by electronic or print means. Such interim reports shall indicate the progress made by the special committee on its assigned tasks and offer a timeline and process for completing its work. When a special committee requests an extension of its existence, the request shall be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. After consultation with the most closely related assembly entity, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will recommend to the assembly whether the project shall be reassigned to the entity, remain with the special committee, or be terminated. Any extension to its existence shall require a two-thirds vote of the commissioners.

**Review**

e. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall review the work of each special committee and include in its report to each session of the General Assembly a summary of the work being carried out by each special committee, including any recommendation to transfer the work assigned to a special committee elsewhere, or to dismiss the committee. A special committee shall not consider matters currently referred to another special committee or entity.

**Representation at General Assembly and Funding**

f. The expenses of one member of a special committee or commission to attend the General Assembly session to make any oral presentation of the report of the committee or commission that may be docketed, and to respond to questions concerning that report shall be paid by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission. This member shall be designated as the corresponding member. The exceptions to this rule are as follows:

(1) At the General Assembly meeting in which the final report of the committee or commission is presented, the moderator, who shall serve as the corresponding member of the committee or commission, and one other designated member of the committee or commission shall attend to present the report and serve as resource to the committee considering the report. Unless otherwise approved in advance by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (due to special circumstances), only the expenses of these two authorized representatives shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

(2) In the event of a minority report, a designated member of the committee's or commission's minority shall also be invited to attend. The expenses of this member shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

(3) Other members of special committees or commissions, not otherwise referred to in this standing rule, shall be reimbursed for attendance at a General Assembly session only if they are individually involved in hearings or other official purposes.

**Coordination**

g. Any such commission or committee shall consult with and advise the General Assembly Mission Council on the progress of its work in order to assist the council in its responsibility for coordinating the work of the entities of the General Assembly and the work of presbyteries and synods.

**Staff Services**

h. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services and other assistance to such commissions and committees in order to facilitate and coordinate their work. The work of commissions and special committees shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

**2. Special Administrative Review of Synods****Three Ways to Review**

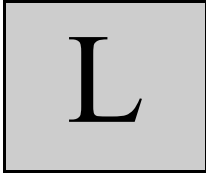
a. The General Assembly has authority to undertake special administrative review of synods (*Book of Order*, G-3.0502c). There are three ways the General Assembly could be requested to consider such review:

- 
- (1) by an overture from a presbytery or synod (G-3.0302d; G-3.0402; Standing Rule A.3.;
  - (2) by request from one of the General Assembly entities (Standing Rule A.2.);
- or
- (3) By a commissioners' resolution (Standing Rule A.8.). If such overture, request, or resolution is acted on favorably by the General Assembly, the General Assembly could undertake Special Administrative Review (G-3.0108b) through commission or special committee as provided for in Standing Rule K.5. and G-3.0109.

**Written Request  
for Review**

b. Special administrative review of an alleged synod irregularity or delinquency may occur when a written request for such review is received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly from another synod or a presbytery within the synod of the alleged irregularity or delinquency. If the request relates to an alleged delinquency, the request can only be filed with the Stated Clerk after the failure or refusal of the synod to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, having been requested to do so in writing prior to the meeting. When the request for special administrative review is received, the Stated Clerk shall convene a meeting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the moderator of the General Assembly Mission Council, and the moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. If the request is in order and all the moderators agree that for the good of the church the special administrative review needs to be undertaken before the next meeting of the General Assembly (when the request could be considered by the whole General Assembly), the Moderator of the General Assembly shall appoint a special committee (Standing Rule K.5.) to conduct a special administrative review in accordance with G-3.0108b and report its findings and recommendations to the next General Assembly.





## Amendment or Suspension of the Standing Rules

1. **Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules**
  2. **Amending the Standing Rules**
  3. **Suspending the Standing Rules**
- 

### **Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules**

1. In consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the next session of the General Assembly any changes in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly deemed necessary. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before proposing to the General Assembly any amendment to the standing rules.

### **Amending the Standing Rules**

2. The Standing Rules of the General Assembly may be amended by a majority vote of the commissioners present and voting. A motion to amend the rules is debatable.

### **Suspending the Standing Rules**

3. A motion to suspend the standing rules is not debatable and shall require a two-thirds vote of the total enrollment of the commissioners.





MODERATORS AND CLERKS

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838-1869

A—SUCCESSION OF MODERATORS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1789-1837

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1789	*John Witherspoon, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1789	*John Rodgers, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1790	*Robert Smith, D.D.	New Castle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1791	*John Woodhull, D.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1792	*John King, D.D.	Carlisle	Carlisle, Pa.
1793	*James Latta, D.D.	New Castle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1794	*Alexander McWhorter, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1795	*John McKnight, D.D.	New York	Carlisle, Pa.
1796	*Robert Davidson, D.D.	Carlisle	Philadelphia, Pa.
1797	*William Mackay Tennent, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1798	*John Blair Smith, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1799	*S. Stanhope Smith, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Winchester, Va.
1800	*Joseph Clark, D.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1801	*Nathaniel Irwin	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1802	*Azel Roe, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1803	*James Hall, D.D.	Concord	Philadelphia, Pa.
804	*James Francis Armstrong	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1805	*James Richards, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1806	*Samuel Miller, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1807	*Archibald Alexander, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1808	*Philip Milledoler, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1809	*Drury Lacy	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1810	*John Brodhead Romeyn, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1811	*Eliphalet Nott, D.D., LL.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1812	*Andrew Flinn, D.D.	Harmony	Philadelphia, Pa.
1813	*Samuel Blatchford, D.D.	Columbia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1814	*James Inglis, D.D.	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1815	*William Neill, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1816	*James Blythe, D.D.	W. Lexington	Philadelphia, Pa.
1817	*Jonas Coe, D.D.	Columbia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1818	*Jacob Jones Janeway, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1819	*John Holt Rice, D.D.	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1820	*John McDowell, D.D.	Jersey	Philadelphia, Pa.
1821	*William Hill, D.D.	Winchester	Philadelphia, Pa.
1822	*Obadiah Jennings, D.D.	Steubenville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1823	*John Chester, D.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.
1824	*Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1825	*Stephen N. Rowan, D.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1826	*Thomas McAuley, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1827	*Francis Herron, D.D.	Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.
1828	*Ezra Stiles Ely, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1829	*Benjamin Holt Rice, D.D.	Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1830	*Ezra Fisk, D.D.	Hudson	Philadelphia, Pa.
1831	*Nathan S.S. Beman, D.D., LL.D.	Troy	Philadelphia, Pa.
1832	*James Hoge, D.D.	Columbus	Philadelphia, Pa.
1833	*William Anderson McDowell, D.D.	Charleston	Philadelphia, Pa.
1834	*Philip Lindsley, D.D.	W. Tennessee	Philadelphia, Pa.
1835	*William Wirt Phillips, D.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1836	*John Witherspoon, D.D., LL.D.	Harmony	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1837	*David Elliott, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1838	*Wm. Swan Plumer, D.D., LL.D.	East Hanover	Philadelphia, Pa.
1839	*Joshua Lacy Wilson, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1840	*William Morrison Engles, D.D.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1841	*Robt. J. Breckenridge, DD, LLD	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1842	*John Todd Edgar, D.D.	Nashville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1843	*Gardiner Spring, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Philadelphia, Pa.
1844	*George Junkin, D.D., LL.D.	Oxford	Louisville, Ky.
1845	*John Michael Krebs, D.D.	New York	Cincinnati, Ohio
1846	*Charles Hodge, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Philadelphia, Pa.
1847	*Jas. H. Thornwell, D.D., LL.D.	Charleston	Richmond, Va.
1848	*Alexander T. McGill, DD, L&D	Ohio	Baltimore, Md.
1849	*Nicholas Murray, D.D.	Elizabethtown	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1850	*Aaron W. Leland, D.D.	Charleston	Cincinnati, Ohio
1851	*Edward P. Humphrey, D.D., LL.D.	Louisville	St. Louis, Mo.
1852	*John Chase Lord, D.D.	Buffalo City	Charleston, S.C.
1853	*John Clark Young, D.D.	Transylvania	Philadelphia, Pa.
1854	*Henry Augustus Boardman, D.D.	Philadelphia	Buffalo, N.Y.
1855	*Nathan Lewis Rice, D.D.	St. Louis	Nashville, Tenn.
1856	*Francis McFarland, D.D.	Lexington	New York, N.Y.
1857	*Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, D.D.	Burlington	Lexington, Ky.
1858	*Wm. Anderson Scott, D.D., LL.D.	California	New Orleans, La.
1859	*William L. Breckenridge, D.D.	Louisville	Indianapolis, Ind.
1860	*John Williams Yeomans, D.D.	Northumberland	Rochester, N.Y.
1861	*Jno. Chester Backus, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Philadelphia, Pa.
1862	*Charles C. Beatty, D.D., LL.D.	Steubenville	Columbus, Ohio
1863	*John Hunter Morrison, D.D.	Lodiana	Peoria, Ill.
1864	*James Wood, D.D.	Madison	Newark, N.J.
1865	*John Cameron Lowrie, D.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1866	*Robert Livingstone Stanton, D.D.	Chillicothe	St. Louis, Mo.
1867	*Phineas Densmore Gurley, D.D.	Potomac	Cincinnati, Ohio
1868	*George W. Musgrave, D.D., LL.D.	Phila. Central	Albany, N.Y.
1869	*M.W. Jacobus, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio	New York, N.Y.
1869	*M.W. Jacobus, D.D., LL.D.	Ohio (Nov. 12)	Pittsburgh, Pa.

2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838	*Samuel Fisher, D.D.	Newark	Philadelphia, Pa.
1839	*Baster Dickinson, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1840	*William Wisner, D.D.	Cincinnati	Philadelphia, Pa.
1843	*Ansel Doan Eddy, D.D.	Newark	Philadelphia, Pa.
1846	*Samuel Hanson Cox, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn	Philadelphia, Pa.
1849	*Philip Courtlandt Hay, D.D.	Tioga	Philadelphia, Pa.
1850	*David H. Riddle, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Detroit, Mich.
1851	*Albert Barnes	Philadelphia, 4th	Utica, N.Y.
1852	*William Adams, D.D., LL.D.	New York, 4th	Washington, D.C.
1853	*Diarca Howe Allen, D.D.	Cincinnati	Buffalo, N.Y.
1854	*Thomas H. Skinner, D.D., LL.D.	New York, 3rd	Philadelphia, Pa.
1855	*William Carpenter Wisner, D.D.	Niagara	St. Louis, Mo.
1856	*Laurens P. Hickok, D.D., LL.D.	Troy	New York, N.Y.
1857	*Samuel W. Fisher, D.D., LL.D.	Cincinnati	Cleveland, Ohio
1858	*Matthew L. P. Thompson, D.D.	Buffalo	Chicago, Ill.
1859	*Robert Wilson Patterson, D.D.	Chicago	Wilmington, Del.
1860	*Thornton Anthony Mills, D.D.	Indianapolis	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1861	*Jonathan Bailey Condit, D.D.	Cayuga	Syracuse, N.Y.
1862	*George Duffield, D.D.	Detroit	Cincinnati, Ohio
1863	*Henry B. Smith, D.D., LL.D.	N. York, 4th	Philadelphia, Pa.
1864	*Thomas Brainerd, D.D.	Philadelphia, 4th	Dayton, Ohio
1865	*James Boylan Shaw, D.D.	Rochester	Brooklyn, N.Y.

\* Deceased  
 † Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE	A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1866	*Samuel Miles Hopkins, D.D.	Cayuga	St. Louis, Mo.	1926	*William O. Thompson, D.D., LL.D.	Columbus	Baltimore, Md.
1867	*Henry Addison Nelson, D.D.	St. Louis	Rochester, N.Y.	1927	‡*Robert E. Speer, D.D., LL.D.	Jersey City	San Francisco, Calif.
1868	*Jonathan French Stearns, D.D.	Newark	Harrisburg, Pa.	1928	*Hugh Kelso Walker, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	Tulsa, Okla.
1869	*Philemon Halsted Fowler, D.D.	Utica	New York, N.Y.	1929	*Cleveland Boyd McAfee, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	St. Paul, Minn.
1869	*Philemon Halsted Fowler, D.D.	Utica (Nov. 12)	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1930	*Hugh Thomson Kerr, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Cincinnati, Ohio

REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS

1870-1958

1870	*J. Trumbull Backus, DD., LL.D.	Albany	Philadelphia, Pa.	1931	*Lewis Seymour Mudge, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1871	*Zephaniah Moore Humphrey, D.D.	Philadelphia	Chicago, Ill.	1932	*Charles William Kerr, D.D.	Tulsa	Denver, Co.
1872	*Samuel J. Nicolls, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Detroit, Mich.	1933	*John McDowell, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Columbus, Ohio
1873	*Howard Crosby, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Baltimore, Md.	1934	*William Chalmers Covert, D.D., LL.D.		Chicago Cleveland, Ohio
1874	*Samuel J. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	St. Louis, Mo.	1935	*Joseph Anderson Vance, D.D., LL.D.	Detroit	Cincinnati, Ohio
1875	*Edward D. Morris, D.D., LL.D.	Cincinnati	Cleveland, Ohio	1936	*Henry Buck Master, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.	Fort Wayne	Syracuse, N.Y.
1876	*Henry Jackson Van Dyke, D.D.	Brooklyn	Brooklyn, N.Y.	1937	*William Hiram Foulkes, D.D., LL.D.	Newark	Columbus, Ohio
1877	*James Eells, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Chicago, Ill.	1938	*Charles Whitefield Welch, D.D.	Louisville	Philadelphia, Pa.
1878	*Francis L. Patton, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1939	‡*Sam Higginbottom, LL.D., Philan.D.	Cleveland	Cleveland, Ohio
1879	*Henry Harris Jessup, D.D.	Lackawanna	Saratoga, N.Y.	1940	*William Lindsay Young, D.D., LL.D.	Kansas City	Rochester, N.Y.
1880	*William M. Paxton, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Madison, Wis.	1941	*Herbert Booth Smith, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	St. Louis, Mo.
1881	*Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D.	Albany	Buffalo, N.Y.	1942	*Stuart Nye Hutchison, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Milwaukee, Wis.
1882	*Herrick Johnson, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Springfield, Ill.	1943	*Henry Sloane Coffin, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.	New York	Detroit, Mich.
1883	*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.	New York	Saratoga, N.Y.	1944	*Roy Ewing Vale, D.D., LL.D.	Indianapolis	Chicago, Ill.
1884	*George P. Hays, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Saratoga, N.Y.	1945	*William Blakeman Lampe, D.D.	St. Louis	Minneapolis, Minn.
1885	*Elijah R. Craven, D.D., LL.D.	Newark	Cincinnati, Ohio	1946	*Frederick W. Evans, D.D.	Troy	Atlantic City, N.J.
1886	*David C. Marquis, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Minneapolis, Minn.	1947	‡*Wilbur LaRoe Jr., LL.D.	Washington City	Grand Rapids, Mich.
1887	*Joseph T. Smith, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Omaha, Neb.	1948	*Jese Hays Baird, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Seattle, Wash.
1888	*Charles L. Thompson, D.D., LL.D.	Kansas City	Philadelphia, Pa.	1949	*Clifford E. Barbour, PhD., D.D., LL.D.		Union Buffalo, N.Y.
1889	*William Chas. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.		Chicago New York, N.Y.	1950	*Hugh Ivans Evans, D.D., S.T.D.	Dayton	Cincinnati, Ohio
1890	*William Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D.	Columbus	Saratoga, N.Y.	1951	*H. Ray Anderson, S.T.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Cincinnati, Ohio
1891	*W. Henry Green, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Detroit, Mich.	1952	*Hermann Nelson Morse, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn-Nassau	New York, N.Y.
1892	*William C. Young, D.D., LL.D.	Pennsylvania	Portland, Ore.	1953	*John Alexander Mackay, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D., L.H.D.	New Brunswick	Minneapolis, Minn.
1893	*Willis Greer Craig, D.D., LL.D.	Iowa	Washington, D.C.	1954	*Ralph Waldo Lloyd, DD, LLD, Litt.D.		Union Detroit, Mich.
1894	*S.A. Mutchmore, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Saratoga, N.Y.	1955	*Paul S. Wright, D.D., L.H.D.	Portland	Los Angeles, Calif.
1895	*Robert Russell Booth, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Pittsburgh, Pa.	1956	‡*David W. Proffitt, LL.D.	Union	Philadelphia, Pa.
1896	*John Lindsay Withrow, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Saratoga, N.Y.	1957	*Harold R. Martin, D.D., LL.D.	Bloomington	Omaha, Neb.
1897	*Sheldon Jackson, D.D., LL.D.	Alaska	Winona Lake, Ind.	1958	*Harold R. Martin, D.D., LL.D.	Bloomington	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1898	*Wallace Radcliffe, D.D., LL.D.	Washington City	Winona Lake, Ind.				
1899	*Robert F. Sample, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Minneapolis, Minn.				
1900	*Charles A. Dickey, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	St. Louis, Mo.				
1901	*Henry Collin Minton, D.D., LL.D.	San Francisco	Philadelphia, Pa.				
1902	*Henry van Dyke, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	New York, N.Y.				
1903	*Robert F. Coyle, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Los Angeles, Calif.				
1904	*J. Addison Henry, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Buffalo, N.Y.				
1905	*James D. Moffat, D.D., LL.D.	Washington	Winona Lake, Ind.				
1906	*Hunter Corbett, D.D., LL.D.	Shantung	Des Moines, Iowa				
1907	*William H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Columbus, Ohio				
1908	*Baxter P. Fullerton, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Kans. City, Mo.				
1909	*James M. Barkley, D.D., LL.D.	Detroit	Denver, Colo.				
1910	*Charles Little, D.D., LL.D.	Muncie	Atl. City, N.J.				
1911	*John F. Carson, D.D., LL.D.	Brooklyn	Atl. City, N.J.				
1912	*Mark A. Matthews, D.D., LL.D.	Seattle	Louisville, Ky.				
1913	*John Timothy Stone, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Atlanta, Ga.				
1914	*Maitland Alexander, D.D., LL.D.	Pittsburgh	Chicago, Ill.				
1915	*J. Ross Stevenson, D.D., LL.D.	Baltimore	Rochester, N.Y.				
1916	*John Abner Marquis, D.D., LL.D.	Cedar Rapids	Atl. City, N.J.				
1917	*J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D., LL.D.	New York	Dallas, Tex.				
1918	*J. Frank Smith, D.D.	Dallas	Columbus, Ohio				
1919	‡*John Willis Baer, LL.D., Litt.D.	Los Angeles	St. Louis, Mo.				
1920	*Samuel S. Palmer, D.D.	Columbus	Philadelphia, Pa.				
1921	*Henry C. Swearingen, DD, LL.D.	St. Paul	Winona Lake, Ind.				
1922	*Calvin C. Hays, D.D., LL.D.	Blairsville	Des Moines, Iowa				
1923	*Charles F. Wishart, D.D., LL.D.	Wooster	Indianapolis, Ind.				
1924	*Clarence Edward Macartney, DD.	Philadelphia	Grand Rapids, Mich.				
1925	*Charles R. Erdman, D.D., LL.D.	New Brunswick	Columbus, Ohio				

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1829-1906

1829	*Thomas Calhoun	Lebanon	Princeton, Ky.
1830	*James B. Porter	Elk	Princeton, Ky.
1831	*Alexander Chapman	Logan	Princeton, Ky.
1832	*Samuel King	Barnett	Nashville, Tenn.
1833	*Thomas Calhoun	Lebanon	Nashville, Tenn.
1834	*F.R. Cossitt, D.D.	Princeton	Nashville, Tenn.
1835	*Samuel King	Lexington	Princeton, Ky.
1836	*Reuben Burrow	Forked Deer	Nashville, Tenn.
1837	*Robert Donnell	Tennessee	Princeton, Ky.
1838	*Hiram A. Hunter	Indiana	Lebanon, Tenn.
1840	*Reuben Burrow, D.D.	Union	Elkton, Ky.
1841	*William Ralston	Richland	Owensboro, Ky.
1842	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Union	Owensboro, Ky.
1843	*A.M. Bryan, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Owensboro, Ky.
1845	*Richard Beard, D.D.	Princeton	Lebanon, Tenn.
1846	*M.H. Bone, D.D.	Tennessee	Owensboro, Ky.
1847	*Hiram A. Hunter, D.D.	Ohio	Lebanon, Ohio
1848	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Morgan	Memphis, Tenn.
1849	*John L. Smith	Nashville	Princeton, Ky.
1850	*Reuben Burrow, D.D.	Madison	Clarksville, Tenn.

\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1851	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Kentucky	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1852	*David Lowry	Chapman	Nashville, Tenn.
1853	*H.S. Porter, D.D.	Memphis	Princeton, Ky.
1854	*Isaac Shook	Elk	Memphis, Tenn.
1855	*M.H. Bone, D.D.	Nashville	Lebanon, Tenn.
1856	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Princeton	Louisville, Ky.
1857	*Carson P. Reed	Richland	Lexington, Mo.
1858	*Felix Johnson, D.D.	McGready	Huntsville, Ala.
1859	*T.B. Wilson	Marshall	Evansville, Ind.
1860	*S.G. Burney, D.D.	Oxford	Nashville, Tenn.
1861	*A.E. Cooper	Hopewell	St. Louis, Mo.
1862	*P.G. Rea	New Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1863	*Milton Bird, D.D.	Morgan	Alton, Ill.
1864	*Jesse Anderson	Ohio	Lebanon, Ohio
1865	*Hiram Douglass	Georgia	Evansville, Ind.
1866	*Richard Beard, D.D.	Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1867	*J.B. Mitchell, D.D.	McGee	Memphis, Tenn.
1868	*G.W. Mitchell	Richland	Lincoln, Ill.
1869	*S.T. Anderson, D.D.	Miami	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
1870	*J.C. Provine, D.D.	Nashville	Warrensburg, Mo.
1871	*J.B. Logan, D.D.	Vandalia	Nashville, Tenn.
1872	*C.H. Bell, D.D.	Oxford	Evansville, Ind.
1873	*J.W. Poindexter, D.D.	Ohio	Huntsville, Ala.
1874	*T.C. Blake, D.D.	Nashville	Springfield, Mo.
1875	*W.S. Campbell, D.D.	Rushville	Jefferson, Tex.
1876	*J.M. Gill, D.D.	Davis	Bowling Green, Ky.
1877	*A.B. Miller, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Lincoln, Ill.
1878	*D.E. Bushnell, D.D.	California	Lebanon, Tenn.
1879	*J.S. Grider, D.D.	Logan	Memphis, Tenn.
1880	*A. Templeton, D.D.	Kirkpatrick	Evansville, Ind.
1881	*W.J. Darby, D.D., LL.D.	Indiana	Austin, Tex.
1882	*S.H. Buchanan, D.D.	Searcy	Huntsville, Ala.
1883	*A.J. McGlumphy, D.D.	Mackinaw	Nashville, Tenn.
1884	‡*John Frizzell	Lebanon	McKeesport, Pa.
1885	*G.T. Stainback, D.D.	McMinnville	Bentonville, Ark.
1886	*E.B. Crisman, D.D.	Kirkpatrick	Sedalia, Mo.
1887	‡*Nathan Green	Lebanon	Covington, Ohio
1888	*W.H. Black, D.D., LL.D.	St. Louis	Waco, Tex.
1889	*J.M. Hubbert, D.D.	Lebanon	Kansas City, Mo.
1890	*E.G. McLean, D.D.	Walla Walla	Union City, Tenn.
1891	‡*E.E. Beard	Lebanon	Owensboro, Ky.
1892	*W.S. Danley, D.D.	Mackinaw	Memphis, Tenn.
1893	*W.T. Ferguson, D.D.	Sangamon	Little Rock, Ark.
1894	*F.R. Earle, D.D.	Arkansas	Eugene, Ore.
1895	*M.B. DeWitt, D.D.	Springfield	Meridian, Miss.
1896	*A.W. Hawkins	Decatur	Birmingham, Ala.
1897	*H.S. Williams, D.D.	Memphis	Chicago, Ill.
1898	‡*H.H. Norman	McMinnville	Marshall, Mo.
1899	*J.M. Halsell, D.D.	San Jacinto	Denver, Colo.
1900	*H.C. Bird, D.D.	Union	Chattanooga, Tenn.
1901	*E.E. Morris, D.D.	New Lebanon	West Point, Miss.
1902	*S.M. Templeton, D.D.	Red River	Springfield, Mo.
1903	*R.M. Tinnon, D.D.	Rocky Mtn.	Nashville, Tenn.
1904	‡*W.E. Settle	Logan	Dallas, Tex.
1905	*J.B. Hail, D.D.	Pennsylvania	Fresno, Calif.
1906	*Ira Landrith, D.D., LL.D.	Lebanon	Decatur, Ill.

**CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1869-1920**

1869	*William Hughes	Racine, Wis.	Columbus, Ohio
1870	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1871	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	New York, N.Y.
1873	*Howell Powell	Cincinnati, Ohio	Racine, Wis.
1875	*William Roberts	Scranton, Pa.	Hyde Park, Pa.

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1877	*Rees Evans	Cambria, Wis.	Chicago, Ill.
1880	*Thomas Roberts	Newark, Ohio	Utica, N.Y.
1883	*G.H. Humphrey	Humphreys, NY	Oak Hill, Ohio
1886	*T.J. Phillips	Plymouth, Pa.	Milwaukee, Wis.
1889	*T.C. Davis	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
1892	*Joseph Roberts	Minneapolis, Minn.	Utica, N.Y.
1895	*J.R. Daniel	Engedi, Wis.	Minneapolis, Minn.
1899	*John R. Jones	Columbus, Wis.	Columbus, Ohio
1901	*Hugh Davis	Scranton, Pa.	Cambria, Wis.
1904	*W.R. Evans	Peniel, Ohio	Venedocia, Ohio
1907	*Daniel Thomas	Wild Rose, Wis.	Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
1910	‡*T. Solomon Griffith	Utica, N.Y.	Cotter, Iowa
1913	*John C. Jones	Chicago, Ill.	Utica, N.Y.
1916	*W.E. Evans	Mankato, Minn.	Lake Crystal, Minn.
1919	*John Hammond	Scranton, Pa.	Racine, Wis.
1920	*John Hammond	Scranton, Pa.	Columbus, Ohio

**UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA**

**1858-1958**

1858	*John T. Pressly, D.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1859	*Peter Bullions, D.D.	Albany	Xenia, Ohio
1860	*Joseph Clokey, D.D.	Xenia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1861	*R.D. Harper, D.D.	Xenia	Monmouth, Ill.
1862	*J.T. Cooper, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1863	*A. Young, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Xenia, Ohio
1864	*D.A. Wallace, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Philadelphia, Pa.
1865	*John B. Clark, D.D.	Allegheny	Washington, Iowa
1866	*David R. Kerr, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Allegheny, Pa.
1867	*John B. Dales, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Xenia, Ohio
1868	*James Harper, D.D., LL.D.	First N.Y.	Argyle, N.Y.
1869	*R.A. Browne, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Monmouth, Ill.
1870	*T.S. Kendall, D.D.	Oregon	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1871	*R.A. McAyeal, D.D.	Des Moines	Xenia, Ohio
1872	*John S. Easton, D.D.	Westmoreland	Washington, Iowa
1873	*John Y. Scouler, D.D.	First Ohio	Philadelphia, Pa.
1874	*John G. Brown, D.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.
1875	*W.W. Barr, D.D.	Philadelphia	Wooster, Ohio
1876	*James Brown, D.D.	Keokuk	Philadelphia, Pa.
1877	*Robert B. Ewing, D.D.	Monongahela	Sparta, Ill.
1878	*S.G. Irvine, D.D.	Oregon	Cambridge, Ohio
1879	*William Bruce, D.D.	Xenia	New Wilmington, Pa.
1880	*E.T. Jeffers, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Xenia, Ohio
1881	*David W. Carson, D.D.	Frankfort	Allegheny, Pa.
1882	*David Paul, D.D.	Muskingum	Monmouth, Ill.
1883	*W.H. McMilan, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1884	*William H. French, D.D.	First Ohio	St. Louis, Mo.
1885	*William Johnston, D.D.	College Springs	Topeka, Kans.
1886	*John T. Brownlee, D.D.	Chartiers	Hamilton, Ohio
1887	*Matthew M. Gibson, D.D.	San Francisco	Philadelphia, Pa.
1888	*Wm. T. Meloy, D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Cedar Rapids, Iowa
1889	*E.S. McKittrick, D.D.	Allegheny	Springfield, Ohio
1890	*Andrew Watson, D.D., LL.D.	Egypt	Buffalo, N.Y.
1891	*Thos. J. Kennedy, D.D.	College Springs	Princeton, Ind.
1892	*David MacDill, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	Allegheny, Pa.
1893	*James Bruce, D.D.	Delaware	Monmouth, Ill.
1894	*John A. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Mansfield	Albany, Oreg.
1895	*J.B. McMichael, D.D.	Monmouth	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1896	*James White, D.D.	Kansas City	Xenia, Ohio
1897	*Thomas H. Hanna, D.D.	Monmouth	Rock Island, Ill.
1898	*R.G. Ferguson, D.D., LL.D.	Mercer	Omaha, Nebr.

\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1899	*Wm. J. Robinson, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Philadelphia, Pa.
1900	*James P. Sankey, D.D.	Caledonia	Chicago, Ill.
1901	*J.A. Thompson, L.H.D., D.D., LL.D.	College Springs	Des Moines, Iowa
1902	*James C. Wilson, D.D., LL.D.	Lake	Allegheny, Pa.
1903	*James P. Cowan, D.D.	Indiana	Tarkio, Mo.
1904	*James W. Witherspoon, D.D.	Allegheny	Greenville, Pa.
1905	*Wm. C. Williamson, D.D., LL.D.	Keokuk	Washington, Iowa
1906	*J.K. McClurkin, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Richmond, Ind.
1907	*William T. Campbell, D.D.	Monmouth	Denver, Colo.
1908	*James G. Carson, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1909	*D.A. McClenahan, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Knoxville, Tenn.
1910	*James D. Rankin, D.D., LL.D.	Colorado	Philadelphia, Pa.
1911	*John C. Scouller, D.D.	Philadelphia	Washington, Pa.
1912	*Hugh H. Bell, D.D.	San Francisco	Seattle, Wash.
1913	*R.M. Russell, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Atlanta, Ga.
1914	*Joseph Kyle, D.D., LL.D.	Xenia	New Castle, Pa.
1915	*T.H. McMichael, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Loveland, Colo.
1916	*W.B. Smiley, D.D.	Chartiers	Cleveland, Ohio
1917	*W.E. McCulloch, D.D.	Monongahela	Boston, Mass.
1918	*W.M. Anderson, D.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1919	*James T. McCrory, D.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.
1920	*F.M. Spencer, D.D., LL.D.	Ark. Valley	Sterling, Kans.
1921	*A.F. Kirkpatrick, D.D.	Puget Sound	Philadelphia, Pa.
1922	*J. Kelly Giffen, D.D.	The Sudan	Cambridge, Ohio
1923	*W.R. Sawhill, D.D.	Puget Sound	Buffalo, N.Y.
1924	*Charles H. Robinson, D.D.	Wheeling	Richmond, Ind.
1925	*W.I. Wishart, D.D.	Allegheny	Topeka, Kans.
1926	*R.A. Hutchison, D.D., LL.D.	Conemaugh	Sharon, Pa.
1927	*M.G. Kyle, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Washington, D.C.
1928	*Wm. A. Spalding, D.D.	Oregon	St. Louis, Mo.
1929	*John McNaugher, DD, LLD, Litt.D.	Allegheny	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1930	*T.C. Atchison, D.D.	Boston	Des Moines, Iowa
1931	*J. Knox Montgomery, DD, LL.D.	Muskingum	Youngstown, Ohio
1932	*Chas. S. Cleland, D.D.	Philadelphia	Beaver, Pa.
1933	*W.B. Anderson, D.D., LL.D.	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1934	*J. Alvin Orr, D.D., LL.D.	Allegheny	Oxford, Ohio
1935	*E.C. McCown, D.D.	Monongahela	Akron, Ohio
1936	*Robert W. Thompson, DD, LL.D.	Wisconsin	Pittsburg, Kans.
1937	*A.R. Robinson, D.D., LL.D.	Monongahela	Oak Park, Ill.
1938	*Ralph Atkinson, D.D.	Los Angeles	Cleveland, Ohio
1939	‡*Hon. H. Walton Mitchell, LL.D.	Monongahela	Philadelphia, Pa.
1940	*Homer B. Henderson, D.D.	Butler	Buffalo, N.Y.
1941	*R.L. Lanning, D.D., LL.D.	Beaver Valley	Indianapolis, Ind.
1942	*Thomas C. Pollock, D.D.	Philadelphia	Colombus, Ohio
1943	*W. Bruce Wilson, D.D.	Monongahela	New Wilmington, Pa.
1944	*James H. Grier, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	New Concord, Ohio
1945	*James M. Ferguson, D.D.	Allegheny	Monmouth, Ill.
1946	*Lytle Rodgers Free, D.D.	Philadelphia	Tarkio, Mo.
1947	‡*Samuel A. Fulton, LL.D.	Wisconsin	Sterling, Kans.
1948	*Albert H. Baldinger, D.D.	Butler	New Wilmington, Pa.
1949	‡*Tim J. Campbell, LL.D.	Des Moines	Buck Hill Falls, Pa.
1950	*J. Lowrie Anderson, D.D.	Upper Nile	New Concord, Ohio
1951	‡*W. Kyle George, LL.D.	Cleveland	Des Moines, Iowa
1952	*James Leon Kelso, D.D., ThD., LL.D.	Monongahela	Albany, Oregon
1953	*Samuel C. Weir, D.D.	Detroit	Carlisle, Pa.
1954	*Albert E. Kelly, D.D., LL.D.	Los Angeles	Akron, Ohio
1955	*George A. Long, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.	Monongahela	Monmouth, Ill.
1956	*Robert W. Gibson, D.D., LL.D.	Monmouth	Knoxville, Tenn.
1957	*Robert N. Montgomery, D.D., LL.D.	Muskingum	New Concord, Ohio
1958	*Robert N. Montgomery, D.D., LL.D.	Muskingum	Pittsburgh, Pa.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

1958	*Theophilus M. Taylor, PhD., D.D.	Vermont	Pittsburgh, Pa.
1959	*Arthur L. Miller, D.D., LL.D.	Denver	Indianapolis, Ind.

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1960	*Herman Lee Turner, D.D., LL.D.	Chattanooga	Cleveland, Ohio
1961	‡*Paul D. McKelvey	Los Angeles	Buffalo, N.Y.
1962	*Marshal L. Scott, Ed.D., D.D., LL.D.	Chicago	Denver, Colo.
1963	*Silas G. Kessler, D.D., LL.D.	Platte	Des Moines, Iowa
1964	*Edler G. Hawkins, D.D.	New York City	Oklahoma City, Okla.
1965	‡William P. Thompson, J.D., J.C.D., LL.D.	Wichita	Columbus, Ohio
1966	*Ganse Little, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D.	Los Angeles	Boston, Mass.
1967	*Eugene Smathers, D.D.	St. Andrew	Portland, Ore.
1968	*John Coventry Smith, D.D.	Pittsburgh	Minneapolis, Minn.
1969	*George E. Sweazey, Ph.D.	St. Louis	San Antonio, Tex.
1970	*William R. Laws Jr., D.D.	Indianapolis	Chicago, Ill.
1971	‡*Lois H. Stair, L.H.D.	Milwaukee	Rochester, N.Y.
1972	‡C. Willard Heckel, LL.D.	Newark	Denver, Colo.
1973	Clinton M. Marsh, D.D.	Omaha	Omaha, Nebr.
1974	Robert C. Lamar, D.D.	Albany	Louisville, Ky.
1975	*William F. Keesecker, D.D., LL.D.	Southern Kansas	Cincinnati, Ohio
1976	‡Thelma C.D. Adair, Ed.D.	New York City	Baltimore, Md.
1977	*John T. Conner	Cascades	Philadelphia, Pa.
1978	*William P. Lytle, D.D.	Alamo	San Diego, Calif.
1979	*Howard L. Rice Jr.	San Francisco	Kansas City, Mo.
1980	Charles A. Hammond, D.D.	Wabash Valley	Detroit, Mich.
1981	*Robert M. Davidson	New York City	Houston, Tex.
1982	James H. Costen, D.D.	Georgia	Hartford, Conn.
1983	James H. Costen, D.D.	Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861-1983

1861	*Benj. M. Palmer	New Orleans	Augusta
1862	*J.L. Kirkpatrick	Concord	Montgomery
1863	*James A. Lyon	Tombeckbee	Columbia
1864	*John S. Wilson	Flint River	Charlotte
1865	*George Howe	Charleston	Macon
1866	*Andrew Hart Kerr	Memphis	Memphis
1867	*Thos. Verner Moore	East Hanover	Nashville
1868	*John N. Waddel	Chickasaw	Baltimore
1869	*Stuart Robinson	Louisville	Mobile
1870	*Robert L. Dabney	West Hanover	Louisville
1871	*William S. Plumer	Harmony	Huntsville, Ala.
1872	*Thomas R. Welch	Arkansas	Richmond
1873	*Henry Martyn Smith	New Orleans	Little Rock
1874	*John L. Girardeau	Charleston	Columbus, Miss.
1875	*Moses D. Hoge	East Hanover	St. Louis
1876	*Benjamin M. Smith	West Hanover	Savannah
1877	*C.A. Stillman	Tuscaloosa	New Orleans
1878	*T.E. Peck	Roanoke	Knoxville
1879	*Joseph R. Wilson	Wilmington	Louisville
1880	*T.A. Hoyt	Nashville	Charleston, S.C.
1881	*Robert P. Farris	St. Louis	Staunton
1882	*R.K. Smoot	Central Texas	Atlanta
1883	*T. Pryor	East Hanover	Lexington, Ky.
1884	*T.D. Witherspoon	Louisville	Vicksburg
1885	*H.R. Raymond	Tuscaloosa	Houston
1886	*J.H. Bryson	N. Alabama	Augusta
1887	*G.B. Strickler	Atlanta	St. Louis
1888	*J.J. Bullock	Maryland	Baltimore
1889	*H.G. Hill	Fayetteville	Chattanooga
1890	*James Park	Knoxville	Asheville
1891	*Hampden C. DuBose	Pee Dee	Birmingham
1892	*Samuel A. King	Central Texas	Hot Springs
1893	‡*J.W. Lapsley	N. Alabama	Macon

\* Deceased

‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1894	*James R. Graham	Winchester	Nashville
1895	*C.R. Hemphill	Louisville	Dallas
1896	*R.Q. Mallard	New Orleans	Memphis
1897	*Geo. T. Goetchius	Cherokee	Charlotte
1898	*E.M. Green	Transylvania	New Orleans
1899	*John F. Cannon	St. Louis	Richmond
1900	‡*Jos. W. Martin	Arkansas	Atlanta
1901	*Neander M. Woods	Memphis	Little Rock
1902	*William T. Hall	Bethel	Jackson, Miss.
1903	*Abner C. Hopkins	Winchester	Lexington, Va.
1904	*S.M. Neel	Upper Missouri	Mobile
1905	*J.T. Plunkett	Augusta	Fort Worth
1906	‡*Allen G. Hall	Nashville	Greenville, S.C.
1907	*J.R. Howerton	Asheville	Birmingham
1908	*W.M. Moore	West Hanover	Greensboro
1909	*William E. Boggs	Suwannee	Savannah
1910	*J.W. Bachman	Knoxville	Lewisburg, W. Va.
1911	*Russell Cecil	East Hanover	Louisville
1912	*Thos. S. Clyce	Dallas	Bristol
1913	*J.S. Lyons	Louisville	Atlanta
1914	‡*W.J. Martin	Concord	Kansas City
1915	*W. McF. Alexander	New Orleans	Newport News
1916	*C.W. Grafton	Mississippi	Orlando
1917	*Jno. M. Wills, Ph.D.	Wilmington	Birmingham
1918	*Jas. I. Vance	Nashville	Durant
1919	*A.M. Fraser	Lexington	New Orleans
1920	*W.L. Lingle	Concord	Charlotte
1921	*A.B. Curry	Memphis	St. Louis
1922	*R.C. Reed	Atlanta	Charleston, W. Va.
1923	*Alexander Spunt	Charleston	Montreat
1924	*Thornton Whaling	N. Alabama	San Antonio
1925	*Georgia Summey	New Orleans	Lexington, Ky.
1926	*J.W. Skinner	West. Texas	Pensacola
1927	*R.F. Campbell	Asheville	El Dorado
1928	*Harris E. Kirk	Potomac	Atlanta
1929	*W.R. Dobyns	Birmingham	Montreat
1930	*Thos. W. Currie	Central Texas	Charlottesville
1931	‡*R.A. Dunn	Mecklenburg	Montreat
1932	*William Crowe	St. Louis	Montreat
1933	*Ernest Thompson	Kanawha	Montreat
1934	‡*Samuel Hale Sibley	Cherokee	Montreat
1935	*Henry H. Sweets	Louisville	Montreat
1936	*P. Frank Price	Montgomery	Augusta
1937	*D. Clay Lilly	Winston-Salem	Montreat
1938	‡*Willis M. Everett	Atlanta	Meridian
1939	*Edward Mack, Ph.D.	East Hanover	Montreat
1940	*Frank C. Brown	Dallas	Chattanooga
1941	*Chas. E. Diehl	Nashville	Montreat
1942	‡*Chas. G. Rose	Fayetteville	Knoxville
1943	*Donald W. Richardson	Asheville	Montreat
1944	*Charles L. King	Brazos	Montreat
1945	*Thomas K. Young	Memphis	Montreat
1946	*J.B. Green	Meridian	Montreat
1947	*John R. Cunningham	Winston-Salem	Montreat
1948	*C. Darby Fulton	Enoree	Atlanta
1949	‡*W.E. Price	Mecklenburg	Montreat
1950	*Ben R. Lacy Jr.	Granville	Massanetta
1951	‡*James Ross McCain, Ph.D.	Atlanta	Orlando
1952	*W.A. Alexander Jr.	Red River	Charleston, W. Va.
1953	*Frank W. Price, Ph.D.	Lexington	Montreat
1954	*Wade H. Boggs	Red River	Montreat
1955	*J. McDowell Richards	Atlanta	Richmond
1956	*W. Taliaferro Thompson	Orange	Montreat
1957	*W.M. Elliott Jr., Ph.D.	Dallas	Birmingham
1958	‡*Philip F. Howerton	Mecklenburg	Charlotte
1959	*Ernest Trice Thompson	Hanover	Atlanta
1960	Marion A. Boggs	Washburn	Jacksonville

A.D.	NAME	PRESBYTERY	PLACE
1961	*Wallace M. Alston, Th.D.	Atlanta	Dallas
1962	‡*Edward D. Grant	Louisiana	Winston-Salem
1963	*William H. McCorkle	Holston	Huntington
1964	*Felix B. Gear, Ph.D.	Westminster	Montreat
1965	‡*Samuel J. Patterson	John Knox	Montreat
1966	*F.H. Caldwell, Ph.D.	Louisville	Montreat
1967	*Marshall C. Dendy	St. Johns	Bristol
1968	*P.D. Miller	Atlanta	Montreat
1969	*R. Matthew Lynn	TheSouthwest	Mobile, Ala.
1970	*William A. Benfield Jr.	Kanawha	Memphis, Tenn.
1971	*Ben Lacy Rose	Wilmington	Massanetta Springs, Va.
1972	‡*L. Nelson Bell	Asheville	Montreat, N.C.
1973	*Charles E.S. Kraemer	Mecklenburg	Fort Worth, Tex.
1974	*Lawrence W. Bottoms	Atlanta	Louisville, Ky.
1975	*Paul M. Edris	St. Johns	Charlotte, N.C.
1976	‡Jule C. Spach	Concord	Tuscaloosa, Ala.
1977	*Harvard A. Anderson	St. Johns	Nashville, Tenn.
1978	‡Sara Bernice Moseley	Covenant	Shreveport, La.
1979	Albert C. Winn	Hanover	Kansas City, Mo.
1980	*David L. Stitt	Brazos	MyrtleBeach, SC
1981	‡*Dorothy G. Barnard	Southeast Missouri	Houston, Tex.
1982	John F. Anderson Jr., D.D.	Grace Union	Columbus, Ga.
1983	John F. Anderson Jr., D.D.	Grace Union	Atlanta, Ga.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

1983—

1983	*J. Randolph Taylor, DD, LL.D., Ph.d.	Mecklenburg	Atlanta, Ga.
1984	‡Harriet Nelson, L.H.D.	Redwoods	Phoenix, Ariz.
1985	‡William H. Wilson	Mission	Indianapolis, Ind.
1986	Benjamin M. Weir	San Francisco	Minneapolis, Minn.
1987	‡Isabel Wood Rogers	Hanover	Biloxi, Miss.
1988	C. Kenneth Hall	Beaver-Butler	St. Louis, Mo.
1989	Joan SalmonCampbell	Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pa.
1990	‡Price H. Gwynn III	Charlotte	Salt Lake City, Utah
1991	Herbert D. Valentine	Baltimore	Baltimore, Md.
1992	John M. Fife	de Cristo	Milwaukee, Wis.
1993	David Lee Dobler	Yukon	Orlando, Fla.
1994	Robert Wayne Bohl	Grace	Wichita, Kans.
1995	‡Marj Carpenter	Tres Rios	Cincinnati, Ohio
1996	John M. Buchanan	Chicago	Albuquerque, N.Mex.
1997	‡Patricia G. Brown	Cincinnati	Syracuse, N.Y.
1998	Douglas W. Oldenburg	Greater Atlla	Charlotte, N.C.
1999	‡Freda Gardner	New Brunswick	Fort Worth, Tex.
2000	Syngman Rhee	Atl. Kor. Amer.	Long Beach, Calif.
2001	Jack Rogers	San Gabriel	Louisville, Ky.
2002	Fahed Abu-Akel	Greater Atlanta	Columbus, Ohio
2003	Susan R. Andrews	National Calpital	Denver, Colo.
2004	‡Rick Ufford-Chase	De Christo	Richmond, Va.
2006	Joan S. Gray	Greater Atlanta	Birmingham, Ala.
2008	Bruce Reyes-Chow	San Francisco	San Jose, Calif.
2010	Cynthia Bolb ach	National Capital	Minneapolis, Minn.
2012	Neal D. Presa	Elizabeth	Pittsburgh, Pa.

B—SUCCESSION OF STATED CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 1789—1837

A.D.	NAME
1789	*George Duffield, D.D.
1790	*Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.
1803	*Philip Milledoler, D.D.

\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

**A.D. NAME**

- 1806 \*Nathaniel Irwin
- 1807 \*Jacob Jones Janeway, D.D.
- 1817 \*William Neill, D.D.
- 1825 \*Ezra Stiles Ely, D.D.
- 1836 \*John McDowell, D.D.

**1839–1869**

**1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)**

- 1838 \*John McDowell, D.D.
- 1840 \*Wm. Morrison Engels, D.D.
- 1846 \*Willis Lord, D.D., LL.D.
- 1850 \*John Leyburn, D.D.
- 1862 \*Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.

**2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)**

- 1838 \*Erskine Mason, D.D.
- 1846 \*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.

**(REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS)**

**1870–1958**

- 1870 \*Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.
- 1884 \*Wm. H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.
- 1921 \*Lewis S. Mudge, D.D., LL.D.
- 1938 \*William Barrow Pugh, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.
- 1951 \*Eugene Carson Blake, D.D. HH.D., LL.D., Litt.,D., D.Cn.L.

**CLERKS**

**CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**1829–1906**

- 1829 \*F.R. Cossitt
- 1834 \*James Smith
- 1841 \*C.G. McPherson
- 1850 \*Milton Bird
- 1872 ‡\*John Frizzell
- 1883 \*T.C. Blake, D.D.
- 1896 \*J.M. Hubbert, D.D.

**CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH**

**IN THE UNITED STATES**

**1869–1920**

- 1869 \*M.A. Ellis
- 1870 \*J.P. Morgan
- 1871 ‡\*T.L. Hughes
- 1873 \*M.A. Ellis
- 1875 \*M.A. Ellis
- 1877 \*T.C. Davis
- 1880 \*James Jarrett
- 1883 \*H.P. Howell
- 1886 \*W. Machno Jones

**A.D. NAME**

- 1889 \*John R. Jones
- 1892 \*Edward Roberts
- 1895 \*John Hammond
- 1898 \*David Edwards
- 1901 \*Joshua T. Evans
- 1904 \*J.R. Johns
- 1907 \*W.E. Evans
- 1910 \*John E. Jones
- 1913 \*W.O. Williams
- 1916 \*R.E. Williams
- 1919 \*J.O. Parry
- 1920 \*J.O. Parry

**UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA**

**1858–1958**

- 1858 \*Samuel Wilson, D.D.
- 1859 \*James Prestley, D.D.
- 1863 \*Jos. T. Cooper, D.D., LL.D.
- 1875 \*Wm. J. Reid, D.D., LL.D.
- 1903 \*David F. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
- 1931 \*O.H. Milligan, D.D., LL.D.
- 1954 \*Samuel W. Shane, D.D.

**THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**1958–1983**

- 1958 \*Eugene Carson Blake, DD., HH.D., LL.D., Litt.D., D.Cn.L.
- 1966 ‡William P. Thompson, J.D., J.C.D., LL.D.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES**

**1861–1983**

- 1861 \*John N. Waddel
- 1865 \*Joseph R. Wilson
- 1898 \*William A. Alexander
- 1910 \*Thos. H. Law
- 1922 \*J.D. Leslie
- 1935 \*E.C. Scott (Acting 1935B36)
- 1959 \*James A. Millard Jr., Th.D.
- 1973 \*James E. Andrews

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**1983–**

- 1983 ‡\*William P. Thompson (Interim Co-Stated Clerk)  
\*James E. Andrews (Interim Co-Stated Clerk)
- 1984 \*James E. Andrews
- 1988 \*James E. Andrews
- 1992 \*James E. Andrews
- 1996 Clifton Kirkpatrick
- 2000 Clifton Kirkpatrick
- 2004 Clifton Kirkpatrick
- 2008 Gradye Parsons
- 2012 Gradye Parsons
- \* Deceased
- ‡ Ruling Elder

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

C—SUCCESSION OF  
ASSOCIATE STATED CLERKS

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1958–1983

A.D. Name

- 1958 †\*Henry Barraclough, LL.D. (Emeritus, 1961)
- 1958 \*Samuel W. Shane, D.D. (Emeritus, 1974)
- 1972 †Otto K. Finkbeiner
- 1972 Robert F. Stevenson, D.D.
- 1973 \*Robert Pierre Johnson, D.D.
- 1975 Robert T. Newbold Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983

- 1974 †\*Donald A. Speck
- 1978 Flynn V. Long Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
1983–

- 1983 †Otto K. Finkbeiner
- 1983 Flynn V. Long Jr.
- 1983 Robert T. Newbold Jr.
- 1983 Robert F. Stevenson
- 1987 Margrethe B.J. Brown
- 1988 William B. Miller
- 1989 †Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe
- 1993 \*C. Fred Jenkins
- 1993 J. Scott Schaefer
- 1993 Eugene G. Turner
- 1997 †Frederick J. Heuser
- 1997 Janet M. De Vries
- 2001 †Loyda Puig Aja
- 2001 Kerry Clements
- 2001 Gradye Parsons
- 2001 Mark Tammen
- 2001 Gary Torrens
- 2001 Robina Winbush
- 2008 Jill Hudson
- 2008 Marcia Myers
- 2010 Thomas Hay
- 2012 Andrew Black

D—SUCCESSION OF  
ASSISTANT STATED CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1907–1921, 1953–1958

- 1907 †\*James M. Hubbert, D.D.
- 1953 †\*Henry Barraclough, LL.D.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA  
1868–1913, 1952–1958

- 1868 —
- 1913 \*A.G. Wallace, D.D., LL.D.
- 1914 Office discontinued

A.D. Name

- 1952 \*Samuel W. Shane, D.D.
- 1954 \*John M. Bald, Ph.D.
- 1956 \*J.Y. Jackson, D.D.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1967–1972, 1981–1983

- 1967 †Otto K. Finkbeiner
- 1967 Robert F. Stevenson, D.D.
- 1981 †Mildred L. Wager

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983

- 1930 \*E.C. Scott
- 1949 P.J. Garrison Jr.
- 1979 Joyce C. Tucker
- 1975 Flynn V. Long Jr.
- 1980 Ms. Lucille Scott Hicks
- 1980 Ms. Catherine M. Shipley
- 1982 Eugene D. Witherspoon Jr.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
1983–

- 1983 Ms. Lucille S. Hicks
- 1983 †Ms. Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe
- 1983 †Ms. Mildred L. Wager
- 1983 Eugene D. Witherspoon Jr.
- 1987 Mrs. Juanita H. Granady
- 1990 Paul M. Thompson
- 1995 Ms. Maggie Houston
- 1995 Ms. Deborah Davies
- 1995 Kerry Clements
- 2001 Zane Buxton
- 2001 Dennis Cobb
- 2001 Jerry Houchens
- 2001 Carlos Malavé
- 2001 †Joan Richardson
- 2001 †Margery Sly
- 2001 †Valerie Small
- 2002 †Laurie Griffith
- 2002 †Doska Ross Radebaugh
- 2003 Lesley A. Davies
- 2006 †Chris Nicholas
- 2006 Julia Thorne
- 2006 Sharon Youngs
- 2007 †Kerry Rice
- 2008 Evelyn Hwang
- 2008 †Jewel McRae
- 2008 Joyce Lieberman
- 2008 †Martha Miller
- 2012 Molly Casteel
- 2012 Kay Moore
- 2012 Kris Valerius

MODERATORS AND CLERKS

E—SUCCESSION OF  
PERMANENT CLERKS

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1789–1837**

- 1802 \*Nathaniel Irwin
- 1807 \*John Ewing Latta
- 1825 \*John McDowell, D.D.
- 1837 \*John Michael Krebs, D.D.

**1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)  
1838–1869**

**A.D. Name**

- 1838 \*John Michael Krebs, D.D.
- 1845 \*Robert Davidson, D.D.
- 1850 \*Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
- 1862 \*Wm. Edward Schenck, D.D.

**2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)**

- 1838 \*Eliphalet W. Gilbert, D.D.
- 1854 \*Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D.
- 1864 \*J. Glentworth Butler, D.D.

**REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS  
1870–1921**

- 1870 \*Cyrus Dickson, D.D.
- 1882 \*Wm. H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.
- 1884 \*Wm. Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D.
- 1900 \*Wm. Brown Noble, D.D., LL.D.
- 1916 \*Edward Leroy Warren, D.D.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES  
1861–1983**

- 1861 \*Joseph R. Wilson
- 1866 \*William Brown
- 1885 \*Robert P. Farris
- 1905 \*Thomas H. Law
- 1910 \*J.D. Leslie

F—SUCCESSION OF  
RECORDING CLERKS

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

- 1951 ‡\*Henry Barraclough, L.L.D.  
(Elected for this one General Assembly)

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\* Deceased  
‡ Ruling Elder



**KEY:**Racial/Ethnic designation:

A—Asian American  
 B—African American/Black  
 H—Hispanic/Latina/Latino  
 M—Middle Eastern  
 N—Native American  
 O—Other  
 W—Caucasian

Gender and Ordination designation:

FL—Female Church Member  
 FR—Female Ruling Elder  
 FT—Female Teaching, Minister of the Word and Sacrament  
 MC—Male Minister non-Presbyterian  
 ML—Male Church Member  
 MR—Male Ruling Elder  
 MT—Male Teaching Elder, Minister of the Word and Sacrament

**Persons Serving on General Assembly Entities****As of August 29, 2012**

## Class of 2014

Susan	Evans	Philadelphia	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	B	F	R
Keith	Geckeler	Orange	CA	Los Ranchos	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Heahwan	Rim	Jacksonville	FL	Savannah	South Atlantic	A	M	T

## Class of 2016

Therese	Howell	Brentwood	TN	Middle Tennessee	Living Waters	W	F	R
Julie	MacLemore	Houston	TX	New Covenant	Sun	W	F	R
Stewart	Pollock	Lower Burrell	PA	Pittsburgh	Trinity	W	M	T

## Class of 2018

Fred	Denson	Webster	NY	Genesee Valley	Northeast	B	M	R
Daryl	Fisher-Ogden	Westlake Village	CA	Santa Barbara	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	T
Daniel	Williams	Stuarts Draft	VA	Central Florida	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	T

**Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns**

## Class of 2014

Noushin	Framke	Milburn	NJ	Newark	Northeast	M	F	R
Paul	Hoang	Houston	TX	New Covenant	Sun	A	M	T
Buddy D.	Monahan	Albuquerque	NM	Santa Fe	Southwest	N	M	T
Patricia	Morse	Washington	DC	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	L
Carmen M.	Rosario	Bradley Beach	NJ	New York City	Northeast	H	F	T

## Class of 2016

Debbie	Battiste-Kleinman	Livingston	TX	New Covenant	Sun	N	F	R
David	Esterline	Long Point	IL	Blackhawk	Lincoln Trails	W	M	T
Aida	Faris	Austin	TX	Mission	Sun	M	F	R
Mark S.	Jones Sr.	Los Angeles	CA	The Pacific	Southern California and Hawaii	B	M	R
Lilia Maria	Ramirez-Jimenez	West New York	NJ	Palisades	Northeast	H	F	T
Samson C.	Tso	Brooklyn	NY	New York City	Northeast	A	M	T

**Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy**

## Class of 2014

Gloria	Albrecht	Detroit	MI	Detroit	Covenant	W	F	T
Kathryn	Poethig	Watsonville	CA	New York City	Northeast	W	F	L
Raymond R.	Roberts	Westfield	NJ	Elizabeth	Northeast	W	M	T
Raafat	Zaki	Cumming	GA	Grace	Sun	M	M	T

## Class of 2016

Christine M.	Darden	Hampton	VA	Eastern Virginia	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	R
Rachael	Eggebeen	Tucson	AZ	De Cristo	Southwest	W	F	L
Marsha	Fowler	Altadena	CA	San Gabriel	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	T
Kevin	Johnson	Detroit	MI	Detroit	Covenant	B	M	T
Charles Eric	Mount	Danville	KY	Transylvania	Living Waters	W	M	T

**Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns**

## Class of 2014

Barbara	Adams-Smelter	Philadelphia	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	B	F	R
Kerri	Allen	Evanston	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	O	F	T
Elizabeth	Hinson-Hasty	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	W	F	T
Jack D.	Hodges	Lake Oswego	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	T
Joann Haejong	Lee	St. Paul	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	A	F	T
Sheila H.	Louder	Fayetteville	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	B	F	R
Belinda	Rice	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	O	F	R

## Class of 2016

Louise	Davidson	Dublin	OH	Scioto Valley	Covenant	W	F	R
Mary M.	Fulkerson	Hillsborough	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	T
Darcy	Metcalfe	Louisville	KY	Wabash Valley	Lincoln Trails	W	F	R
Jacob	Parsons-Wells	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	W	M	L
Susie	Wiggins	Louisville	KY	Arkansas	Sun	W	F	R

**Advisory Committee on  
Litigation**

## Class of 2014

Robin W.	Hadfield	Lincoln	NE	Homestead	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	R
Barry	McDonald	Westlake Village	CA	San Fernando	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	L

## Class of 2016

William Reid	Dalton	Burlington	NC	Salem	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	T
Timothy T.	Read	Rosewell	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	T

## Class of 2018

Matthew R.	Hall	Oxford	MS	St. Andrew	Living Waters	W	M	L
Beth	Law	Fairfax	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	R

**Audit Committee**

## Class of 2014

Richard Allen	Turpen	Birmingham	AL	Sheppards & Lapsley	Living Waters	W	M	R
Ellen Pearre	Cason	New York	NY	New York City	Northeast	W	F	R

**Board of Pensions**

## Class of 2014

Jesse	Butler	Independence	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	B	M	R
Lindley	DeGarmo	Baltimore	MD	Baltimore	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	T
Brian	Ellison	Kansas City	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T
Bradley	Fowler	Mercer Island	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	M	R
John	Hamm	Dallas	TX	Grace	Sun	W	M	R
John A.	Huffman	Newport Beach	CA	Los Ranchos	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Jacqueline	Jenkins	Montclair	NJ	Newark	Northeast	W	F	R
Peter	Kalan	Greenwood Village	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	W	M	L
Samuel D.	Kim	Wayne	NJ	Eastern Korean	Northeast	A	M	T
Christopher	Mason	New York	NY	New York City	Northeast	W	M	R
Angelica	Michail	Rowland Heights	CA	San Gabriel	Southern California and Hawaii	A	F	R
Thomas	Paisley, Jr.	Center Valley	PA	Lehigh	Trinity	W	M	R
Carol Sheffey	Parham	Annapolis	MD	Baltimore	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	L
Stephen	Proctor	Dillsburg	PA	Carlisle	Trinity	W	M	R
Paul	Volker	Boone	IA	North Central Iowa	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	R
Lawrence	Wright	Houston	TX	New Covenant	Sun	W	M	R

## Class of 2016

Tony	De La Rosa	New York	NY	New York City	Northeast	H	M	R
Harland	Doak	Austin	TX	Mission	Sun	W	M	R
Fairfax	Fair	Ann Arbor	MI	Detroit	Covenant	W	F	T
Bob	Gorsky	Elmhurst	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	M	R
Judith A.	Harris	Allentown	PA	Lehigh	Trinity	W	F	L
John	Hougen	Independence	IA	East Iowa	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
Linda	Jacobsen	Radnor	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	W	F	R
Frank	James	Vestavia Hills	AL	Sheppards & Lapsley	Living Waters	B	M	R
Bettina	Kilburn	Decatur	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	F	T
Joseph M.	Kinard	Sewanee	TN	Middle Tennessee	Living Waters	B	M	L
Mark	Lu	San Diego	CA	Los Ranchos	Southern California and Hawaii	A	M	L
Linda	Patrick	Franklin	TN	Middle Tennessee	Living Waters	W	F	L
Frank C.	Spencer	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	R

**Committee on the Office of the General Assembly**

## Class of 2014

Dennis	Hughes	Edmonds	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	M	T
Jerrold Belton	Lowry	Sandy	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	B	M	T
Carol	McDonald	Indianapolis	IN	Wabash Valley	Lincoln Trails	W	F	T
Marcia	Mount Shoop	Chapel Hill	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	T
Neal D.	Presa	Middlesex	NJ	Elizabeth	Northeast	A	M	T
Chris	Rhodes	Santa Rosa	CA	The Redwoods	Pacific	W	M	R
Alejandra	Spir-Haddad	Bloomington	IN	Ohio Valley	Lincoln Trails	O	F	R
John	Wilkinson	Rochester	NY	Genesee Valley	Northeast	W	M	T

## Class of 2016

Margaret	Elliott	Winston-Salem	NC	Salem	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R
Leah	Johnson	Downingtown	PA	Donegal	Trinity	W	F	R
Eileen W.	Lindner	Tenafly	NJ	Palisades	Northeast	W	F	T
Virginia	Rainey	State College	PA	Huntingdon	Trinity	W	F	R
Vincent A.	Thomas	Minneapolis	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	B	M	R
James	Wilson	Columbus	OH	Scioto Valley	Covenant	W	M	R
Robert	Wilson	Madison	AL	North Alabama	Living Waters	B	M	R

**Committee on Theological Education**

## Class of 2014

Alan	Bancroft	Franklin	TN	Middle Tennessee	Living Waters	W	M	T
Matthew	Miles	Fort Davis	TX	Tres Rios	Sun	W	M	T
Mary Elva	Smith	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	W	F	R
Glen	Snider	Safford	AZ	De Cristo	Southwest	W	M	R
Chandler	Stokes	Grand Rapids	MI	Lake Michigan	Covenant	W	M	T
K. Nicholas	Yoda	Cincinnati	OH	Cincinnati	Covenant	A	M	T

## Class of 2016

Mindy Douglas	Adams	Chapel Hill	NC	Salem	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	T
Vilmarie	Cintron-Olivieri	Miami, FL	FL	Tropical Florida	South Atlantic	H	F	R
Jose	Irizarry	San Juan	PR	De San Juan	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	M	T
Kathryn Wolf	Reed	Tuscaloosa	AL	Sheppards & Lapsley	Living Waters	W	F	T
Max	Sherman	Austin	TX	Mission	Sun	W	M	R
Landon	Whitsitt	Liberty	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T

### Educator Certification Committee

#### Class of 2014

Craig	Foster	Spartanburg	SC	Foothills	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Donald	Griggs	Livermore	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	W	M	T
Medora	Hix	Cary	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R
Debbie	Hough	Hershey	PA	Carlisle	Trinity	W	F	R

#### Class of 2016

Hugh	Anderson	Phoenix	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	T
Susan Sharp	Campbell	Lewisburg	WV	West Virginia	Trinity	W	F	T
Sung Hee	Chang	Greenville	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	A	F	L
Kathy L.	Dawson	Decatur	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	F	T
Mary	Marcotte	Houston	TX	New Covenant	Sun	W	F	R

### Finance Committee

#### Class of 2014

Clarence	Antioquia	Anacortes	WA	North Puget Sound	Alaska Northwest	N	M	L
Molly	Baskin	Wilmette	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	L
William W.	Capel	Champaign	IL	Southeastern Illinois	Lincoln Trails	W	M	R
Clark D.	Cowden	San Diego	CA	San Diego	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Jack D.	Hodges	Lake Oswego	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	T
Jack D.	Shelver	Julian	CA	San Diego	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	R
Kathy	Trott	Woodland	CA	Sacramento	Pacific	W	F	R
Connie M.	Tubb	Dallas	TX	Grace	Sun	W	F	R

### General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

#### Class of 2014

Scott	Anderson	Madison	WI	The John Knox	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
Judy	Angleberger	Beaver	PA	Beaver-Butler	Trinity	W	F	T
David P.	Baak	Grand Rapids	MI	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	W	M	C
Krystin	Granberg	New York	NY	New York City	Northeast	W	F	T
David E.	Jensen	Minocqua	WI	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	W	M	C
Gun Ho	Lee	Greenville	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	A	M	T
Jerrold Belton	Lowry	Sandy	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	B	M	T
Cruz Alberto	Negron-Torres	Trujillo Alto	PR	De San Juan	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	M	T
Damayanthi	Niles	St Louis	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	A	F	T
Paul	Rader	Knoxville	TN	East Tennessee	Living Waters	W	M	T

## Class of 2016

Sherrí	Hausser	Bryn Mawr	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	W	F	T
Kathryn	Jones	Dallas	TX	Grace	Sun	W	F	R
Aimee	Moiso	Santa Clara	CA	San Jose	Pacific	W	F	T
Tyler	Orem	Chicago	IL	Whitewater Valley	Lincoln Trails	W	M	L
Rodney	Petersen	Newton	MA	Boston	Northeast	W	M	T
Y. Dianna	Wright	Clemmons	NC	Salem	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	R

**General Assembly Committee on Representation**

## Class of 2014

Kenneth	Bartlett-Preston	Oakland	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	B	M	L
Deborah	Fair	Dearborn	MI	Detroit	Covenant	B	F	R
Dora V.	Martinez	Albuquerque	NM	Santa Fe	Southwest	H	F	R
Amy	Mendez	Denver	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	H	F	T
Patrick	Nelson	Stillwater	NY	Albany	Northeast	W	M	R
Cindy Lou	Ray	Urbandale	IA	Des Moines	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	R
Martha	Ross-Mockaitis	Winnetka	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	T
Heather	Walchar	St. Joseph	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	F	T

## Class of 2016

Myung	Han	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	A	M	T
Thomas G.	Kirkpatrick	Maple Valley	WA	Olympia	Alaska Northwest	W	M	T
Josephine C.	Mueller	Ridgecrest	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	A	F	R
Tressie	Muldrow	Washington	DC	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	R
Ruben	Ortiz-Rodriguez	Lajas	PR	Del Suroeste	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	M	T
Hector M.	Rivera-Velez	League City	TX	Mission	Sun	H	M	T
Issa	Sayar	Norcross	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	M	M	R
Wanda	Tanner-McNeill	North Wales	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	B	F	R

**General Assembly Nominating Committee**

## Class of 2014

Joan	Carpenter	Highland	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	R
Warner R.	Durnell	Huntsville	AL	Middle Tennessee	Living Waters	B	M	T
Roger B.	Howell	Toledo	OH	Maumee Valley	Covenant	W	M	R
Marta	Rodriguez-Fonseca	San Juan	PR	De San Juan	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	F	R
Lita	Simpson	McAllen	TX	Mission	Sun	H	F	R

## Class of 2016

Victor	Aloyo, Jr.	Princeton	NJ	New Brunswick	Northeast	H	M	T
Tully M.	Fletcher IV	Phoenix	AZ	Grand Canyon	Southwest	W	M	T
Amy Kim	Kyremes-Parks	Salt Lake City	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	O	F	L
Judith	North	Wausau	WI	Winnebago	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	R
Bob	Riggs	Liberty	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	R

Class of 2018

Juanita D.	Holley	Warrenville	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	O	F	R
Yena	Hwang	Rockville	MD	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	A	F	T
Bertram	Johnson	Seattle	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	B	M	T
Judy	Lussie	Dublin	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	A	F	R
Danny C.	Murphy Sr.	Columbia	SC	Trinity	South Atlantic	B	M	T
John M.	Willingham	Doylestown	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	W	M	T

**General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission**

Class of 2014

Bradley C.	Copeland	Riverside	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Meta Shoup	Cramer	Salem	OH	Eastminster	Covenant	W	F	T
H. Clifford	Looney	Vale	OR	Boise	Pacific	W	M	R
Michael B.	Lukens	Hobart	WI	Winnebago	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
Mary Charlotte	McCall	Anchorage	AK	Yukon	Alaska Northwest	W	F	R
Flor N.	Velez-Diaz	Aguadilla	PR	Del Noroeste	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	F	R

Class of 2016

Barbara A.	Bundick	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	T
A. Bates	Butler III	Tucson	AZ	De Cristo	Southwest	W	M	R
Jay	Lewis	Penn Hills	PA	Pittsburgh	Trinity	W	M	T
Jeana	Lungwitz	Austin	TX	Mission	Sun	W	F	R
Patrick	Notley	Barrington	RI	Southern New England	Northeast	W	M	T

Class of 2018

Terry	Epling	Saint Louis	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	W	M	T
Helen R.	Heffington	Ft. Myers	FL	Peace River	South Atlantic	W	F	T
Julia	Henderson	Westminster	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	W	F	R
Robin L.	Roberts	Hattiesburg	MS	Mississippi	Living Waters	W	M	R
Sarah	Thornburg	Asheville	NC	Western North Carolina	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R

**Mid Council Commission**

Class of 2014

Warren B.	Cooper	Philadelphia	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	B	M	R
Lemuel	Garcia-Arroyo	Clemmons	NC	Salem	Mid-Atlantic	H	M	T
Barbara	Gilliland	Colorado Springs	CO	Pueblo	Rocky Mountains	W	F	R
Liza	Hendricks	Cleveland	OH	Western Reserve	Covenant	W	F	T
Judi	Johnson	Holliser	CA	San Jose	Pacific	N	F	R
Jason	Ko	Cypress	CA	Los Ranchos	Southern California & Hawaii	A	M	T
Eileen W.	Lindner	Tenafly	NJ	Palisades	Northeast	W	F	T
Jerrod	Lowry	Sandy	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	B	M	T

Christopher	McCloskey	Worcester	MA	Southern New England	Northeast	W	M	R
Ariel	Mink	Novato	CA	Redwoods	Pacific	W	F	R
Marcia	Mount Shoop	Chapel Hill	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	T
Jane D.	Smith	Yucaipa	CA	Riverside	Southern California & Hawaii	W	F	R
Byron A.	Wade	Raleigh	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	B	M	T
Landon	Whitsitt	Liberty	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T
James	Wilson	Columbus	OH	Scioto Valley	Covenant	W	M	R

### Mission Development Resources Committee

#### Class of 2014

Maryann	Farnsworth	Liberty	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	F	T
David	Hicks	Goodyear	AZ	Grand Canyon	Southwest	W	M	T
Ellen	Marquardt	Kansas City	MO	Long Island	Northeast	W	F	T
Valerie J.	Putnam	Sioux Falls	SD	South Dakota	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	T
Jack	Schutte	Murrieta	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Wayne A.	Steele Sr.	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	B	M	T

#### Class of 2016

Robert D.	Bidwell	Adrian	MI	Maumee Valley	Covenant	W	M	T
Joan	Fong	Fremont	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	A	F	R
Martin W.	Lifer III	Hilton Head Island	SC	Charleston-Atlantic	South Atlantic	O	M	T
Frances	Lin	Escondido	CA	San Diego	Southern California and Hawaii	A	F	R
Steven	Shussett	Allentown	PA	Lehigh	Trinity	W	M	T
Jane L. Searjeant	Watt	Old Saybrook	CT	Albany	Northeast	W	F	T
Donald A.	Wingate	Winter Garden	FL	Central Florida	South Atlantic	W	M	R

### Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee

#### Class of 2014

Frank	Adams	Pensacola	FL	Florida	South Atlantic	W	M	L
Elizabeth	Dunning	Salt Lake City	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	W	F	R
Brian	Ellison	Kansas City	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T
Noushin	Framke	Milburn	NJ	Newark	Northeast	M	F	R
George	Parks	Bristol	VA	Abingdon	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	R
George	Philips	Chesterfield	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	A	M	R
Susan J.	Ezell	Annandale	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	H	M	R

#### Class of 2016

Sharon M.	Davison	New York	NY	New York City	Northeast	B	F	R
Rachel Mihee	Kim-Kort	Bloomington	IN	Ohio Valley	Lincoln Trails	A	F	T



**Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations**

Class of 2014

Moongil	Cho	Raleigh	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	A	M	T
Margaret	Gillespie	Bloomsburg	PA	Northumberland	Trinity	W	F	T
Kang	Na	New Castle	PA	Shenango	Trinity	A	M	T
Pamela	Szurek	Wantagh	NY	Long Island	Northeast	W	F	T
Jane Roger	Vann	Asheville	NC	The James	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R

Class of 2016

Janis Alling	Adams	Cincinnati	OH	Cincinnati	Covenant	W	F	R
Margaret	Aymer Oget	Decatur	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	B	F	T
Timothy A.	Beach-Verhey	Faison	NC	Coastal Carolina	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	T
Sylvia	Karcher	Hemet	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	T
Steven	Ranney	Ballwin	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	W	M	T

**Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel**

Class of 2014

Albert A.	Hockaday	San Antonio	TX	Mission	Sun	B	M	T
Sidney	Leak	Orange Beach	AL	South Alabama	Living Waters	W	M	T
Jeffrey	Mercer	Independence	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T
Bill	Nisbet	Marietta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	T

Class of 2016

Sung-Joo	Park	Brooklyn Park	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	A	M	T
Karen	Stocks	Scherta	TX	Mission	Sun	W	F	T
Donna C.	Weddle	Falls Church	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	T
Don	Yancey	Olive Branch	MS	St. Andrew	Living Waters	W	M	T

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

Class of 2014

Harry	Bartel	Fort Worth	TX	Grace	Sun	W	M	R
Steven	Bass	Seattle	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	M	R
Robert	Crist	Bellevue	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	M	L
Elizabeth	Dunning	Salt Lake City	UT	Utah	Rocky Mountains	W	F	R
Marilee K.	Hopkins	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	L
Robert	Olcott	Reston	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	L
Roscoe	Overton	Austin	TX	Mission	Sun	B	M	R
Jane L. Searjeant	Watt	Old Saybrook	CT	Albany	Northeast	W	F	T
James	Welch	Seminole	FL	Tampa Bay	South Atlantic	W	M	T

## Class of 2016

David A.	Davis	Princeton	NJ	New Brunswick	Northeast	W	M	T
Enid	Flores	Guaynabo	PR	De San Juan	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	F	L
Karen	Gray	Elderton	PA	Kiskiminetas	Trinity	W	F	L
Victor L.	Hymes	Alamo	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	B	M	R
Stephen	Kelly	Lexington	KY	Transylvania	Living Waters	W	M	R
Paul E.	Lee	Barrington	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	A	M	R
Eustacia	Marshall	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	T
Michele	Minter	Plainsboro	NJ	New Brunswick	Northeast	B	F	R
D. Scott	Weimer	Atlanta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Louise	Westfall	Denver	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	W	F	T

**Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People**

## Class of 2014

Paul	Bayerl	Summerville	GA	Cherokee	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Faye	Chiou	St. Louis	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	A	F	L
John	Etheredge	Rocky Mount	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	B	M	R
Michael	Fagans	Bakersfield	CA	San Joaquin	Pacific	W	M	L
Susan	Freed-Held	Colton	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	N	F	R
John L.	Herndon III	Huntsville	AL	North Alabama	Living Waters	B	M	T
Joseph L.	Johnson III	Dothan	AL	South Alabama	Living Waters	W	M	T
Dianne	Kareha	Allentown	PA	Lehigh	Trinity	W	F	T
Lisa	Leverette	Detroit	MI	Detroit	Covenant	B	F	L
Johnnie	Monroe	Pittsburgh	PA	Pittsburgh	Trinity	B	M	T
Sarah Jane	Moore	Arlington Heights	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	R
Reginald	Ragland	Glendale	AZ	Grand Canyon	Southwest	B	M	R
Carline	Seide-Murphy	Niverville	NY	Albany	Northeast	B	F	L
Maria J.	Williams	Westbury	NY	Long Island	Northeast	B	F	R

## Class of 2016

Carolyn	Ashe	Roosevelt	NY	Long Island	Northeast	B	F	L
Tiffany	Brown	Baltimore	MD	Baltimore	Mid-Atlantic	B	F	L
Jonas	Georges	Miami Shores	FL	Tropical Florida	South Atlantic	O	M	T
Cynthia	Hayes	Savannah	GA	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	B	F	L
Oscar L.	Heyward	Howard Beach	NY	New York City	Northeast	B	M	R
Bernadette	Hightower-Hughes	Sartell	MN	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	B	F	L
T. Ewen	Holmes	Plymouth	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
Selma	Jackson	Brooklyn	NY	New York City	Northeast	B	F	R
Laura	Krauss	Rolling Hills Estate	CA	The Pacific	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	T
Lawrence	Low	Seattle	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	A	M	T
Johnetta	Marshall	Jeffersontown	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	B	F	R

Joe	Nelson	Lubbock	TX	Palo Duro	Sun	N	F	R
Rebecca	Reyes	Durham	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	H	F	T
Cathryn	Surgenor	Holmes	NY	Hudson River	Northeast	W	F	T
Lori	Winblood	Delta	CO	West Virginia	Rocky Mountains	N	F	R
Shonte	Young	St. Louis	MO	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	B	F	L

### Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program Advisory Committee

Class of 2014

Max	Messman	Tacoma	WA	Olympia	Alaska Northwest	W	M	L
James W.	Pellot	Jacksonville	FL	St. Augustine	South Atlantic	W	M	R
Renato J.	Suntay	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	A	M	L

Class of 2016

Stephanie	Fritts	Ilwaco	WA	Olympia	Alaska Northwest	W	F	L
Jeff	Holland	Ojai	CA	Santa Barbara	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Kathy Fay	Lee	New Orleans	LA	South Louisiana	Sun	A	F	L
Adrian	Washington	Pueblo	CO	Pueblo	Rocky Mountains	B	M	T

### Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee

Class of 2014

Lucy	Janjigian	Franklin Lakes	NJ	Palisades	Northeast	M	F	R
Harold	Johnson	Durant	OK	Grace	Sun	W	M	R
Jeff	Kackley	Summerville	SC	Charleston-Atlantic	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Margarette	Kennerly	Brevard	NC	Western North Carolina	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R
Janice	Richardson	Florissant	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	B	F	R

Class of 2016

Sung Yeon	Choi-Morrow	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	A	F	L
Peter	Mann	Lake Shore	MN	Minnesota Valleys	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	R
Diane	Waddell	Saint Joseph	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	F	R

### Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program

Class of 2014

Linda	Bailey	Sun City	AZ	Grand Canyon	Southwest	W	F	R
Margaret	Jorgensen	Memphis	TN	Mid-South	Living Waters	W	F	T
Sam	McNairy	Raleigh	NC	New Hope	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	R
Terry	Nall	Atlanta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	R
William C.	Nelson	Portland	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	L
James B.	Rea Jr.	Los Angeles	CA	The Pacific	Southern California and Hawaii	O	M	L
Linda D.	Scholl	Memphis	TN	Mid-South	Living Waters	W	F	R
Joyce A.	Smith	Columbus	OH	Scioto Valley	Covenant	B	F	R

## Class of 2016

Stephen	Bacon	Atlanta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Rebecca	New	Anthony	KS	Southern Kansas	Mid-America	W	F	T
Conrad	Rocha	Albuquerque	NM	Santa Fe	Southwest	H	M	R
Louise	Westfall	Denver	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	W	F	T
Catesby	Woodford	Mount Sterling	KY	Transylvania	Living Waters	W	M	R
In	Yang	Irvine	CA	Hanmi	Southern California and Hawaii	A	M	T

**Presbyterian Mission Agency Board**

## Class of 2013

C. Arlin	Talley	Coleraine	MN	Northern Waters	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
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## Class of 2014

Steve	Aeschbacher	Woodinville	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	M	R
Clarence	Antioquia	Anacortes	WA	North Puget Sound	Alaska Northwest	N	M	L
Cynthia (Cindy)	Bolbach	Arlington	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R
Arthur	Canada	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	B	M	T
Clark D.	Cowden	San Diego	CA	San Diego	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
Melissa	DeRosia	Rochester	NY	Genesee Valley	Northeast	W	F	T
Joyce Martin	Emery	Seattle	WA	Olympia	Alaska Northwest	W	F	T
James E.	Foucher Jr.	Denver	CO	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	B	M	C
Roger J.	Gench	Washington	DC	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	T
Jack D.	Hodges	Lake Oswego	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	T
Mary	Jorgenson	Shawnee	KS	Heartland	Mid-America	W	F	R
Jan	Martin	Milwaukee	WI	Milwaukee	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	R
Cruz Alberto	Negron-Torres	Trujillo Alto	PR	De San Juan	Sínodo Presbiteriano Borinquén	H	M	T
Cathryn C.	Piekarski	Marietta	OH	Muskingum Valley	Covenant	W	F	R
Matthew	Schramm	Bay City	WI	Lake Huron	Covenant	W	M	T
Joyce A.	Smith	Columbus	OH	Scioto Valley	Covenant	B	F	R

## Class of 2016

William W.	Capel	Champaign	IL	Southeastern Illinois	Lincoln Trails	W	M	R
Jan	Dowlearn	Blanchard	OK	Indian Nations	Sun	W	F	R
Marilyn	Gamm	Madison	WI	The John Knox	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	T
Rachel Mihee	Kim-Kort	Bloomington	IN	Ohio Valley	Lincoln Trails	A	F	T
Kears	Pollock	Bruin	PA	Pittsburgh	Trinity	W	M	R
Neal D.	Presa	Middlesex	NJ	Elizabeth	Northeast	A	M	T
Heath K.	Rada	Montreat	NC	Western North Carolina	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	R
Marianne O.	Rhebergen	Hopewell	NJ	Cayuga-Syracuse	Northeast	W	F	T
Noelle	Royer	Seattle	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	F	R
Glen	Snider	Safford	AZ	De Cristo	Southwest	W	M	R

Class of 2018	Josephine (Jo)	Stewart	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	W	F	R
	Connie M.	Tubb	Dallas	TX	Grace	Sun	W	F	R
	Marsha Zell	Anson	Polson	MT	Glacier	Rocky Mountains	W	F	R
	Andrew	Barron	Minneapolis	MN	Foothills	South Atlantic	W	M	L
	Molly	Baskin	Wilmette	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	L
	James R.	Ephraim, Jr.	Birmingham	AL	Sheppards & Lapsley	Living Waters	B	M	T
	Thomas O.	Fleming Jr.	Los Angeles	CA	The Pacific	Southern California and Hawaii	W	M	T
	Chad	Herring	Prairie Village	KS	Heartland	Mid-America	W	M	T
	Jung Nam	Lee	Torrance	CA	Hanmi	Southern California and Hawaii	A	M	R
	Susan	Osoinach	Wichita Falls	TX	Palo Duro	Sun	W	F	R
	Nancy	Ramsay	Fort Worth	TX	Grace	Sun	W	F	T
David W.	Shinn	Livonia	MI	Detroit	Covenant	A	M	T	
Kevin	Yoho	Mullican Hill	NJ	Newark	Northeast	W	M	T	

### Presbyterian Mortgage Corporation

Class of 2012	Alicia F.	Williams	Ann Arbor	MI	Maumee Valley	Covenant	W	F	T
Class of 2014	William C.	Nelson	Portland	OR	The Cascades	Pacific	W	M	L
	Jay J.	Wilkinson	Woodbury	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	R

### Presbyterian Men Executive Board

Class of 2014	David	Caves Jr.	Kittanning	PA	Kiskiminetas	Trinity	W	M	T
	George	Goodman	Lynchburg	VA	The Peaks	Mid-Atlantic	B	M	T

### Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board

Class of 2014	John M.	Buchanan	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	M	T
	Valire Carr	Copeland	Pittsburgh	PA	Pittsburgh	Trinity	B	F	L
	Jesse G.	Hite Jr.	Charlotte	NC	Charlotte	Mid-Atlantic	W	M	R
	Laura S.	Mendenhall	Leander	TX	Mission	Sun	W	F	T
	Olivia Hudson	Smith	Denver	CO	Denver	Rocky Mountains	B	F	R
Class of 2016	Adlai	Amor	Arlington	VA	National Capital	Mid-Atlantic	A	M	R
	Mary Gene	Boteler	St. Louis	MO	Giddings-Lovejoy	Mid-America	W	F	T
	Elizabeth	Caldwell	Chicago	IL	Chicago	Lincoln Trails	W	F	T
	John	Temple	Carmel	NY	Hudson River	Northeast	W	M	L

**Review Committee on the Board of Pensions**

Class of 2014

Fahed	AbuAkel	Atlanta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	M	M	T
Deborah	Block	Milwaukee	WI	Milwaukee	Lakes and Prairies	W	F	T
Teresa A.	Bryce Bazemore	Philadelphia	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	B	F	R
Richard	Coffelt	Phoenix	AZ	Grand Canyon	Southwest	W	M	R
Maria	Curatolo	New York	NY	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	W	F	L
Karen	Garrett	Kansas City	MO	Heartland	Mid-America	W	F	L
Kent	Grimes	Hilton Head	SC	Charleston-Atlantic	South Atlantic	W	M	R
Faith Dow	Jongewaard	San Antonio	TX	Mission	Sun	W	F	T
Jim	Kitchens	San Francisco	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	W	M	T
Douglas F.	Megill, M.D.	Warren	PA	Lake Erie	Trinity	W	M	T
Scott	Prouty	Redwood Falls	MN	Minnesota Valleys	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T
Judith	Wellington	Albuquerque	NM	Santa Fe	Southwest	N	F	T

**Review Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

Class of 2014

Clemente H. 'Andy'	Anzaldua	Corpus Christi	TX	Mission	Sun	H	M	R
David H.	Bennett	Ballston Lake	NY	Albany	Northeast	W	M	T
Paul	Costel	Louisville	KY	Mid-Kentucky	Living Waters	W	M	R
Anne	Drennan	Newtown	PA	Monmouth	Northeast	W	F	R
Gordon	Enderle	Madison	WI	The John Knox	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	L
Alan	Ford	Hampton	NJ	Elizabeth	Northeast	W	M	R
Gary	Kidwell	Indianapolis	IN	Non-Presbyterian	Ecumenical	W	M	C
Donna	Misterly	La Quinta	CA	Riverside	Southern California and Hawaii	W	F	R
Nancy	Muth	Wyndmoor	PA	Philadelphia	Trinity	W	F	T
Irene	Pak	San Jose	CA	San Jose	Pacific	A	F	T
James N.	Tse	Woodhaven	NY	New York City	Northeast	A	M	R

**Special Committee on the Review of Biennial General Assemblies**

Class of 2014

W. Glen	Bell	Indianapolis	IN	Whitewater Valley	Lincoln Trails	W	M	T
Theresa	Cho	San Francisco	CA	San Francisco	Pacific	A	F	T
Thomas	Evans	Atlanta	GA	Greater Atlanta	South Atlantic	W	M	T
Glen Alberto	Guenther	Idaho Falls	ID	Kendall	Pacific	H	M	L
Marcus C.	Lambright	Dayton	OH	Miami Valley	Covenant	B	M	L
Kathy	Lueckert	DesMoines	WA	Seattle	Alaska Northwest	W	F	R
Carol	McDonald	Indianapolis	IN	Wabash Valley	Lincoln Trails	W	F	T
Matthew	Schramm	Bay City	WI	Lake Huron	Covenant	W	M	T
David A.	Van Dyke	St. Paul	MN	Twin Cities Area	Lakes and Prairies	W	M	T

3 Commissioners from the 220th General Assembly will be appointed

**Central Committee World Council of Churches**

Class of 2012-2015

Judy	Angleberger	Beaver Fall	PA	W	F	T
Robina	Winbush	Louisville	KY	B	F	T

**Principal Delegates to the General Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.**

Class of 2012-2015

Loyda	Aja	Louisville	KY	H	F	R
Scott	Anderson	Sun Prairie	WI	W	M	T
Judy	Angleberger	Beaver Falls	PA	W	F	T
SanDawna	Ashley	Louisville	KY	B	F	T
Flora Wilson	Bridges	Harrison	NY	B	F	T
Gay	Byron	Rochester	NY	B	M	T
José Luis	Casal	Midland	TX	H	M	T
Molly	Casteel	Louisville	KY	W	F	T
Mauricio	Chacon	Houston	TX	H	M	T
David M.	Dobson	Louisville	KY		M	L
Barry	Ensign-George	Louisville	KY		M	T
Brian	Frick	Louisville	KY		M	L
Bethany	Furkin	Louisville	KY		F	L
Marissa	Galvan-Valle	Louisville	KY	H	F	T
Michael	Harper	Louisville	KY		M	L
Sherri	Hausser	Byrn Mawr	PA	W	F	T
Young Lee	Hertig	South Pasadena	CA		M	T
Rhashell	Hunter	Louisville	KY	B	F	T
Jose	Irizarry	San Juan	PR	H	M	T
Donald	Jang	New York	NY		M	L
Kathlyn Joy	Kaufman	Bellwood	PA	W	F	T
Mark	Koenig	New York	NY	W	M	T
Olive	Mahabir	Tyrone	GA		M	T
Dana	McMahan	Louisville	KY		F	L
Marcia Clark	Myers	Louisville	KY	W	F	T
Lonnie	Oliver	Louisville	KY	B	M	T
Dianna	Ott	Louisville	KY		F	L
Eugene Eung-Chun	Park	San Anselmo	CA		M	T
Gradye	Parsons	Louisville	KY	W	M	T
Brian	Paulson	Libertyville	IL	W	M	T
Doska	Ross	Los Angeles	CA	W	F	R
Zabrina	Santiago	Wheaton	IL		F	L

Bill	Somplatsky-Jarman	Louisville	KY			M
Jerry	Van Marter	Louisville	KY	W	M	T
Robina	Winbush	Louisville	KY	B	F	T
Leslie	Woods	Washington	DC	W	F	L
Gina	Yeager-Buckley	Louisville	DC	W	F	T
Sharon	Youngs	Louisville	KY	W	F	T



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