

08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES & INSTITUTION

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Item 08-01

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) authorize the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Office of Theology and Worship, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians to begin research into the feasibility of a new Presbyterian hymnal, and further that, subject to action of a future General Assembly upon presentation and approval of a comprehensive publication plan, the 216th General Assembly (2004) designate the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation as the prospective publisher of the next Presbyterian hymnal, which would be developed in partnership with the Office of Theology and Worship and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians.

Rationale

The development of the current *Presbyterian Hymnal* began in 1983 and the hymnal itself was published in 1990. According to the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, the average lifespan of a denominational hymnal is between fifteen and twenty years because of changing theological understandings, ecumenical, theological, liturgical, and musical research, and consultation. Since our last hymnal was produced, the PC(USA) has witnessed a significant increase in the use of the Revised Common Lectionary, and a renewed and deepened living of the liturgical year.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) historically has produced a new hymnal every twenty years. There is agreement among liturgical, music, and theological scholars that in the Reformed tradition the hymns that the people sing and come to know have a profound influence on both the individual's and the church's faith formation and developments.

Areas of research that will be undertaken will include the following:

1. A research process to assess the need for a new hymnal, including
 - a. the advantages and disadvantages,
 - b. the growth or increase of multicultural congregations, and
 - c. the effects of the decline of singing in our culture on the worship and faith of the church.
2. Identifying areas of theological and liturgical weakness in previous hymnals.
3. Investigating the effects of electronics and electronic media on the church.
4. Studying the influence of the increasing use of the Revised Common Lectionary on the worship and hymnody of the church.
5. Investigating the influence of the increasingly important place the sacraments have in the worship life of the church, and the effect this has had on recent hymn writing.
6. Trying to determine why 46 percent of our member congregations apparently do not use the 1990 hymnal.
7. Studying a new hymnal's relationship to other PC(USA) worship resources.
8. Beginning planning for: field testing of a potential new hymnal; training events for clergy and musicians; marketing of a new hymnal; potential spin-off resources that could accompany and supplement a new hymnal; and introduction of the new hymnal to the church.

The planning, development, and publication of a new hymnal can be expected to take seven to ten years. The executive director of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM), by letter dated January 28, 2004, has proposed to the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) that PPC, the Office of Theology and Worship, PAM, and a representative of the Executive Director's Office of the General Assembly Council begin researching the many aspects of the need for and scope of a new hymnal. The Board of Directors of PPC, by unanimous action on February 6, 2004, supported the PAM proposal and authorized that this recommendation be forwarded to the 216th General Assembly (2004).

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC), as the official denominational publisher of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Office of Theology and Worship, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians seek the recommendation of the 216th General Assembly (2004) to work in partnership to begin research on the possibilities for a new Presbyterian hymnal that would include an array of hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs that are gender inclusive, appropriate for use by all PC(USA) congregations, and representative of the multi-ethnic and cultural traditions of the denomination.

Item 08-02

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approve the revised Bylaws (Appendix 1), Articles of Incorporation (Appendix 2), and the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (Appendix 3).

Rationale

This recommendation is in response to the following referrals:

- *2003 Referral: Item 02-03. Recommendation C. All Corporations Shall Amend, as Necessary, Their Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Other Pertinent Documents to Carry into Effect the Purposes and Intent of this Deliverance and Related Enactments of the General Assembly; Report Such Amendments to the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 34, 124).*
- *2003 Referral: Item 13-03. Recommendation The Curriculum Publishing Change, the Additional Trade Name, and the Original Trade Name Should Be Noted in Appropriate Attachments or Amendments to the Deliverance, the Organization for Mission, and PPC's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 49, 666, 670).*

Item 02-03 (Recommendation C) and Item 13-03 from the 215th General Assembly (2003) require changes to the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and the Organization for Mission.

In Item 02-03 (Recommendation C), it was approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003) to change the terms for the board of directors to be in compliance with the biennial assembly format.

In Item 13-03, the General Assembly Committee on Review recommended to the 215th General Assembly (2003) that changes be made to the Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and the Organization for Mission to more accurately reflect the organization of PPC. The 215th General Assembly (2003) approved this recommendation and requested that PPC report on these changes to the 216th General Assembly (2004).

Appendix 1

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AMENDED AND RESTATED
BYLAWS OF
PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING CORPORATION

ARTICLE I
OFFICES

The principal office of Presbyterian Publishing Corporation ("Corporation") in the Commonwealth of Kentucky shall be located at 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396. The Corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the Commonwealth of Kentucky, as may be established by the Board of Directors from time to time.

ARTICLE II
RESTRICTIVE PROVISIONS

A. The Corporation shall distribute its income for each taxable year at such time and in such manner so as not to become subject to the tax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.

- B. The Corporation shall not engage in any act or self-dealing, as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
- C. The Corporation shall not retain any excess business holdings, as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
- D. The Corporation shall not make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
- E. The Corporation shall not make any taxable expenditures, as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws. The provisions set out above require the Corporation to distribute its income in such manner as to avoid imposition taxes under Section 4942 of the Code, and prohibit the Corporation from engaging in any acts contrary to Sections 4941, 4943, 4944 and 4945. Accordingly it is intended that the provisions meet the requirements of Section 508(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

ARTICLE III **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- A. **Members of the Board of Directors.** The affairs of the Corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors of not less than three (3) ~~nor more than nine (9) persons, one of whom would be~~ *and up to twelve (12) members*, ~~the Corporation's President and Publisher, and one of whom would be the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly or their designee shall serve as ex-officio members without vote.~~ The management and disposition of the affairs and property of the Corporation shall be vested in Directors who shall be selected from time-to-time by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) ("the General Assembly"), in such number, and for such terms, and who may include such a number of ex officio directors, who should be selected in such a manner as the General Assembly may determine. The number of such Directors may be increased or decreased at any time by the General Assembly, and in the case of an increase, the additional Directors shall be selected by or in the manner determined by the General Assembly. All the business and affairs of said Corporation shall be conducted by the Directors under and subject to the direction of the General Assembly or any officer or agency thereunto duly authorized, so far as such direction shall be in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and of the United States of America. No material change concerning this provision shall be made in these Bylaws without the prior approval of the General Assembly. *The Board shall include Directors with expertise in business management, finance, religious scholarship and theological education, law, and publishing, and congregational pastoral expertise.*
- B. **Rights of Directors.** The right of a Director to vote and all of his or her right, title, and interest in or to the Corporation shall cease on the termination of his or her membership as a Director. No Director shall be entitled to share in the distribution of the corporate assets upon the dissolution of the Corporation.
- C. **Resignation of Directors.** Any Director may resign from the Corporation by delivering a written resignation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with a copy to the Chairperson or Secretary of the Board.
- D. **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the Directors of the Corporation shall be held at the principal office of the Corporation or any other place so designated for the purpose of transacting such business as may properly come before the meeting.
- E. **Notice of Annual Meeting.** Notice of the time, place, and purpose or purposes of the annual meeting shall be served, either personally or by mail, not less than ten (10) nor more than forty (40) days before the meeting upon each person who appears on the books of the Corporation as a member of the Board of Directors, and if mailed, such notice shall be directed to the Director at his or her address as it appears in the books of the Corporation, unless he or she shall have filed with the Secretary of the Corporation a written request that notices intended for the Director be mailed to some other address, in which case it shall be mailed to the address designated in such request.
- F. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Directors, other than those regulated by statute, may be called at any time by the Chairperson. It shall also be called by the Chairperson or Secretary upon receipt of a written request of one-third (1/3) of the Directors of the Corporation to hold such a meeting. Special meetings may be held by telephone conference call or similar communications equipment provided that all Directors participating in such meeting can speak to and hear one an-

other. Participation in a telephone conference call constitutes presence in person at such meeting. Minutes of special conference call meetings will be taken by the corporate Secretary and become a part of the official minutes of the Board.

G. **Notice of Special Meetings**. Notice of the special meetings stating the time, place, and purpose or purposes shall be served personally or by mail upon each member residing within the United States, not less than five (5) nor more than forty (40) days before such meeting, and, if mailed, such notice shall be directed to each Director at his or her address as it appears on the books or records of the Corporation unless he or she shall have filed with the Secretary of the Corporation a written request that notices intended for him or her shall be mailed to some other address, in which case it shall be mailed to the address designated in such request. In the case of conference calls, the date and time of such meeting will be determined by advance phone calls to all Directors by the corporate Secretary.

H. **Quorum**. At any meeting of the Directors of the Corporation the presence of a majority of the Directors in person shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for all purposes except as otherwise provided by law, and the act of the majority of the Directors present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the full Board of Directors except as may otherwise specifically be provided by statute or by these Bylaws. All quorum provisions will apply to telephone conference calls.

I. **Voting**. Any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Directors may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the Directors.

J. **General Assembly Nominating Committee (“Committee”)**. It is the duty of the Committee to nominate the Board of Directors.

K. **Waiver of Notice**. Whenever under the provisions of any law, or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Corporation, the Corporation or the Board of Directors or any committee that is authorized to take any action after notice to the Directors of the Corporation, such action may be taken without notice, if at any time before or after such action be completed, such requirements be waived in writing by the person or persons entitled to such notice or entitled to participate in the action to be taken.

L. **Removal of Directors of the Board**. Any Director of the Board may be removed from his or her position as a Director or from office by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose for conduct detrimental to the interest of the Corporation, for lack of sympathy with its objectives, or for refusal to render reasonable assistance in carrying out its purposes. Any such Director proposed to be removed shall be entitled to at least five (5) days notice in writing by mail of the meeting at which such removal is voted upon and shall be entitled to appear before and be heard at such meeting.

M. **Vacancies**. In the case of a vacancy in the Board of Directors by death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or any other cause, a majority of the remaining Directors may, subject to the approval of the General Assembly Nominating Committee, appoint a successor Director to serve until the next meeting of the General Assembly or until his or her successor is appointed.

N. **Compensation/Expenses**. Directors shall not receive any stated salary for their services as such, but by resolution of the Board of Directors, shall be entitled to receive a fixed reasonable sum or expenses of attendance, or both, for attendance at each regular or special meeting. The Board of Directors shall have the power at its discretion to contract for and to pay to Directors rendering unusual or special services to the Corporation, special compensation appropriate to the value of such services.

O. **Chairperson of the Board of Directors**. The Chairperson of the Board of Directors shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors, have general charge and supervision of the affairs of the Board of Directors, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors. The Chairperson of the Board of Directors shall be elected by a majority of all the Directors from its members. Such Chairperson of the Board of Directors may be removed by a vote of a majority of all Directors.

ARTICLE IV **OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION**

A. **Number**. The Officers of the Corporation shall be the President and Publisher, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers with such powers and duties not inconsistent with these Bylaws as may be appointed and determined

by the Board of Directors. Any two offices, except those of the President and Publisher and Secretary, may be held by the same person, and there may be more than one person holding the same office.

B. **Election, Term of Office, and Qualifications.** The Officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors from its members and among such other persons as the Board of Directors may see fit, at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Corporation *for a term of four years*. The Officers will be subject to concurrence of the General Assembly Council.

C. **Vacancies.** In case any office of the Corporation becomes vacant by death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or any other cause, the majority of the Directors in office may elect an Officer to fill such vacancy, and the Officer so elected shall hold and serve until the next annual meeting of the Board of Directors or until the election and qualification of his or her successor.

D. **President and Publisher.** With confirmation of the General Assembly, the Board shall elect a President and Publisher for a term of four years, who is eligible for reelection. The President and Publisher shall be a voting member of the Board and have authority to conduct the Corporation's day-to-day operations including, but not limited to, the following:

1. developing the staff structure and hiring personnel;
2. determining compensation and benefits;
3. setting personnel procedures;
4. overseeing editorial decisions;
5. supervision of product production, marketing, sales, distribution and storage;
6. setting policy norms for contracts and royalties;
7. financial management and accounting; and
8. selection of management information system.

E. **Vice- President.** At the request of the President and Publisher, or in the event of his or her absence or disability, the Vice President shall perform the duties and possess the powers of the President and Publisher and such other powers as the Board of Directors may determine, and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors.

F. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall have charge of books, documents, and papers as the Board of Directors may determine and shall have the custody of the corporate seal. He or she shall attend and keep the minutes of all of the meetings of the Board of Directors of the Corporation. He or she shall keep a record, containing the names, alphabetically arranged, of all persons who are Directors of the Corporation, showing places of residence, and such books shall be opened for inspection as prescribed by law. He or she may sign with the President and Publisher or Vice President, in the name and on behalf of the Corporation, any contracts or agreements authorized by the Board of Directors, and when so authorized or ordered by the Board of Directors, he or she may have fixed the seal of the Corporation. He or she shall, in general, perform all the duties incident to the office of Secretary, subject to the control of the Board of Directors, and shall do such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Board of Directors.

G. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have the custody of all funds, property, and securities of the Corporation, subject to such regulations as may be imposed by the Board of Directors. He or she may be required to give bond for the faithful performance of his or her duties, in such sum and with such sureties as the Board of Directors may require. When necessary he or she may endorse on behalf of the Corporation for collection checks, notices, and other obligations, and shall deposit the same to the credit of the Corporation at such banks or bank or depository as the Board of Directors may designate. He or she shall sign all receipts and vouchers and, together with such other Officer or Officers, if any, that shall be designated by the Board of Directors. He or she shall sign all checks of the Corporation, all Bills of Exchange or Promissory Notes issued by the Corporation, except in cases where the signing and execution shall be expressly designated by the Board of Directors or by the Bylaws to some other Officer or agent of the Corporation. He or she shall make such payments as may be necessary on behalf of the Corporation. He or she shall enter regularly on the books of the Corporation to be kept by him or her for the purpose of obtaining a full and accurate account of all moneys and obligations received and paid or incurred by him or her for the account of the Corporation, and shall exhibit such books at all reasonable times to any Director on application at the offices of the Corporation. He or she shall, in general, perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer, subject to the control of the Board of Directors.

H. **Salaries.** The salaries of all Officers shall be fixed by the Board of Directors, shall be reasonable in amount and the fact that any Officer is a Director of the Corporation or member of an Advisory committee, shall not preclude the Officer receiving a salary or voting on the resolution providing for the same.

I. **Removal.** Any Officer may be removed from office by the affirmative vote of a majority of all Directors at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose when in their judgment it is determined to be in the best interests of the Corporation.

ARTICLE V
INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

A. **Generally.** The Corporation shall, to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify each of its Directors and/or Officers against expenses (including counsel fees), judgments, taxes, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, incurred by him or her in connection therewith, and shall advance expenses (including counsel fees) incurred by him or her in defending any threatened, pending, or contemplated action, suit, or proceeding (whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative) to which he or she is threatened to be made a party by reason of the fact that he or she *is or* was a Director and/or Officer, or is or was serving at its request as a Director and/or Officer, of another domestic or foreign corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise.

B. **Insurance.** The Corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was entitled to indemnification as described above, whether or not the Corporation would have the power or be obligated to indemnify him or her against such liability under either this Article V or the Act.

C. **Repeal or Modification.** Any repeal or modification of this Article V by the Board or Directors of the Corporation shall not adversely affect any right or protection of a Director or Officer of the Corporation under this Article V with respect to any act or omission prior to the time of such repeal or modification.

ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES

A. **General.** The Chairperson of the Board, with the consent of the Board, shall have the authority to create and terminate committees as may be necessary to carryout the functions of the Corporation. The Chairperson of the Board shall also have the authority to create, change, and terminate ad hoc committees as he or she deems necessary.

B. **Chairpersons.** It shall be the duty of the Chairperson of the Board to appoint Committee chairpersons as soon after his or her election as practicable. The chairpersons of Committee shall serve for a one (1) year term. No chairperson shall serve more than two (2) consecutive one (1) year terms, but may again serve as chairperson after at least one (1) year after he or she has ceased to serve as such. It shall be the duty of the chairpersons to preside over their Committees. The chairpersons shall be responsible to see that full and complete minutes of Committee meetings are maintained.

C. **Committee Meetings.** Committee members shall be appointed by the chairpersons for one (1) year terms. No Committee member shall serve more than three (3) consecutive one (1) year terms, but may again serve on such Committee after at least one (1) year off such Committee.

ARTICLE VII
AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The Board of Directors may appoint Agents and Representatives of the Corporation with powers and to perform acts or duties on behalf of the Corporation as the Board of Directors may see fit, so far as may be consistent with these Bylaws, to the extent authorized by law.

ARTICLE VIII
CONTRACTS

The Board of Directors, except as in these Bylaws otherwise provided, may authorize any officer or agent to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to a specific instance; and unless so authorized by the Board of Directors, no officer, agent, or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation. The President and Publisher shall be delegated authority to take necessary action in circumstances not provided for in Board policy, provided that such action shall be reported to the Board at the next meeting following such action.

ARTICLE IX
FISCAL YEAR

The Fiscal Year of a Corporation shall commence on January 1st and end on December 31st.

ARTICLE X
PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS

All property, whether real, personal, tangible, or intangible, received by the Corporation by contribution, bequest, devise, gift, grant, or otherwise, shall be held by the Corporation or disposed of by it on such terms and conditions, not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation as the Board of Directors shall determine. Unless otherwise specified or limited by the terms of the particular gift, bequest, devise, grant, or instrument, the funds of the Corporation may be invested from time to time and in such manner as the Board of Directors may deem advantageous.

ARTICLE XI
AMENDMENTS

The power to alter, amend, or repeal the Bylaws or adopt new Bylaws, subject to repeal or change by action of the Board of Directors, shall be vested in the Board of Directors. However, any amendments concerning the confirmation of the President and Publisher or changing the constitution of the Board of Directors shall not be amended or repealed without the approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or its delegate. All other amendments or revisions will be reported to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or its delegate.

Appendix 2

[Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with an underline and as italic.]

November 2003

AMENDED AND RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING CORPORATION

The undersigned Incorporator signs these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a non-profit corporation under chapter 273 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

ARTICLE I

The name of the Corporation is the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. These amendments were adopted on ~~February 28, 2000~~, February 6, 2004 with the Board of Directors casting a unanimous vote. These restated articles of incorporation correctly set forth the provisions of the articles of incorporation as theretofore amended, they have been duly adopted as required by law and they supersede the original articles of incorporation and all amendments thereto.

ARTICLE II

A. The corporation is organized and shall be operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes as described within Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws) including for such purposes the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any further federal tax code.

B. The purposes of the corporation shall be more specifically stated as follows:

1. Publishing, promoting, and distributing ~~materials relating to~~ Christian education, ~~nurture, and spiritual growth~~ resources consonant with Reformed tradition for use as congregational resources by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
2. ~~enriching the educational environment of congregations by offering expanded curriculum options, seasonal dramas and confirmation materials;~~

- ~~3. utilizing creative approaches and electronic media for curriculum development;~~
- ~~4. providing subscription services and relevant inserts to Presbyterian churches for weekly bulletins containing appropriate lectionary based scripture selections;~~
- ~~5. providing daily devotional guides;~~
- ~~6. publishing quarterly magazines relating to the overall Presbyterian ministry;~~
- ~~7. publishing, produce, and market other materials as appropriate: titles, including software, in theology, biblical studies, ethics, preaching, pastoral care, counseling, Christian education, Christian doctrine, and Judeo/Christian studies;~~
- ~~8. publishing, marketing, and distributing books and similar materials under the trade name Westminster John Knox Press, Geneva Press, Congregational Resources, or any other trade names adopted by the Corporation;~~
- ~~9. publishing curriculum and related materials for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and~~
- ~~10. distributing the books and materials published and, under contract, other publications intended for use in the Presbyterian Church (USA), ecumenical audiences, and/or the general religious trade market; and~~
- ~~engage in and conduct such business as may be permitted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States of America and not inconsistent with the directives of the General Assembly.~~

ARTICLE III

The Corporation shall neither have nor exercise any power, nor shall it directly or indirectly engage in any activity, that would:

1. Prevent it from obtaining or maintaining exemption from federal income taxation as a corporation described in Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code");
2. cause it to lose its exempt status under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Code;
3. cause it to be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business for profit;
4. result in a substantial part of its activities consisting of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation;
5. involve, participating in, or intervening in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office;
6. violate applicable federal, state, or local laws;
7. result in any prohibited transactions described in Section 503 of the Code;
8. cause it to accumulate income, invest income, or divert income, in a manner that would endanger its exempt status by virtue of Section 504 of the Code;
9. accumulate income so as to be subject to corporate tax under Section 4942 of the Code; or
10. result in any act of self-dealing, retaining any excess business holdings, making any investment which would subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Code, or making any taxable expenditures.
11. If and so long as the Corporation is a private foundation as defined in Section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws:

- a) The Corporation shall distribute its income for each taxable year at such time and in such manner as not to become subject to the tax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws.
- b) The Corporation shall not engage in any act of self-dealing as defined in Section 4941 (d) of the Internal Revenue code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws.
- c) The Corporation shall not retain any excess business holdings as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws.
- d) The Corporation shall not make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws.
- e) The Corporation shall not make any taxable expenditures as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any later Federal tax laws.

ARTICLE IV

The duration of the Corporation is perpetual. Upon dissolution, however, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall, at the time, qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

ARTICLE V

The address of the current registered office and the name of the current registered agent of the Corporation is:

~~Richard Brown~~ Jack Keller
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396

The principal office of the Corporation will be located at 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396.

ARTICLE VI

The name of the incorporator is:

Price H. ~~Gwynn~~ Gwynn III
6366 Sharon Hills Road
Charlotte, North Carolina 28210

ARTICLE VII

The number of Directors constituting the initial Board of Directors shall be 7. The names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as Directors are:

Nina Hickson Perry
2177 Wellington Circle
Lithonia, Georgia 30058

Jerine W. Clark
2973 Morley Road
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122

Price H. Gwynn III
6366 Sharon Hills Road
Charlotte, North Carolina 28210

William S. Dillon
924 North Chestnut
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60004

Barbara A. Wheeler
Auburn Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, New York 10027

James D. Brown
Room 5406
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396

William A. Longbrake
939 18th Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98112

ARTICLE VIII

The affairs and business of the Corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors of not fewer than one ~~nor more than nine persons~~ and up to twelve voting members. The Corporation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly or their designee shall serve as ex-officio members without vote. The management and disposition of the affairs and property of the corporation shall be vested in directors who shall be selected from time to time by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (the "General Assembly"), in such number, and for such terms, and who may include such a number of ex officio directors, who shall be selected in such a manner as the General Assembly may determine. The number of such directors may be increased or decreased at any time by the General Assembly, and in the case of an increase, the additional directors shall be selected by or in the manner determined by the General Assembly. All the business and affairs of the said corporation shall be conducted by the directors under and subject to the direction of the General Assembly or of any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, so far as such direction shall be in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and of the United States of America. No material change concerning this provision shall be made in these articles of incorporation without the prior approval of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE IX

The Directors of the Corporation shall not be liable for any debt or obligation of this Corporation solely by reason of being Directors.

ARTICLE X

The Corporation's Board of Directors shall not amend or repeal any provision in its bylaws or adopt new bylaws concerning the confirmation of the President and Publisher or changing the constitution of the Board of Directors without the approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or its delegate. All other amendments or revisions will be reported to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or its delegate.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, said Corporate officer subscribes his name and acknowledges this to be his act and deed this the _____ day of _____, 20 ____.

Davis Perkins, President

Appendix 3

[Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with an underline and as italic.]

Articles11/2003

The Publishing Corporation

Section 2.

(a) *Presbyterian Publishing Corporation established*—As of the close of business December 31, 1993, there ~~was shall~~ be created as a separate corporate agency of the General Assembly a nonmember corporation known as the Presbyterian

Publishing Corporation (the Publishing Corporation), which is and shall be an integrated auxiliary and a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

(b) *Corporate Charter*—The articles of incorporation of the Publishing Corporation shall provide for its governance and subordination to the General Assembly to substantially the following effect:

The management and disposition of the affairs and property of the corporation shall be vested in directors, who shall be selected from time to time by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“the General Assembly”), in such number, and for such terms, and who may include such a number of ex officio directors, who shall be selected in such a manner as the General Assembly may determine. The number of such directors may be increased or decreased at any time by the General Assembly, and in case of an increase, the additional directors shall be selected by or in the manner determined by the General Assembly. All the business and affairs of the said corporation shall be conducted by the directors under and subject to the direction of the General Assembly or of any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, so far as such direction shall be in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and of the United States of America. No material change shall be made in these articles of incorporation without the prior approval of the General Assembly. The Board shall include directors with expertise in business management, finance, religious scholarship and theological education, law, publishing, and congregational pastoral expertise

(c) *Bylaws*—The bylaws of the Publishing Corporation shall not be amended concerning the confirmation of the President and Publisher or changing the constitution of the Board of Directors without the concurrence of the General Assembly or its delegate and the existing bylaws of the Publishing Corporation shall be amended to contain language to substantially the following effect:

The power to alter, amend, or repeal the bylaws or adopt new bylaws, subject to repeal or change by action of the Board of Directors, shall be vested in the Board of Directors. However, any amendments concerning the confirmation of the President and Publisher or changing the constitution of the Board of Directors shall not be amended or repealed without the approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or its delegate. All other amendments or revisions will be reported to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or its delegate. The corporation shall not amend or repeal these bylaws or adopt new bylaws without the approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or its delegate.

(d) *Financial Status*—~~The Publishing Corporation shall seek recognition as a nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue code of 1986. On November 16, 1993, the Publishing Corporation was incorporated as a nonprofit organization under Chapter 273 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.~~ It shall have no claim on Presbyterian Mission Program Fund. It shall be responsible for any financial obligations it incurs and shall retain any surplus it generates.

(e) *Board of Directors*—The Publishing Corporation shall be governed by a ~~nine member~~ board of directors of up to twelve voting members. The, one of whom shall be the corporation’s chief executive officer (CEO), and one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly or their designee shall serve as ex-officio members without vote. The remaining directors shall be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for ~~three~~ four -year terms up to a maximum of ~~three~~ two terms. No director may serve more than two terms, full or partial. Classes shall be established so that under normal conditions no more than one-third of the board will be elected in the same year.

(f) *Functions*—The Publishing Corporation exists in order to fulfill the goals articulated in the Publishing Corporation Mission Statement as formulated by the board of directors and officially adopted by them on February 6, 2004.

Building on the Reformed Tradition, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation seeks to glorify God by contributing to the spiritual and intellectual vitality of Christ’s Church. To that end, PPC publishes resources that advance religious scholarship, stimulate conversation about moral values, and inspire faithful living. Subject to an inconsistent provision of the Form of Government and subject to the lawful directions from time to time of the general assembly or of any officer or agency thereof thereunto duly authorized, the Publishing Corporation shall

- ~~(1) publish, market, and distribute books and similar materials under the trade name: Westminster/John Knox Press;~~
- ~~(2) publish curriculum of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);~~
- ~~(3) publish, produce, and market other materials as appropriate;~~

~~(4) distribute the books and materials it publishes and, under contract, other publications intended for use in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and~~

~~(5) engage in and conduct such business as may be permitted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States of America and not inconsistent with the directives of the General Assembly.~~

(g) *Reporting*—The Board of Directors of the Publishing Corporation shall report ~~annually~~ to the General Assembly.

(h) *Executives*—As provided by the Form of Government, G-9.0703, of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the board of directors of the Publishing Corporation shall elect a CEO, and may elect other executives, for a term of four years, and eligible for reelection with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council. The CEO shall be subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.

(i) *Copyright*—All agreements between the Publishing Corporation and the other entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall expressly designate the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Publishing Corporation, or another specified corporate body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *the author or volume editor* as owner of the copyright of the material published thereunder.

Item 08-03

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Congregational Ministries Division and on behalf of the Committee on Theological Education, recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) grant permission to the following theological institutions to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in 2005 and 2006: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary; Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary; McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in cooperation with the Inter-denominational Theological Center, and Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education.

Rationale

Beginning in 1989, the General Assembly became the governing body that grants permission to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Presbyterian theological institutions. The 215th General Assembly (2003) granted permission for celebrations in 2004; the 216th General Assembly (2004) is asked to grant permission for calendar years 2005 and 2006.

Item 08-04

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Congregational Ministries Division, recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) authorize for two years the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu and in Santa Fe, at Montreat Conference Center, and at Stony Point Center in connection with Presbyterian conferences and retreats held at those centers; at worship celebrations held at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky; and at the following events:

- National Presbyterian Youth Ministry Council (NPYMC), April 21–25, 2004, Cleveland, Ohio;
- Association Retired Minister, Spouses & Survivors National Conference, June 17–20, 2004, Charlotte, N.C.; and June 16–19, 2005, Kansas City, Mo.;
- Adopted Family Conference, July 6–10, 2004, Montreat Conference Center, N.C.; and July 5–9, 2005, Montreat Conference Center, N.C.;
- Presbyterian Families, July 11–14, 2004, Colorado Springs, Colo.; and July 6–9, 2005, Montreat Conference Center, N.C.;
- Presbyterian Youth Triennium, July 20–25, 2004, West Lafayette, Ind.;
- National Taiwanese Presbyterian Young Adult Coalition (NTPYAC), July 29–31, 2004, Los Angeles, Calif.;
- Meetings of the General Assembly standing committees (commissions);
- Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference, August 3–7, 2004, Tacoma, Wash.;
- Korean American Young Adult Leadership Coalition (KAYALC), September 2–4, 2004, Atlanta, Ga.; and September 1–3, 2005, location undecided;
- Korean American Student Empowerment (KASE), October 10–13, 2004, Chicago, Ill.; and August 2–5, 2005, Chicago, Ill.;
- Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network (POAMN) Annual Meeting, October 27–30, 2004, Daytona Beach, Fla.;
- Presbyterian Men's Annual Meeting, April 21–24, 2005, Charlotte, N.C.; and April 20–23, 2006, location undecided;
- 7% Event, October 3–6, 2005, San Francisco, Calif.
- Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association (PCCCA) annual meeting, November 8–13, 2005, Harrisonburg, Va.;
- Association of Presbyterian Church Educators, February, 2–5, 2005, Vancouver, Canada;
- Association of Presbyterian Church Educators, February, 1–4, 2006, St. Louis, Mo.;
- Presbyterian Association of Musicians 2004 conferences at Montreat, June 20–July 3, 2004; Westminster College, July 11–16, 2004; and Denver, Colo., September 20–23, 2004.

Item 08-05

On Reorganizing and Improving the Presentation of G-2.0300, G-2.0400, and G-2.0500 Without Material Alteration to Its Actual Content—From the Presbytery of John Calvin.

The Presbytery of John Calvin overtures the 216th General Assembly (2004) of the PC(USA) to reorganize and improve the presentation of G-2.0300, G-2.0400, and G-2.0500 without material alteration to its actual content.

Rationale

The constitutional questions require all candidates for ordination to affirm that they “sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith” (G-14.0207c), and the *Book of Order* does not explicitly identify or describe these “essential tenets,” as such.

The failure to respond adequately to repeated requests for guidance in this regard leaves the impression that we are unwilling or unable to express our faith when asked to do so, contrary to the great tradition of our confessional church, which has always sought to hold forth to the world a clear statement of faith.

The *Book of Order* (G-2.0300 and G-2.0400) contains an eloquent summarization of the “essence” (or core substance) of our Reformed faith, but it has existed in a presentation that is not easily recognizable for what it is, nor has it been arranged in such a way to draw sufficient and helpful attention to itself.

Current tensions in the church may cause some to suggest that “important” matters of the faith are “essential” (i.e., belonging to its core substance) when, in fact, they are “important” matters that, although susceptible to error in an imperfect church, are unworthy of schism in the Body of Christ.

The Presbytery of John Calvin, seeking to “further the peace, unity, and purity of the church” (G-14.0207g), suggests that G-2.0300, G-2.0400, and G-2.0500 could be reorganized as follows: (The current text is shown with a strike-through; the suggested text is shown as italic.)

~~“G-2.0300—Faith of the Church Catholic~~

~~“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gives witness to the faith of the Church catholic. The confessions express the faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church^{*b} in the recognition of canonical Scriptures and the formulation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds, notably the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds with their definitions of the mystery of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.~~

~~“G-2.0400—Faith of the Protestant Reformation~~

~~“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) identifies with the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation. The focus of these affirmations is the rediscovery of God’s grace in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Protestant watchwords—*grace alone*,^{*c} *faith alone*,^{*d} *Scripture alone*—^{*e} embody principles of understanding which continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith.~~

~~“G-2.0500—Faith of the Reformed Tradition~~

~~“a. In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty,^{*f} holiness,^{*g} and providence of God^{*h} who creates,^{*i} sustains,^{*j} rules,^{*k} and redeems^{*l} the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love.^{*m} Related to this central affirmation of God’s sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:~~

~~“(1) The election^{*n} of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;^{*o}~~

~~“(2) Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;~~

~~“(3) A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation;~~

~~“(4) The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry*^p and tyranny,*^q which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.~~

~~“Reflect a Particular Stance~~

~~“b. Thus, the creeds and confessions of this church reflect a particular stance within the history of God’s people. They are the result of prayer, thought, and experience within a living tradition. They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and witness of the community of believers.”~~

~~“G-2.0300 The Essential Tenets of the Reformed Faith~~

~~“Among the tenets deemed essential to an understanding of the Reformed Faith, as expressed in the confessions of the Presbyterian Church (USA), are:~~

~~“a. The faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church in the recognition of canonical Scriptures and the formulation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds, notably the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds with their definitions of the mystery of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.~~

~~“b. The affirmations of the Protestant Reformation in the rediscovery of God’s grace in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Protestant watchwords—grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone—embody principles of understanding which continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith.~~

~~“c. The central affirmation of the Reformed Tradition expressing faith in the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love.~~

~~“d. The great themes of the Reformed Tradition which are related to its central affirmation:~~

~~“1. The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;~~

~~“2. Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;~~

~~“3. A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation;~~

~~“4. The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.~~

~~“G-2.0400 Reflect a Particular Stance~~

~~“Thus, the creeds and confessions of this church reflect a particular stance within the history of God’s people. They are the result of prayer, thought, and experience within a living tradition. They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and witness of the community of believers.”~~

[Note: Text is a replacement. Please discard Item 08-05, pp. 3-4, as received in the second mailing and insert this as current copy.]

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-05

Advice on Item 08-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 216th General Assembly (2004) to disapprove the overture.

Rationale

Item 08-05 proposes a reorganized Chapter II of the Form of Government. The ACC believes that the changes requested results in a material alteration of the chapter. The passage in question is a clear explication of our denomination in the context of the apostolic, catholic, confessional faith, and the particularity of our reformed expression of that faith.

The concept “essential tenets” is not included in the section of the *Constitution* the overture seeks to change. Importing such a concept into Chapter II reduces the clarity of that chapter without adding clarity to the ordination question that refers to the “essential tenets” in an entirely different section of the *Constitution* (G-14.0207c). The proposed conflation of these paragraphs along with the removal of the current clarifying paragraph titles does materially alter its content. The expressed goal of the overture would, therefore, not be accomplished.

Over many years, the church has chosen not to approve a discrete list of “essential tenets,” or to take a subscriptionist approach to the ordination questions. The overture’s rationale characterizes this as a “failure to respond adequately.” This consistent response of the church to such overtures is not inadequate and does not indicate an unwillingness or inability to express faith, but rather is an unwillingness to minimize the rich content of the extraordinary collection of documents in *The Book of Confessions* with such an inadequate list.

It is precisely in *The Book of Confessions* that the tenets of the Christian faith and the Reformed tradition are expressed in meaningful language in documents written and received by the church through many centuries. The prefatory material to *The Book of Confessions* explains:

... Although some other wording may better express the intent, the phrase “essential tenets” is intended to protect freedom with the limits of general commitment to the confessions. ... Moreover, while Chapter II of the Form of Government lists a number of general theological affirmations to summarize the broad general character of Presbyterian faith and life, it too prescribes no specific understanding of any of these affirmations to test the acceptability of people for ordained office in the church. (Confessional Nature of the Church Report, pp. xxv–xxvi)

Within the church’s polity, presbyteries have the power and responsibility to interpret the confessions of the church and the standards they express. In conversation with those who seek to hold office within their bounds, presbyteries by examination determine a candidate’s or minister’s adequate adherence to those confessional standards. In the case of elders and deacons, this power is exercised by the session. The proposed amendment would appear to preclude presbyteries and sessions from adopting essential tenets different from or more stringent than those proposed here.

The primary effect of this overture is to add a specific interpretation of G-14.0207c by amending G-2.0300–.0500. Such an approach disregards the integrity of the *Constitution* itself. The results of such amendments, if approved, would be far-reaching and disturbing.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-05

Comment on Item 08-05—From the Office of the General Assembly.

Chapter II of the *Book of Order* came to our *Constitution* by way of the Plan for Reunion. It represents an attempt to describe the theology that united the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyte-

rian Church in the United States of America and provided a concise summary of our historic and current theological understandings. The reunion committee surely knew of the church's destructive history with subscription.

Our predecessor denominations experimented with requiring subscription to a particular list of tenets, which one group of commissioners deemed essential. After painful and divisive experiences with subscription, historically Presbyterians have recognized it diminished the church's ability to live out its Great Ends (currently found at G-1.0200). Each time Presbyterians have entrusted sessions and presbyteries to determine whether particular candidates for ordained office expressed orthodox reformed faith.

Today, the *Book of Order* makes this responsibility clear in the ordination vows (G-14.0207c, G-14.0405b[4]) and imposes the duty to examine the faith behind those vows on the ordaining body. The *Book of Order* provides no simple checklist, but rather requires those ordaining bodies to examine each candidate and each circumstance for adherence to the theology of our confessions. It represents our modern version of this historic Presbyterian compromise.

GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-05

Comment on Item 08-05—From the General Assembly Council.

We advise that the overture be answered with the following statement:

The 216th General Assembly (2004) affirms the right and responsibility of presbyteries to determine whether candidates and ministers “sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church,” together with all other matters expressed in ordination and installation vows.

Ordination vows and essential tenets have a long and complex history in the Presbyterian church. The church has worked through the issue of “essential tenets” many times before, so attention to that history is essential.

From the beginning, the church has lived in the space between two tendencies. One stressed the more “objective” aspects of Christian faith such as theological precision, the distinct character of the ministry, and ordered church government. The other placed more emphasis on spontaneity, vital experience, and adaptability. In 1729, division was averted by recognizing the concerns of both groups in the “Adopting Act.” The Adopting Act required:

1. That all ministers and candidates accept the Westminster Confession, together with the Larger and Shorter catechisms . . .
2. . . . but not categorically.
3. That all ministers and candidates must declare “agreement in and approbation of” the confessional standards “as being in all the essential and necessary articles, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine.”
4. That any minister who did not accept any particular part of the Confession or catechisms should state his scruple concerning that part, and the presbytery should then decide whether or not the scruple involved “essential and necessary articles of faith.”

The Adopting Act regularized confessional standards, but it did not require adherence to every confessional articulation. “Essential and necessary articles” were not identified. The Adopting Act was refined in 1758 at the repair of the Old Side/New Side schism:

1. With respect to any action deemed essential and necessary by the church, “every member shall actively concur . . . or passively submit . . . or peaceably withdraw.”
2. It became a censurable offense irresponsibly to accuse other ministers.
3. Presbyteries were to examine candidates on “religious experience” as well as doctrine.
4. Five questions were to be asked at ordinations and installations, including, “Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church as contained in the system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures?” The “system of doctrine” was interpreted in the spirit of “essential and necessary.”

Item 08-06

On Amending W-2.4006 and W-2.4011 Concerning Who May Participate—From the Presbytery of Central Washington.

The Presbytery of Central Washington overtures the 216th General Assembly (2004) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the Directory for Worship to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall the first paragraph of W-2.4006 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Around the Table of the Lord, God’s people are in communion with Christ and with all who belong to Christ. Reconciliation with Christ compels reconciliation with one another. ~~All the baptized faithful~~ *who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior* are to be welcomed to the Table, and none shall be excluded because of race, sex, age, economic status, social class, handicapping condition, difference of culture or language, or any barrier created by human injustice. Coming to the Lord’s Table the faithful are actively to seek reconciliation in every instance of conflict or division between them and their neighbors. Each time they gather at the Table the believing community”

2. Shall W-2.4011 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. The invitation to the Lord’s Supper is extended to all who ~~have been baptized~~ *acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior*, remembering that access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. In preparing to receive Christ in this Sacrament, the believer is to confess sin and brokenness, to seek reconciliation with God and neighbor, and to trust in Jesus Christ for cleansing and renewal. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may come to the Table in order to be assured of God’s love and grace in Christ Jesus.

“b. ~~Baptized~~ *Children who are being nurtured and instructed in the significance of the invitation to the Table and the meaning of their response are invited to receive the Lord’s Supper, recognizing that their understanding of participation will vary according to their maturity. (W-4.2002)”*

Rationale

At our Savior’s command the church of Jesus Christ is to be open and inviting to all who seek after the grace of God.

The Lord’s Supper is one of the central elements of worship where we celebrate the grace of God and our unity as believers, regardless of the historical and denominational lines that have fractured the one catholic holy Christian Church.

In this day and age, the majority of our new members and visitors to our congregations come from many different denominational and spiritual paths as they begin to worship in our congregations and become active in our ministries.

We recognize with the Reformed tradition that the true Church of Jesus Christ is invisible and known only to God.

We recognize that often we have Christians attending our worship services who, for a variety of reasons, have not yet been baptized, but may have a full and vital relationship with Jesus Christ and we understand that current Presbyterian polity forces us to deny participation in the Lord’s Supper to these brothers and sisters.

We should not judge who is fit to participate in the Lord's Supper based on baptism status alone.

Our *Book of Order* should reflect what is the current practice of many churches: to invite all who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior to participate in the Lord's Supper.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-06

Advice on Item 08-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 216th General Assembly (2004) to disapprove Item 08-06.

Rationale

The proponents seek to alter the language of the Directory for Worship so that unbaptized persons may participate in the Lord's Supper. The sentiment that Jesus Christ invites all to his holy supper is well meaning. That we not place ourselves in the place of God to determine who may participate in the feast expresses a proper humility.

In ancient times, non-baptized seekers after Jesus were dismissed from the community before the Lord's Supper was observed. In our own Reformed heritage, the Sunday before the sacrament was celebrated a sermon was mandated that outlined its meaning for the community. Only those who claimed a token symbolizing proper preparation were invited to the Table. Such restrictions no longer constrain our invitation. However, the entire context of the Directory for Worship, both in regard to the Lord's Supper and in all its provisions assumes that it is a directory for the community of faith, for those who believe, for those who have joined themselves to the Christian Church. Baptism is the sign and symbol of this joining.

The proponents seek to substitute an "acknowledgement" for the sacrament of baptism. If such an acknowledgement is anything more than a personal and private "feeling"; what would be the meaning of membership in the community? If acknowledgement requires any public evidence, how would such evidence differ from the public profession of faith that now precedes baptism and membership? If access to the Lord's Table is extended to unbaptized children, what would acknowledgement mean if a knowing awareness (seemingly required for a non-member adult) was not possible for a child? In the current understanding, access to the Table is not based on any conscious action on our part, but rather on our having received the blessing of our Lord through baptism, a sacramental act by which God grants what we cannot gain.

Jesus commissioned the church to go into all the world, teaching and baptizing. The church is a community bound together by its Lord through the sacraments we believe Jesus instituted in his earthly ministry. All are invited. For the sake of defining the community of faith, Presbyterians have determined that those who acknowledge that invitation through accepting Christ as Lord and Savior in membership and children whose parents have presented them for baptism and are seeing to their nurture of the church may share this feast of God for the people of God. An "acknowledgement" left exclusively to the determination of the individual conscience denigrates the church's role as the Body of Christ, often broken but still his body.

If the 216th General Assembly (2004) wishes to consider such an alteration in our traditional standard in this matter, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends a deferral of action on this overture until a current study, led by the Department of Theology and Worship, is completed.

GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-06

Comment on Item 08-06—From the General Assembly Council.

We advise that Item 08-06 be referred to the work on sacramental study currently being conducted by the Office of Theology and Worship, reporting to the 217th General assembly (2006).

Item 08-06 asks that W-2.4006 be amended to remove the requirement of baptism for admission to the Lord's Table. This matter is currently before the assembly as a result of action taken by the 214th General Assembly (2002):

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of its Congregational Ministries Division, recommends that the 214th General Assembly (2002) authorize the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, to conduct a comprehensive study of sacramental theology and practice with special attention to the ways in which the catechuminate relates Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A final report will be made to the 217th General Assembly (2005).

The Sacramental Study Group, created by the action, is studying the Reformed and ecumenical understandings of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as well as their relation. This action explicitly takes up the issues included in Item 08-06 as a result of continuing the work on *Overture 98-33* that called for amending W.24006 and W-2.4011a to open the table to unbaptized persons.

The Office of Theology and Worship has conducted consultations and research that indicate that the underlying issue is the theological and ecclesial relationship between Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The relationship between the two sacraments is so vital to the church's self-understanding that it would be irresponsible to respond to the overture in isolation from a broader and deeper consideration of our church's ecumenical relationships and the centuries-old catholic and evangelical understanding of Baptism, Eucharist, and the relationship between the two. A full and substantive study is required, exploring the sacraments within the Reformed tradition and in ecumenical context so that the church may discern the history, theology, and ecclesial significance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as well as their appropriate relationship.

Item 08-07

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Congregational Ministries Division and on behalf of the Committee on Theological Education, recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approve the new trustees elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological institutions in 2003:

- 1. Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary: George S. Cladis, Jerry M. Hilton, Catherine L. Lowry, Blair R. Monie.**
- 2. Columbia Theological Seminary: George Hauptfuhrer, Elizabeth Soileau.**
- 3. University of Dubuque Theological Seminary: Kimberly M. David.**
- 4. Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary: None.**
- 5. McCormick Theological Seminary: Robert Barnes, Jennifer Blandford, David Howard Crawford, Diane Tessmer Hart, Theodore Hiebert, Dianne Shields.**
- 6. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary: Harold Burlingame, Donald Evans, Joseph Guyaux, Sandra McLaughlin, Susan Vande Kappelle, James Walker.**
- 7. Princeton Theological Seminary: Deena Candler.**
- 8. San Francisco Theological Seminary: Christopher N. Grewe, Frank Jackson, Dale Lindsay Morgan, Gary Pinkston, John J. Reynolds, Stephen J. Rhoades, Wanda L. Sawyers, Audrey Yamagata-Noji.**
- 9. Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary: Richard A. Bigger Jr., Martin Lehfeldt, James C. Pratt, David B. Sanders, Vera Swann, Lawrence Willis.**
- 10. Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education: John T. DeBevoise, Steven P. Eason, Donald L. Griggs, Yun-gil Lee, Lillian James Smith, Lamar Williamson Jr.**

Rationale

A list of the entire board of trustees of each of the ten seminaries as well as biographical information about trustees to be approved will be made available by COTE for review by the appropriate committee during the 216th General Assembly (2004). Similar information will also be made available about those currently serving on the boards of Auburn Theological Seminary and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico that are related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through covenant agreements.

As required by vote of the 209th General Assembly (1997), the following information is offered in regard to racial ethnic, gender, and clergy/lay representation on the various seminary boards:

Ten PCUSA Seminaries	Total on Board	Cauc.	Hisp.	Black	Asian	Male	Fem.	Clergy	Lay	Other Ethnic
Austin	29	27	1	1	0	17	12	9	20	
Columbia	38	33	0	4	1	28	10	11	27	
Dubuque	30	30	0	0	0	21	9	3	27	
Louisville	29	28	0	1	0	16	13	6	23	
McCormick	51	46	2	3	0	32	19	17	34	

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Pittsburgh	36	33	0	3	0	26	10	13	23	
Princeton	37	33	1	2	1	27	10	17	20	
SFTS	42	31	3	5	3	27	15	19	23	
J.C. Smith	26	9	0	17	0	17	9	12	14	
Union-PSCE	27	23	0	3	1	20	7	11	16	
TOTALS	345	293	7	39	6	231	114	118	227	
Covenant Part- ner Schools										
Auburn	16	15	0	1	0	7	9	7	9	
ESPR	31	0	31	0	0	18	13	15	16	
Overall TOTALS	392	308	38	40	6	256	136	140	252	

Item 08-09

The General Assembly Council, upon recommendation of the Congregational Ministries Division, recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) do the following:

- 1. Commend the Trinity Working Group for its labor on behalf of the church.**
- 2. Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship, with participation of the Trinity Working Group, to invite response and comment to the current draft of the theological statement on the Doctrine of the Trinity, and to conduct a series of consultations throughout the church to encourage fresh engagement with the fullness of the Doctrine of the Trinity.**
- 3. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship, with participation of the Trinity Working Group, to prepare a final draft of the theological statement on the Doctrine of the Trinity and submit it to the 217th General Assembly (2006) for action.**

Rationale

This recommendation is in response to the following referral: *2000 Referral: 21.164. Recommendation G.2. That the 212th General Assembly (2000) Direct the General Assembly Council, Through Its Office of Theology and Worship, to Constitute a Task Force (2001–2003) to Study the Doctrine of the Trinity in Presbyterian Theology and Worship with Particular Attention to the Need to Recover the Terms and Images That Refer to the Being of the Persons of the Trinity, as Stated in “Definitions and Guidelines on Inclusive Language” and Report to the ~~213th~~ 215th General Assembly (~~2001~~) (2003)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2000, Part I, pp. 34, 176).*

Item 08-10

The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) encourage every presbytery to create intentional gatherings of Presbyterians of varied theological views to covenant together to discuss the affirmations in the task force's preliminary report, utilizing the resources being developed by the task force; and that sessions be encouraged to do the same.

Rationale

The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity, whose members were selected to reflect the diversity within the church, would like to share with the whole church a process that has enabled us to build community and deepen our faith. The task force is discovering that the appropriation of Christ's peace, unity, and purity in the church can be realized only as fellow Presbyterians engage in a process of studying together, learning together, and working together toward such a reality. In order to invite the whole church to engage in this process, the task force has developed, and will continue to develop, video and written materials that aim to capture both the content and methodology being employed by the task force. Presbyteries and sessions are encouraged to organize study groups, each of which should reflect a broad diversity of theological perspectives, as well as other categories of diversity (as possible), and that each of the groups study (1) the covenant written and adopted by the task force; (2) the two videos produced; and (3) the preliminary report that has resulted from our work so far. As other materials are produced, the study groups are encouraged to utilize them as well.

Item 08-11

On Appropriate Language to Describe the Ministry of All Believers—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

The Presbytery of New Brunswick overtures the 216th General Assembly (2004) to request the General Assembly Council, through its Office of Theology and Worship, to do the following:

- 1. Create a study document that would set forth the Reformed-Presbyterian understanding of the relationship between Baptism and the ministry of all church members both ordained and not ordained. Such a study document, field-tested in a number of congregations and then distributed to sessions and presbyteries, would provide a common language for the various ministry activities of those governing bodies.**
- 2. Suggest the language appropriate for expression of these relationships.**

Rationale

The words we use and misuse when we speak about the ministry of the people of God need attention and clarification. When we speak, we enjoy the possibility and run the risk that our words will teach and edify. Often, our careless or unknowing choice of words teaches what we do not or should not intend.

As examples: to whom do we refer when we speak of ministers? Who do we believe receives a call to ministry? Are there Christian vocations for ministers of Word and Sacrament, elders, and deacons, and something else for everyone other than an ordained person? Does vocation refer only to work carried on within the corporate body of the church?

It has always been the teaching of the Reformed tradition that all Christians are Christ's ministers in the world. By virtue of the Sacrament of Baptism, all baptized persons have a vocation, a call to make Christ's ministry their own. Baptism acknowledges God's claim upon us as well as our commissioning for ministry in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ. In baptism we have been enlisted as Christ's own people to minister in the world. Baptism defines the shape of our lives and all that we do as God's children because it defines who we are. As Christians, our primary identity is found in our belonging to the Triune God, not in what we do. Who we are in Christ Jesus—the new life we have been given in our baptismal vocation—is about who we are and not what we do.

In considering our baptismal vocation, we are claiming the Reformed notion that our identity must flow from the knowledge that we are the beloved children of God. We call this our baptismal vocation because it is in our baptism that God brings us into covenant with Godself. From that moment on, we are the redemptively called people of God. But for what have we been called? As Presbyterians, we say we have been redeemed for service in the world; such service is not limited to the ordained but is the property and privilege of all of us who have been baptized into the saving love of the Triune Lord. Therefore, the phrase “a ministering Christian” is as redundant as speaking of a “running jogger.”

Vocation—our God-given calling—is not measured by the particular occupation we choose or by the so-called “productive years” of our lives. Our baptismal vocation encompasses our whole lives for our whole lives.

The New Testament teaches us that gifts are given to each for the common good. Each of us is an important part of God's mission in the world regardless of whether we are an ordained minister or a nonordained minister. Every Christian is a minister by virtue of his or her baptism into Christ Jesus. A greater awareness of our baptismal vocation of being Christ's ministers is deeply needed within our church. We need to again contemplate what it means to find our identity in our belonging—in body and soul, in life and in death—to the God revealed in Jesus Christ made known by the Holy Spirit. This would be greatly assisted by a biblically informed and theologically grounded understanding of our baptismal vocation as the basis of our common ministry as Christians. Such a study document would be a gift to the teaching, preaching, missional shaping of the church.

[Note: Text is a replacement. This item has been moved from Item 05-12 to Item 08-12. Please discard Item 05-12 as received in the first mailing and insert this current copy as Item 08-12.]

Item 08-12

On Examining the Conscience of Candidates—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.

The Presbytery of Hudson River respectfully overtures the 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the following guidance for the church:

“That the General Assembly, out of concern for the peace, unity, purity, and progress of the church, and for the integrity of Christian conscience of its ministers, elders, and deacons does the following:

“1. Affirms the primary role of *The Book of Confessions* as guide to interpreting Scripture in the examination of candidates for ordination as ministers, elders, and deacons, and their reception or transfer into new installed calls, congregations, or appointments to mission service.

“2. Affirms the freedom of Christian conscience of candidates under God in interpreting articles of faith contained in those confessions, both because the confessions point to the need to interpret Scripture in accordance with ‘saving faith,’ and because the church as a whole has resisted legalism and encourages ever-reforming creativity ‘when it bears a present witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ’ (*The Book of Confessions*, 9.01).

“3. Recalls that the words ‘essential and necessary’ articles or tenets were used in the Presbyterian church’s 1729 Adopting Act to point to basic elements of Christian faith found in the Westminster Confession, thus allowing candidates to ‘declare scruples’ on nonessential elements in those standards, rather than compel ‘strict subscription’ or absolute conformity to any document, system, or doctrinal words secondary to Scripture.

“4. Affirms the responsibility of presbyteries to safeguard the process of spiritual discernment in search processes, the collegial ethos of mutual respect among presbyters, and the healthy range of congregational vocations, by not elevating the use of particular lists of ‘essentials’ or ‘fundamentals’ over our confessions or Scripture itself.

“5. Encourages committees on preparation for ministry and committees on ministry to help candidates, congregations, and presbyteries resist any ‘politicization’ of the call process that would enforce checklists of doctrinal particulars, while also ensuring a wholeness of Trinitarian faith and understanding of Presbyterian and Reformed tradition in each individual candidate.”

Rationale

“The whole counsel of God” is contained in the Bible, according to the Westminster Confession (*The Book of Confessions*, 6.006); other confessions and amendments to Westminster stress more the continuing witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart of each believer. In 1729, when the first North American Presbyterian church was formed, it affirmed the right of candidates to declare “scruples” on matters that were to others crucial, such as the fate of unbaptized children. Such disputed matters were deemed “nonessential articles” in “the system of doctrine” that Westminster was purported to contain. After the divisive experience of the church with lists of “fundamentals” in the 1920s, the church chose to develop a *Book of Confessions* rather than any inevitably limited list of essentials. In a parallel way, 20th century biblical theology lifted up the great themes of Scripture and showed the limits of using “proof texts” in exegesis.

In times of controversy, it may be tempting to simplify the identity of the church on a regional or other basis. The great Reformed themes of “God alone, Scripture alone, Christ alone, grace alone, and faith alone” invite us to unity and mutual encouragement. Our 20th century confessions point us to essential acts of love and justice in the

world. This overture encourages us to affirm the wisdom of the whole denomination and the responsibility of presbyteries to care for individual candidates and congregations in light of the truth of the whole Gospel.

GAC COMMENT ON ITEM 08-12

Comment on Item 08-12—From the General Assembly Council.

We advise that the overture be answered with the following statement:

The 216th General Assembly (2004) affirms the right and responsibility of presbyteries to determine whether candidates and ministers “sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church,” together with all other matters expressed in ordination and installation vows.

Ordination vows and essential tenets have a long and complex history in the Presbyterian church. The church has worked through the issue of “essential tenets” many times before, so attention to that history is essential.

From the beginning, the church has lived in the space between two tendencies. One stressed the more “objective” aspects of Christian faith such as theological precision, the distinct character of the ministry, and ordered church government. The other placed more emphasis on spontaneity, vital experience, and adaptability. In 1729, division was averted by recognizing the concerns of both groups in the “Adopting Act.” The Adopting Act required:

1. That all ministers and candidates accept the Westminster Confession, together with the Larger and Shorter catechisms ...
2. . . . but not categorically.
3. That all ministers and candidates must declare “agreement in and approbation of” the confessional standards “as being in all the essential and necessary articles, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine.”
4. That any minister who did not accept any particular part of the Confession or catechisms should state his scruple concerning that part, and the presbytery should then decide whether or not the scruple involved “essential and necessary articles of faith.”

The Adopting Act regularized confessional standards, but it did not require adherence to every confessional articulation. “Essential and necessary articles” were not identified. The Adopting Act was refined in 1758 at the repair of the Old Side/New Side schism:

1. With respect to any action deemed essential and necessary by the church, “every member shall actively concur . . . or passively submit . . . or peaceably withdraw.”
2. It became a censurable offense irresponsibly to accuse other ministers.
3. Presbyteries were to examine candidates on “religious experience” as well as doctrine.
4. Five questions were to be asked at ordinations and installations, including, “Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church as contained in the system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures?” The “system of doctrine” was interpreted in the spirit of “essential and necessary.”

The 1910 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America declared that the Adopting Act of 1729 called upon judicatories to determine which articles of faith are “essential and necessary.” The assembly then identified five doctrines as “essential” (although the assembly added, “others are equally so.”) (1) inerrancy of Scripture, (2) virgin birth, (3) sacrificial atonement, (4) bodily resurrection, (5) Christ’s miracles.

Although the 1910 deliverance was challenged repeatedly, it was not repealed. Following the 1923 General Assembly, and in reaction against the 1910/1916/1923 doctrinal deliverance, more than 1,200 ministers signed the “Auburn Affirmation” declaring that the five-point deliverance

attempts to commit our church to certain theories concerning the Inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We all hold most earnestly to these great facts

and doctrines. . . . Some of us regard the particular themes contained in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1923 as satisfactory explanations of these facts and doctrines. But we are united in believing that these are not the only themes allowed by the Scriptures and our standards as explanations of these facts and doctrines of our religion, and that all who hold to these facts and doctrines, whatever theories they may employ to explain them, are worthy of our confidence and fellowship.

The issue was set: narrowly defined confessional subscription or broadly defined confessional subscription. The question was not *whether* confessional subscription was required, but the specific nature of that confessional subscription.

The matter was referred to a special commission that reported in 1926 and 1927. The upshot of the special commission's report, adopted by the 1927 General Assembly, was that:

1. The *General Assembly* does not have the constitutional power to give binding definition to the church's essential faith. By denying that the assembly has the right to define authoritatively the "essentials" of the church's faith, the commission eliminated the five points as a source of controversy.

2. While a measure of tolerance was embedded in the church, it was made clear that the church, and not the individual, must decide the limits of tolerated diversity, "either *generally*, by amendment to the constitution, or *particularly*, by Presbyterian authority."

The church has decided limits *generally*, by amending the constitution to create *The Book of Confessions*, and *particularly*, by the continuing examination for ordination of candidates and for reception into membership of ministers. To this end, it must be acknowledged that in ordination the presbytery has historically demonstrated its power and responsibility in determining confirmation with the church's theology.

Item 08-Info

A. *Committee on Theological Education*

1. *Assigned Responsibilities*

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has responsibility for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for theological education from the perspective of the whole church. The committee seeks to identify, develop, and propose strategies for a systemic approach to theological education within the denomination. The committee serves as an advocate for theological education, seeking to support the seminaries and to strengthen them for their mission to the whole church. The Committee on Theological Education can be seen as a two-way communication link between the denomination and its graduate theological institutions. Voting members of the committee include thirteen people elected to represent the church at large and a representative from each of the ten seminaries related directly to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Corresponding members of COTE, who serve with voice but no vote, include: representatives from Auburn Theological Seminary and from the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico (both institutions related to the General Assembly through covenant agreements negotiated every five years), a representative of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, and representatives of two non-Presbyterian seminaries.

2. *Accomplishments*

a. *Interschool and Seminary/Church Cooperation*

In cooperation with the Interschool and Mission Cooperation Subcommittee of COTE, the PC(USA) seminaries continue to seek creative ways to work more closely together and in collaboration with other entities of the denomination. Currently the seminaries are cooperating on an interschool project that is designed to raise awareness of the ministry as a vocation among college and university students. Through COTE, the seminaries contributed moneys to help launch the Presbyterian Pastoral Leadership Search Effort (PLSE) in 2003. The seminaries are also involved in a variety of projects in cooperation with various offices representing all three divisions of the General Assembly Council, the Office of General Assembly, and the Board of Pensions.

A task group with representation from the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Ordination, Churchwide Personnel Services, and COTE made progress in coordination of data related to candidates/inquirers and addressed other issues of mutual concern. Recommendations made by the task group are being implemented by the various entities and by a ministry staff team that was established in 2003. Continuing collaboration of the three entities is expected.

The Office of the General Assembly, San Francisco Theological Seminary, and COTE continue to sponsor a class for seminarians entitled "Presbyterianism: Principles and Practices" during General Assembly each year. Each January, COTE also sponsors, in cooperation with Louisville Theological Seminary and the General Assembly Council, a January-term course for seminarians entitled "Leaders for a Connectional Church: Congregations and the General Assembly." Letters sent by the office of theological education have encouraged presbytery committees on preparation for ministry to urge candidates under their care to take advantage of these opportunities to learn firsthand about the program and polity of our denomination.

Some of the groups of individuals representing the various schools that have come together for mutual planning and information sharing during this academic year include the institutions' presidents, deans of student affairs, financial aid officers, continuing education staff and faculty, development officers, placement officers, communication directors, admission officers, field education directors, ethics and social witness faculty, urban ministry professors, and academic deans. There was also a consultation on theological education and racism sponsored by the PC(USA) office of racial ethnic ministries.

b. *Funding for Seminaries Related to the PC(USA)*

Implementation and interpretation of the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan), which is the sole source of denomination-wide support for the ten PC(USA) seminaries and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, continues to be an important task for COTE and the office of theological education. In 2002, approximately 23 percent of PC(USA) congregations made voluntary contributions to the Theological Education Fund (TEF). As a re-

sult, \$2,503,435 in TEF moneys were distributed to eligible schools in 2003 according to a formula developed and monitored by the COTE Institutional Review Subcommittee on which only members-at-large sit.

“For Generations to Come: Seminaries and Churches Together” continues to be the theme for interpretation of the seminaries on behalf of the Theological Education Fund. The Theological Education Funding Network is made up of more than 160 enthusiastic representatives from presbyteries and synods. Participation at network training conferences continues to grow. Three TEF area facilitators and sixteen regional representatives continue to work on a contract basis to make possible improved regional coordination for the TEF Funding Network. Pastors, clerks of sessions, and designated contact persons in PC(USA) congregations received interpretive materials urging support of the Theological Education Fund.

In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, active promotion of the Theological Schools Endowment Fund has continued. The Theological Schools Endowment Fund provides opportunity for individuals to contribute moneys for benefit of our Presbyterian seminaries. It differs from the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan) that provides a way for congregations to contribute moneys to be divided among all Presbyterian seminaries on an equitable basis.

c. Charter Changes in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions

One of the governance functions assigned to COTE by the Report of the Special Committee on Theological Institutions approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) is the reporting of charter changes by the individual schools to the General Assembly. Only one seminary reported changes in the charters or other constitutional documents during 2003. The Committee on Theological Education will have the full text of the new charters available for the assembly committee to which this report will be referred.

In October of 2003, the Board of Trustees of San Francisco Theological Seminary voted to change the name of the Advancement Committee to Seminary and Church Relations Committee and the bylaws were amended to reflect that change. The reason for the change was because the title for the vice president for Advancement had been changed to vice president of Seminary and Church Relations because the seminary felt it better reflected the work of the office.

d. Reports from Individual Institutions

The Committee on Theological Education brings to the assembly a narrative report from each of the ten seminaries related to the PC(USA), Auburn Theological Seminary, the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, and the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation.

(1) Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary’s 2003–2004 academic year—the first full year under the leadership of President Theodore J. Wardlaw—saw significant events in the life of the institution. Dr. Michael Jinkins was inaugurated as professor of pastoral theology and elected academic dean. Austin Seminary’s College of Pastoral Leaders (funded by a grant from Lilly Foundation, Inc.), under the direction of Principal Janet Maykus and Director of Professional Development Nancy Chester McCranie, accepted its first class of cohort groups. The seminary welcomed two faculty members: Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care Allan Hugh Cole Jr. and Zbinden Professor of Pastoral Ministry Louis H. Zbinden Jr.; two additional faculty searches were conducted. The year also saw the acquisition of a notable journal, *Horizons in Biblical Theology*.

(2) Columbia Theological Seminary

Columbia began its 176th year with the largest incoming class in twenty years. The seminary has launched a dual-degree program through which students may earn the M. Div. degree from Columbia and the M.S. in Urban Policy Studies from Georgia State University, combining studies in theology and public policy. Thanks to a Lilly grant, we have a collaborative, peer group, action-learning project designed to help pastors sustain excellence in ministry. Recent appointments to the faculty and administration include Stephen A. Hayner, Peachtree Associate

Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth; Maggi Henderson, dean of students and vice president of student services; Harvey Newman, director of the Faith and the City program to develop public leadership; William P. Brown, professor of Old Testament; and David L. Bartlett, professor of New Testament.

(3) *University of Dubuque Theological Seminary*

The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary is committed to preparing women and men for faithful and effective pastoral and lay ministry. In pursuit of this mission the seminary has formed UDTSlearning.net, an online education program for commissioned lay pastors (CLPs). Almost 400 students representing more than sixty presbyteries across the nation have taken courses through this program. At least ten new students enter the program each month. Currently all eight courses required by the *Book of Order* for CLPs are offered online. In addition, UDTSlearning.net is expanding its offering of upper-level courses for continuing education of those serving as CLPs. For information visit UDTSlearning.net.

(4) *Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

Dr. Milton J Coalter served as acting president from December 2002–July 2003. Dr. John W. Kuykendall became interim president in August 2003. In April 2003, the presidential search committee commissioned a study on “How is Louisville Seminary Perceived?” With approximately 1,400 responses, this study provided one basis for a position description for the new president. The current timetable provides for the calling of a new president by the summer of 2004. We welcomed Kerry Rice as the interim director of admissions, Lisa Cromer as the director of alumni/ae relations, James Hyde as the interim director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, and Garnett Foster graciously agreed to serve as interim director of Field Education. During 2002–2003, our faculty published eleven books.

(5) *McCormick Theological Seminary*

McCormick Theological Seminary began this academic year with a new curriculum within a semester system. Previously McCormick had been on the quarter system. The shift to semesters is part of a curricular change in which the seminary seeks to highlight its most salient features: Reformed, ecumenical, urban, and cross-cultural. McCormick continues to settle into its new building set next to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, with whom we enjoy an increasingly closer collaboration. During the fall semester, President Cynthia Campbell was on a sabbatical leave to work on a project on how McCormick can best engage with the myriad of interfaith issues confronting theological education today. She returned in January 2004.

(6) *Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary welcomed its largest incoming class in more than two decades, with 25 percent of the class less than twenty-five years of age. The Summer Youth Institute continues to encourage high school youth to consider ministry as a vocation. Past participants have enrolled in several PC(USA) seminaries. The new residence hall has met with enthusiasm on campus with student floors filled to capacity and continuing education participants enjoying the guest rooms. The seminary and Shadyside Presbyterian Church have formed an innovative pastor/professor partnership, where the Reverend Dr. M. Craig Barnes, Meneilly Professor of Leadership and Ministry at the seminary, has also become pastor at the Shadyside Presbyterian Church. The seminary will soon complete an intensive planning process that will guide future capital enhancements and program emphasis.

(7) *Princeton Theological Seminary*

Princeton Theological Seminary welcomed Gordon S. Mikoski to its faculty as instructor in Christian Education. The first Joe R. Engle Preaching Institute, designed to nurture and strengthen the craft of those who preach in a variety of contexts, was held in June, with forty-one Engle Fellows from the seminary’s M.Div. classes of 1996 and 1997 participating. The new parking facility was dedicated in May. Also in May, President Thomas W. Gillespie announced his retirement in June of 2004, and the board of trustees appointed a search committee to name his successor.

(8) *San Francisco Theological Seminary*

San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS), in the second year under the leadership of Philip W. Butin, began work to strengthen ties between the seminary and local churches. These relationships are providing an important focus for a new strategic planning process. Using the mission statement as its foundation, the strategic plan emphasizes “wholeness,” which has led to a new positioning statement for SFTS: “Whole leaders for the whole Church.” Jana L. Childers, was installed as dean and vice president for Academic Affairs in early September. The M.Div. and MATS enrollment continues to be strong. On the SFTS Southern California campus, numerous new students are drawn to the nonresidential, congregationally based, multiethnic, and multilingual program.

(9) *Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary*

Johnson C. Smith reached another milestone with fifty-four seminarians enrolled for the 2003–2004 academic year. The student population is more diverse than ever with eleven Brazilians, seven Caucasians, five Africans, and the majority comprised of African Americans. Also, representation is increasing among female and younger aged seminarians. Most students are involved in the practice of ministry while pursuing degrees. For example, three students are living in the East Lake Community working with the Faith in the City Project, mentoring community youth. The number one challenge facing the seminary is fundraising. The blessing of a larger student enrollment has come at a time when our budget is impacted by increases in student fees and the downturn in the economy.

(10) *Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education*

Enrollment at Union-PSCE in 2003–2004 climbed to 397 students, the highest combined total for Union and PSCE in several decades. The strength of the seminary’s extension program in Charlotte, N.C., is one reason for the growth, but enrollment increased on the Richmond campus also. In Charlotte, sixty students are working toward a master of divinity or master of arts in Christian education degree. New faculty members have been added at both campuses to begin in Fall 2004. Advanced video conferencing technology has strengthened communication between the two campuses; it will soon play a greater role in teaching and instruction.

(11) *Auburn Theological Seminary*

Auburn Theological Seminary, which was founded in 1818 to provide hardy Presbyterian ministers for the frontier, launched a major new program this year in that same frontier spirit. The New York Sabbatical Institute, organized jointly with New York Theological Seminary and Union Seminary in New York and supported by a grant of \$824,630 from Lilly Endowment, Inc., involves sixty pastors meeting over a two-year period. The participants were selected because they show high promise and because they fall into categories deemed to be “at risk”: young pastors, women, solo pastors, urban ministers, and those who lead churches in transition. They will work with faculty facilitators, experienced “Legacy Pastors,” and professional coaches to become better grounded for ministry that both lasts a lifetime and is responsive to changing contexts.

(12) *Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico*

The Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico academic year represents once again an occasion to serve God and his Kingdom through theological education. During this year, we have had the visit of important worldwide recognized theologians, such as, Dr. Juan J. Tamayo, from Spain, and Joseph Comblin from Brazil. In August of 2003, we initiated the doctor of ministry program. We are organizing the anniversary celebration number eighty-five of the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico.

(13) *Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation*

The Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Omaha, which closed at the request of the General Assembly in 1943, continues as the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation (OPSF) in 2004. The purpose is similar to that

of the former teaching seminary, though OPSF has no resident faculty, student body, or campus. The Foundation today provides scholarships for seminary students, sponsors continuing education programs for ordained ministers, and conducts an annual Pastor's School at Hastings College. In 2002, the foundation contributed the following amounts to help underwrite leadership development programs for the PC(USA): continuing education programs sponsored by PC(USA) entities and the Foundation, \$121,691; aid to students attending PC(USA) seminaries, \$91,750; grants to seminaries and other church entities, \$2,000; for a total of \$215,441.

B. Office of Theology and Worship: A Report to the Church

How can the church fulfill its calling to worship God, think responsibly about its faith, and be obedient to God in all areas of life? As a ministry to the whole church, conducted within the Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council, the Office of Theology and Worship provides services and resources that help congregations strive for integrity in theology, worship, and mission.

Pastors are among the church's most precious and critical resources. The well-being of pastors directly affects the welfare of the entire church. It is vitally important that pastors maintain personal reservoirs to supply the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love that their vocation requires. The Office of Theology and Worship commits significant resources to help pastors and other church leaders claim the church's calling to think, pray, and live the gospel in contemporary North American culture.

The Office of Theology and Worship's service to pastors has been supported generously by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. More than \$4.2 million in grants enables Theology and Worship to provide significant pastoral leadership programs that would not have been possible within the General Assembly Council budget. The "Pastor Theologian Program" and "Excellence From the Start," coupled with the "Company of Pastors" have afforded hundreds of pastors with the opportunity to know and strengthen the heart of their vocation.

Two new grants from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. provide the Office of Theology and Worship with enhanced possibilities for service. "Re-Forming Ministry" and the "Company of New Pastors" are significant initiatives that promise to have long-term effect on the shape of ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1. The Shape of Ministry

Good ministry develops from the complex interaction of ecclesial discernment, appropriate practices, spiritual wholeness, professional priorities, and personal integrity. Underlying all of these, however, is the capacity to explore the foundations of Christian faith so that the congregation can be nurtured in mature belief, confident trust, and faithful living. Apart from a deeply theological vocation, pastoral practices can become matters of ministerial technique or institutional marketing. The theological vocation of pastors is not a narrow concern for academic abstraction, for it encompasses a range of spiritual, intellectual, and communal practices that generate the development of congregational life shaped by the gospel.

Contemporary pastors are beset by a bewildering range of congregational and denominational expectations. Demands on pastors' time and energy include regular visitation and successful stewardship programs, membership growth and an efficient committee structure, presbytery service and good sermons, community outreach and an attractive program for children and youth. The list is endless.

The difficulty goes deeper, however. Beneath every demand on time and energy lies the reality that the vocational core of ministry is no longer discernible. Because the church does not have a cohesive understanding of ministry that can be shared by pastors in congregational settings, pastors are presented with an unstable bundle of disparate images, each depicting the essence of ministry: preacher . . . teacher . . . community builder . . . programmer . . . marketer . . . therapist . . . change agent . . . caregiver . . . manager . . . entrepreneur . . . the list goes on! These images are more than another collection of tasks, however. They are comprehensive models of ministry that offer competing options without a compelling rationale for choice.

Excellence in pastoral ministry is grounded in the central theological vocation of all ministry—serious, sustained attention to the core of Christian faith. The theological vocation of pastors should not be confused with academic vocation. Rather, the church’s ministry is constituted by the calling to know, understand, and set forth the gospel through Word and Sacrament. Good ministry involves many personal qualities and organizational activities for which there are generally accepted criteria. Unless these qualities and activities are shaped by the gospel, however, they are not characteristics of good *ministry*.

Serious, sustained attention to the core of Christian faith is the *sine qua non* of good ministry. Ministry’s indispensable focus on the core of Christian faith is sustained by discrete marks of pastoral excellence.

- **Discernment:** Ministers are called to disciplined apprehension of the gospel, the culture, and the church. Such apprehension depends upon continuous probing of Scripture and tradition, ongoing analysis of contemporary culture, and persistent analysis of the wider church and the actual congregation.
- **Practices:** Ministers engage in a broad range of Christian practices and a narrower range of specifically pastoral practices. These practices are diverse, ranging through reading, care for the body, hospitality, visiting the sick, and more. Christian practices become specifically pastoral practices as they are focused by the calling to discernment. Christian practices embody the gospel. Thus, discernment shapes and is shaped by intentional Christian ministerial practices.
- **Spiritual Wholeness:** Pastoral ministry is “a hard way to make a living.” Good ministers are aware of their need to receive grace, love, and communion as well as give it. Spiritual disciplines—grounded in Scripture and prayer—are essential elements that nourish pastors’ faith, engender pastors’ hope, and prompt pastors’ love.
- **Priorities:** It is a managerial truism that successful workers are able to prioritize. The priorities of good ministry, however, are shaped less by organizational imperatives than by the wisdom of pastoral discernment and the nurture of pastoral practices. They are neither reactive to organizational pressures nor driven by institutional imperatives. Rather, they are ordered by regular theological discernment and recurring Christian-pastoral practices.
- **Personal Integrity:** Serious, sustained attention to the foundations of Christian faith makes possible a quality of ecclesial discernment that is grounded in Christian and pastoral practices, nourished by spiritual disciplines, and shaped by appropriate priorities. All of this helps to constitute an “order of life” that is marked by fidelity to the One who calls and to the ones who are called.

Two new Lilly-funded leadership initiatives are designed to address the problem of ministry’s diffusion, and to focus on possibilities for “good ministry.”

2. *Company of New Pastors*

Company of New Pastors is a vocational formation program designed to foster excellence in new pastors by deepening and sustaining the cultivation of their theological vocation. It invites and integrates candidates and newly ordained pastors into Theology and Worship’s churchwide “Company of Pastors.” Focusing on the critical period of vocational formation beginning in seminary and continuing into the first years of ministry, Company of New Pastors promotes faithfulness, fruitfulness, and fulfillment in ministry by establishing and nurturing a sustained habitus of theological exploration and spiritual formation. This habitus richly funds the energy and wisdom necessary for sound, creative engagement with pastoral ministry’s multifarious challenges, expectations, and opportunities.

Company of New Pastors engages participants in specific disciplines that shape and nurture good ministry. Selected seminary faculty leaders from each of the PC(USA) seminaries recruit from each seminary class a cohort of six to twelve student participants. Participants adopt a covenant of daily prayer and study, and commit themselves to participate regularly in vocational formation peer groups, in which they encourage and admonish one

another in their deepening engagement with their common calling. In order to be eligible for inclusion, students must be inquirers or candidates in the PC(USA) ordination process.

Faculty leaders convene their company monthly to engage in common prayer and theological study of their ordination vows. Upon graduation, participants are configured into regional groups, which are convened and led by veteran pastors, who themselves embody vocational excellence in ministry that is grounded in a sound pastoral habitus. These pastor-groups meet for four-day sessions at least once a year.

Both seminarian and pastor gatherings are patterned after the well-honed model of Theology and Worship's "Pastor-Theologian Program" consultations, in which pastors meet for sustained study of common texts, within the framework of shared engagement in the daily offices of morning, noon, and evening prayer. Meetings are usually accompanied by extended table fellowship. Thus, these gatherings intentionally embody the ancient Christian wisdom that growth in ministry is fruitfully nurtured within the nexus of a community gathered around teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

Between gatherings, participants' daily disciplines follow the covenant of the Company of Pastors, which includes Scripture reading following the ecumenical daily lectionary, prayer, and immersion in the confessional heritage of the Reformed tradition. Members of the company also commit to read assigned books together, and to gather with peers for mutual admonition and encouragement in their common calling.

The Company of New Pastors extends and deepens "Excellence From the Start," Theology and Worship's pilot program focusing on transition into ministry. Excellence From the Start has provided significant benefits to approximately eighty graduates from the classes of 2001 and 2002 at five seminaries. Company of New Pastors will eventually serve students and graduates from all PC(USA) seminaries, plus Fuller Theological Seminary. Company of New Pastors receives its major funding from the Lilly Endowment through 2006, with funding gradually shifting to various church agencies, to the end that Company of New Pastors becomes woven into the ongoing fabric of the church's life and culture.

The Company of New Pastors affords candidates for ministry and new pastors a concrete path to nurture this core vocational vitality. Regular prayer and theological study keep heart and mind vitally engaged with the faith; doing this in company with peers assures that pastors will encourage one another to disciplined maintenance and expansion of these practices.

3. *Re-Forming Ministry*

Re-Forming Ministry grows out of the Office of Theology and Worship's experience in shaping programs designed to encourage and sustain pastoral excellence. We have learned that although initiatives designed exclusively, or even primarily, for pastors are important and valuable, they do not address the *pastoral-ecclesial system* that is central to sustaining or inhibiting pastoral excellence. Re-Forming Ministry addresses the pastoral-ecclesial system—a complex culture characterized by the interaction of three historic loci of ministry: pastors and their congregations, theological faculty and their schools, and church officials and their judicatories.

The pastoral-ecclesial system has the capacity to sustain or to inhibit foundational pastoral practices, and thus the capacity to encourage or discourage faithful, vital congregational life. Pastors, theological faculty, and church officials share a responsibility for the teaching ministry of the church. Yet the three ministerial offices have become disconnected; they do not exercise a *shared* teaching office in and for the church, and their restricted exercises of the teaching office suffer from a lack of full ecclesial engagement.

Pastors are at the center of congregations. Congregations are the basic and fundamental form of religious institutions. Religious institutions are significant forces for nurturing societal wholeness. These three integrated convictions point to the reality that pastoral excellence cannot be sustained apart from a cohesive approach to the pastoral-ecclesial system. We are convinced that such an approach must seek to recover the broad theological vocation of pastors within a sustaining ecclesial culture of pastor/congregation, theological professor/seminary, and church official/judicatory. A cohesive, theological approach to the pastoral-ecclesial system will encourage and sustain pastoral excellence, congregational excellence, educational excellence, and church institutional excellence.

As ministers claim and deepen their vocation to “think the faith,” they are better able to discern the shape of distinctly Christian pastoral and congregational life in the midst of disparate cultural and ecclesial claims. Pastoral discernment that encourages congregational discernment is necessary for the church’s renewal in the gospel. By underscoring the pastoral-ecclesial system, we recognize that pastoral ministry is either enhanced or inhibited by its relationship to other significant loci of ministry.

The initiative is called “Re-Forming Ministry: Recovering the Shared Teaching Office of the Church” in order to indicate our understanding of ministry’s common, comprehensive theological task that is done in, with, and on behalf of the church. Too often, theology is understood as an academic task that is confined to theological schools with disastrous results for both the church and the academy. The theological task—serious, sustained attention to the core of Christian faith and life—is the vocation of the *whole* church. Within the whole church, however, three ministerial offices are called to exercise a *shared* teaching office. Re-Forming Ministry entails distinct yet related means of drawing together selected pastors, professors, and church officials in order to accomplish crucial goals:

- *Forge new models of collegial relationships among the three ministerial loci in the pastoral-ecclesial system.* Relationships are not currently characterized by mutual responsibility and accountability. Pastors defer to professors’ theological wisdom and resent church officials’ regulatory procedures. Professors overlook the theological significance of pastoral proclamation and disparage the ecclesial substance of church officials’ ministries. Church officials imagine that professors’ theological work is irrelevant and that pastors’ primary obligation is ordered congregational success. Re-Forming Ministry will forge new patterns of relationship in which pastors, professors, and church officials build trust and engage each other as peers in common service to the whole church.
- *Engage pastors, professors, and church officials in the shared practice of serious, sustained attention to the faith.* Re-Forming Ministry will engage participants in new patterns of serious, sustained, common theological work. The *church’s* theological work will be altered as each locus of ministry contributes its particular theological wisdom in a shared exploration of core matters of Christian faith and life. Pastors, theological faculty, and church officials approach matters from different ecclesial locations, but their perspectives are compatible, for they contribute to a fully ecclesial appropriation of a fully corporate gospel.
- *Focus common theological work on a pressing theological concern before the church.* Shared theological work cannot be sustained if it is episodic intellectual reflection on diffuse questions of Christian faith and life. Pastors, professors, and church officials will engage in focused inquiry on a pressing, unresolved theological question that is of immediate concern to each individually, and to all commonly. The theological work of Re-Forming Ministry will be worth the concerted, persistent attention of participants.
- *Embark on a multiyear inquiry into the identity and life of the church.* The most pressing issue before the church is . . . the church! Uncertainty about the church’s character and mission leads to confusing purposes and strategies, and to doubts about most forms of church life. What is the ecclesial identity of the church in a culture that disparages institutions while prizing personal fulfillment? What is the meaning of church membership in a consumer culture? Which gifts and qualities are needed in church leadership? How should the church proclaim the gospel? These and other deeply ecclesiological questions will engage the full, shared theological attention of pastors, professors, and church officials.
- *Engage in shared ecclesiological inquiry publicly.* Pastors, professors, and church officials will not do shared work for themselves alone, but for the whole church. Pastors, professors, and church officials will exercise the Reformed teaching office by conducting their shared inquiry in public, using a variety of media to inform and engage wider circles of colleagues in ministry. The *Re-Forming Ministry* initiative will teach by the way participants work as well as by the content of their work.
- *Widen the circle of discourse.* The public work of small groups is necessary to demonstrate the possibilities of recovering a shared teaching office in the church. Confining ecclesiological inquiry to restricted groups is not adequate to the re-formation of ministry, however. The extensive publications program of the Office of The-

ology and Worship, a dedicated Web site, church magazines, journals, and books are among the traditional instruments that will help to foster a wider circle of discourse in the church.

- *Engage the Pastoral-Ecclesial System.* Traditional means of informing a wider audience are important and necessary, but they are not sufficient to create a “critical mass” that can effect enduring change in the pastoral-ecclesial system. Widening circles of pastors, theological faculty, and church officials will be drawn into engagement with both the process and the substance of work.

In the end, renewing the pastoral-ecclesial culture by recovering the shared teaching office of pastors, professors, and church officials is not only for the sake of the church’s ministers. Sustaining pastoral excellence is for the sake of sustaining congregations and their members in faithful gratitude for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift. . . . The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:7,11–12)

C. Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church Preliminary Report to the 216th General Assembly (2004)

The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, was created by the 213th General Assembly (2001) “to lead the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity in and for the 21st century . . .” (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 29). Meeting in Dallas, Texas, on February 18–20, 2004, the task force adopted the following preliminary report to the 216th General Assembly (2004) in anticipation of its final report to the 217th General Assembly (2006).

1. Introduction

The theological task force has now been at work for almost three years. During this time, we have been engaged in a wide range of activities.

a. Meetings

The full task force has met eight times, for periods of two to four days. In addition, committees have met to plan meeting agendas and presentations. The task force has been guided by a detailed covenant that outlines the responsibilities of members to one another and to the work at hand. (A copy of the covenant is appended to this report.)

At these meetings, the task force has studied a number of theological topics to help it engage in a process of discerning the church’s Christian identity, as directed by the assembly, and to provide a sound basis for subsequent consideration of controversial issues. To begin our work, Milton J Coalter and Barbara Everitt Bryant helped us consider our social and religious context. Subsequent topics have included Christology, led by Mark Achtemeier; principles of biblical interpretation, led by Frances Taylor Gench; biblical and theological perspectives on human sexuality, led by Jack Haberer; Reformed understandings of the church, led by Mark Achtemeier and Barbara Wheeler; and the theology of ordination, led by Gary Demarest, Sarah Grace Sanderson-Doughty, and John B. (Mike) Loudon.

We have also studied Presbyterian history and Reformed traditions of church order, with specific attention to Presbyterian confessionalism, the development of the *Constitution* and principles of Presbyterian polity, and the current North American social and religious context. Milton J Coalter shared with the task force findings from the Presbyterian Presence series of studies of the denomination’s recent history. He and fellow historian, John Wilkinson, led studies of other historical periods. Lonnie Oliver, Martha Sadongei, and José Luis Torres-Milán led a session on the diversity of racial and ethnic decision-making traditions in the church.

Bible study has been part of each meeting, as has experimentation with a variety of processes for building community, discerning God's will, and taking action. The task force has worshiped regularly, beginning and ending each day with a service of prayer, Scripture reading, reflection and hymn singing, and, with the assembly's permission, we, together with members of the press and all others present, have celebrated the Lord's Supper at every meeting.

Task force meetings have been conducted in accordance with the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy and have been extensively reported in the church press. The 215th General Assembly (2003) voted to allow the task force "to go into closed session solely for the purpose of exchanging views on sensitive theological issues...by two-thirds vote of the members of the task force present in a duly called and constituted meeting" (*Minutes*, 2003, Part I, p. 23). The task force is mindful of this provision but has not yet used it.

b. *Consultations*

The task force has sought the views of the church about the issues assigned to it. We have participated in numerous events (focus groups, workshops, and consultations) in conjunction with meetings of the General Assembly and various Presbyterian organizations across the church. In addition, task force members either alone or together with the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council, have visited at least forty synods and presbyteries. Several phone interviews were also conducted with Presbyterians who expressed an interest in sharing effective experiences of building relationships across lines of division. Many individual Presbyterians have written to the task force. Much of this correspondence has been acknowledged and circulated to the whole task force. In addition, Barbara Everitt Bryant, a professional statistician, has analyzed Presbyterian opinion data gathered for other purposes and has reported to the task force what they indicate about the range and diversity of Presbyterians' convictions about critical issues.

c. *Resources*

The task force is charged with producing "a process and instrument" to promote the peace, unity, and purity of the church. To this end, and to share its own experiences and learning with the wider church, the task force has produced a preliminary series of resources for use by congregations, governing bodies, and other groups in the church. Prominent among these is a video series that currently includes one, three-part video. The first segment features Vicky Curtiss describing and demonstrating the use of tools to build a community of trust within the framework of worship, Bible study, and prayer. Frances Taylor Gench discusses biblical authority and interpretation in the second segment of the series, and, in the third, she leads viewers through a Bible study of Matthew 5. In a second video, scheduled for release at the 216th General Assembly (2004), Mark Achtemeier will focus on Christology, one of the themes assigned for the task force's consideration. The videos are available in English, Korean, and Spanish. In addition to the video series, outlines and texts of various presentations to the task force are available on the task force's web page [<http://www.pcusa.org/peaceunitypurity/index.htm>]. Task force members (listed at the end of report) are also available for consultation.

In the course of these activities, the task force has grown into a strong Christian fellowship. As we now move toward more sustained investigation of divisive issues, the diversity of perspectives deliberately built into the make-up of the task force is apparent. At the same time, however, we have discovered in our work together the same compelling sense of being in Christ with other Presbyterians that we have heard reported over and over in our consultations. We cannot predict whether this sense—that we are all Christians who stand on the same biblical and Reformed theological foundations—will survive the discussions of difficult issues yet to come. But our prayerful study to date has convinced us that, if, despite our differences, we continue to recognize each other as sisters and brothers who are seeking together a Reformed way of being Christian, then our final report must incorporate and provide ways to act upon three, long-standing Presbyterian affirmations.

2. *Preliminary Affirmations About the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church*

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) today longs for the spiritual blessings named in the task force's title. In the midst of strife and conflict, the church longs for *peace*; afflicted by quarrelling and division, it longs for *unity*; weighed down by sin and confusion over the nature of the Gospel, it longs for *purity* in word and deed.

Through study, prayer, and reflection, a conviction has grown among members of the task force that these longings for peace, unity, and purity, far from being reasons for frustration or despair, can actually be seen as Spirit-filled testimony to God’s promise of redemption. “We ... who have the first fruits of the Spirit,” Paul tells us, “groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom 8:23–24). These longings, painful though they may sometimes be, are also accompanied by profound good news. They give evidence that the peace, unity, and purity we desire so fervently are already at work within us. They have already been given to us in Jesus Christ, and the task before the church is to live into the fullness of that gift.

The themes of peace, unity, and purity are addressed at many points in Scripture. Our study of these themes began, but will by no means end, with the Epistle to the Ephesians. In one of our sessions, the task force spent many hours drawing out the implications of these words: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9). This verse underscores that the destiny God has set before the church is a gift from God. The goals of peace, unity, and purity stand as tasks to be realized out in front of us only because in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection they are gifts that already belong to us.

Since we began focusing on this verse, a growing conviction has permeated our deliberations, namely, that our job—and the church’s—is to appropriate what has already been done for us by Jesus Christ. The only way forward, as the reformers long ago insisted, is the way that leads through grace.

Although it is premature at this stage of the task force’s work to present a comprehensive vision about how the peace, unity, and purity of the church might take form in our day, the task force does feel led to make three preliminary affirmations that we believe must guide our work over the next two years—affirmations rooted in our convictions about the church’s perennial need for grace. These three affirmations are a prologue to the hard work ahead of us. We members of the task force make these affirmations together, and we urge the whole church to make them with us.

a. *Jesus Christ Himself Is the Church’s Peace*

Scripture assures us, and we believe, that Jesus Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:14). Indeed, Ephesians can summarize what God has done in Jesus Christ as the “gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15). This is so, because those “who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13). Ephesians is speaking of Gentiles who have been brought into the covenant of grace, a covenant given first to the Jews. In his very flesh, Ephesians declares, Jesus Christ has “made both groups [Jews and Gentiles] into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us,” (Eph. 2:14) in order to “reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross” (Eph. 2:16). Thus, for those who are in Christ, divisions and enmities are not the last word. To be sure, divisions and enmities are real, as the ongoing and often tortured history of the church attests; yet far more real is the bond of faith forged by Christ’s atoning action on behalf of all people.

The church’s peace flows from the work of Jesus Christ. The peace made real in Jesus Christ offers us more than a temporary halt to conflict; it is an enduring peace based on reconciliation achieved for us at great cost. Accordingly, the church must draw the strength it needs for peacemaking from beyond itself, from the one who invites us to a common witness and worship.

In short, the church has already been given the resources it needs for peacemaking. It has only to look to the Spirit of Christ, who empowers us to live out this new reality. Because faithful, just, and peaceful life together is the work of Jesus Christ, who kept company with sinners, this life draws strength from a common discipline that builds up the body through confession of sin, forgiveness, reconciliation, and self-giving service.

b. *Jesus Christ Himself Is the Church’s Unity*

Scripture further assures us, and we believe, that in Christ “the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord..., built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God” (Eph.

2:21–22). As God draws persons by the Holy Spirit into communion with Christ, God also unites them in baptismal and table fellowship with one another. The new life that is ours in Christ is corporate in nature, meaning that there is no unity with Christ that is not also a unity with other believers.

This is not, of course, a simple or easy process. There is rich diversity in the Body of Christ and there are deep disagreements among its members. The unity we seek cannot be reduced to either uniformity or unanimity. In particular, unity cannot be attained if the voices of some members of the body are ignored. It is especially important, when the mind of the church is significantly divided and its decisions are unlikely to be unanimous, that all voices be heard and respected. Moreover, in Reformed tradition, the achievement of unity is complicated by a long-standing tension between the call to exercise mutual accountability and the affirmation that “God alone is Lord of the conscience” [*Book of Order*, G-1.0301(1)(a)].

Notwithstanding this tension, it has become clear to the task force in its own life together that unity with one another is not an optional feature of life in Christ. It is a necessity: union with Christ means union with all the other members of Christ’s body, including those with whom one would not ordinarily choose to associate. This New Testament understanding of the unity of the church undercuts attempts to pick and choose those to whom we are bound in Christ. “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11).

The implication of the biblical teaching is clear: Christians cannot even entertain the notion of severing their ties with sisters and brothers in Christ without also placing themselves in severe jeopardy of being severed from Christ himself. “Those who say ‘I love God,’ and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen” (1 Jn. 4:20). Hence, we have no unity other than that which is given in Christ, the church’s one foundation, who “gives to his Church its faith and life, its unity and mission ...” (*Book of Order*, G-1.0100c).

c. *Jesus Christ Himself Is the Church’s Purity*

Scripture tells us, and we believe, that God “has blessed us in Christ ... to be holy and blameless before him in love” (Eph. 1:3–4). Christ “gave himself up for us” (Eph. 5:2, 25) so that the “breadth and length and height and depth” (Eph. 3:18) of his righteousness might become ours through grace. This is a blessing we celebrate as great, good news—Christ’s grace is sufficient to make each one of us pure—sound in our beliefs, upright in our conduct, just in our dealings. Thus, in our doctrine, devotion, and deeds, we are all being made pure, until that day when together we, the church, are presented to Christ “in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle ... holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27).

This purity is not anything we bring to God on our own, for it comes to us through Christ by the power of the Spirit “at work within us” (Eph. 3:20). The Spirit’s power makes itself real for us in baptism “with the washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:26) and renews us continually until we attain “the full stature of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

It is often difficult to see how this goal of Christian purity can be squared with the equally important call to unity and peace. Yet in Christ all three are tied together, with no one elevated above the other two. Any effort to achieve peace and unity at the expense of purity cannot succeed, nor can we live “a life worthy of the calling to which [we] have been called” unless, “bearing with one another in love,” we make “every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:2–3).

Therefore, the quest for purity is first and foremost a call to self-examination, repentance, and mutual accountability in love. While those who fail to seek purity in any of its forms—truth, goodness, and justice—imperil the faithfulness of the church, purity must not become a pretext for division. Those who break the body of Christ on the grounds that some members do not meet a particular conception of righteousness risk putting fallible human judgment in place of Christ. Living into our baptism, we must always regard disputes over devotion, doctrine, or deeds as gracious invitations to further work together, relying on Christ’s promise of the Spirit who will guide us “into all truth” (Jn. 16:13) and enable us to “find out what is pleasing to the Lord” (Eph. 5:10).

Christian striving here and now for truth, justice, and holiness matters—it matters greatly. The task force, which has a heavy assignment, feels keenly the pressure to teach truly, act justly, and maintain respectful and loving relationships within and beyond the church. We hope that our work will meet high standards of purity and faithfulness, yet we know it cannot unless we acknowledge a basic truth: the best the church can do is to live into what Jesus Christ has already perfectly accomplished for us.

3. *Next Steps*

During the next year, we plan to continue extensive discussions of the issues the General Assembly put before us. Our working assumption is that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), shares “one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of [us] all” (Eph. 4:5–6). We are aware that some wonder whether the unity of this confession has been jeopardized; whether, because of the theological differences in the denomination, the church is now divided; whether the unity of confession that exists in principle no longer exists in practice. We take this issue seriously and will continue to study it carefully. If we do find that the integrity of the church’s confession is intact, then we hope to commend to the church ways of living together and moving into the future that are rooted in the peace, unity, and purity of Christ and that are more constructive and faithful than our current climate of hostile division.

We have heard many expressions of concern about the final results of our work. In response, we have committed ourselves to hold any “process” or “instrument” that we discover or devise to the following criteria:

a. *Faithfulness*

Some have warned against what they see as a lukewarm “compromise.” The task force is not seeking any solution that compromises the gospel of Jesus Christ, but rather faithful, truthful, and just responses to the complex demands the gospel makes upon us.

b. *Theological Grounding*

Some have warned that resolutions of earlier conflicts in the church’s history, based chiefly on polity or legal precedents, have often proved unstable. We have spent a large portion of our time in theological study of these past conflicts and intend that our report will not simply pose political solutions but a way of living together that has clear theological and scriptural integrity. The three affirmations grow out of our convictions that no differences among Reformed Christians can be settled without a firm theological basis.

c. *Clarity About the Relationship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Larger Church of Jesus Christ*

One of the basic issues before the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is whether it is a church that is called to reflect the full integrity of Christ’s body in a distinctive way or, is, rather, merely a denominational subdivision of the church whose peace, purity, and unity are immaterial and whose reason for being is more pragmatic than essential. Any report or process that we set before the church must address this question: does the well-being and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) really matter?

d. *Continuity with Presbyterian Tradition*

Although polity alone cannot confer the peace, unity, and purity that the church is seeking, we do believe that the principles and practices of governance that Presbyterians have been developing for centuries, limited though they may be, will continue to serve us as we move into the future. Any proposals that we set before the church must be the outgrowth of Presbyterian ways of ordering church life and giving it direction.

A final word: The task force is both heartened and humbled by the many expressions of hope that we have heard for our work. Grateful as we are for the church’s trust, however, we are also keenly aware that no measures the task force proposes will serve unless the whole church fervently wants to find different and better ways to express its identity as Christ’s body in and for the world in the twenty-first century. We commend the videos and other resources the task force has provided. We strongly urge that, during the next two years, congregations and

governing bodies use such resources to create occasions on which persons from all parts of the church, including those who deeply disagree with each other, can meet to discern God's will for the church. In these and other gatherings, Presbyterians must search their hearts during the critical next two years. Are the church's members prepared to work, pray, and sacrifice for a more faithful way of life together? If so, we are confident that God will show the way. Indeed, God has shown us the way, and the truth, and the life. God has given us Jesus Christ.

4. *Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church Membership Listing*

The membership listing includes: P. Mark Achtemeier; Scott D. Anderson; Barbara Everitt Bryant; Milton J Coalter; Victoria G. Curtiss; Gary W. Demarest, co-chair; Frances Taylor Gench; Jack Haberer; William Stacy Johnson; Mary Ellen Lawson; Jong Hyeong Lee; John B. (Mike) Loudon; Joan Kelley Merritt; Lonnie J. Oliver; Martha D. Sadongei; Sarah Grace Sanderson-Doughty; Jean S. (Jenny) Stoner, co-chair; José Luis Torres-Milán; Barbara G. Wheeler; John Wilkinson.

COVENANT

We, the members of the task force, covenant together that:

- we will be in prayer for each other and for our work that we may faithfully serve God, follow Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and be guided by the Holy Spirit;
- we will seek to be guided by Scripture and will regularly study it together;
- we will worship whenever we gather, inviting all who are present at our meetings to worship with us. With authorization, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper at each meeting as a sign that the peace, unity and purity we seek is God's gift to us in Christ;
- we will speak the truth with love, expressing ourselves with candor and humility;
- we will listen, endeavoring to understand each other, especially those whose views seem to differ from our own, maintaining a spirit of openness and vulnerability;
- we will carry out our work among this community of believers, respecting confidences, showing faithfulness in our relationships, and trusting each other's motivations and dedication;
- we will model a respectful, loving process of discernment and dialogue, seeking to reach consensus whenever possible, ever mindful of our responsibilities to all the members of our beloved Church;
- we will communicate regularly and effectively with the whole church on the work of the task force in order to include them in the process;
- we will work in good faith within the open-meeting policy of the General Assembly and welcome the press and other observers present at our meetings, as we seek to discover new and challenging ways "to lead the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity in and for the 21st century." We trust the press to perform its part of this responsibility by reporting on our work in accordance with the published ethical standards of the Associated Church Press and the Evangelical Press Association.

We will each commit our best, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to the task entrusted to us.