

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON
CHURCH ORDERS
AND MINISTRY

05

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
216TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2)

[The full text of the items referred to this committee may be found in the Reports to the General Assembly under tab 05.]

Moderator: Scott Schaefer
Vice Moderator: Muriel Brown

There are recommendations contained in this report that will be moved as part of a consent agenda. Such items are marked with an asterisk (“*”) and are so indicated in the Table of Contents below.

There are no financial implications in this report.

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The Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approve the following recommendations:

Clergywomen

***Item 05-03. Research Programs and Support for Clergywomen in Ministries.**

That the recommendations be approved.

Vote: 58/0/3

June 30, 2004, 10:07 PM

Item 05-04. Monitor Clergywomen's Call Processes.

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

“The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (AWAC) recommends that the 216th General Assembly (2004) encourage all committees on ministry to conduct [awareness training for] gender₂ [~~and~~] racial ethnic [awareness training], and disabilities concerns with [~~its nominating committees for all clergy~~] [all pastor nominating committees].”

Vote: 62/0/0

Other

Item 05-01. On Amending G-14.0513 and G-11.0502f. to Clarify Language Regarding Temporary Pastoral Relations—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. *ACC

That the recommendations be disapproved.

Vote: 38/21/5

***Item 05-02. ACC Request Regarding G-6.0502, Authoritative Interpretation Concerning Persistence in Disapproved Work—From Minister Member, Presbytery of the Cascades. *ACC**

That the recommendation be approved.

Vote: 65/0/0

Item 05-10. Amend G-14.0310c Regarding Ordination Exams. *ACC

That the recommendation be disapproved.

Vote: 39/13/3

Item 05-11. On Amending G-14.0705c, G-11.0407, W-3.3603, and W-3.3616 Regarding Certified Christian Educators—From the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. *ACC

That the recommendations be disapproved.

Vote: 52/10/2

Item 05-12. ACC Interpretation of G-14.0515d, Parish Associates—From Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

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

“d. The agreement between the session, ~~and the parish associate, and the presbytery shall, whenever a pulpit becomes vacant, be terminated upon due notice by the session or the parish associate with the approval of the presbytery~~ terminate when the call to the installed pastor is dissolved [~~or the presbytery acts to dissolve the relationship with the parish associate~~]. [The presbytery may dissolve the relationship with the parish associate upon the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry.]”

Vote: 60/3/1

***Item 05-13. Revise all Portions of the Church Leadership Connection.**

That the recommendation be approved.

Vote: 60/0/0

Ordination Requirements

Item 05-07. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation Clarifying Standards for Ordination—From the Presbytery of the Western Reserve. *ACC

That the recommendation be approved.

Vote: 35/30/0

Item 05-05. On Amending G-6.0106b Regarding Gifts and Requirements for Officers—From the Presbytery of Western New York. *ACC

That the recommendation be answered by the action taken on Item 05-07 of this report.

Vote: 35/30/0

Item 05-06. On Striking G-6.0106b from the Constitution in Order to Welcome All Persons into the Life of the Church—From the Presbytery of Baltimore. *ACC

That the recommendation be answered by the action taken on Item 05-07 of this report.

Vote: 35/30/0

Item 05-08. On Declaring That the Definitive Guidance Statements of 1978 and 1979, and Subsequent GA Statements Shall be Given no Further Force or Effect—From the Presbytery of Detroit. *ACC +GAC

That the recommendations be answered by the action taken on Item 05-07 of this report.

Vote: 35/30/0

Item 05-09. On Amending G-6.0106 and on Approving an Authoritative Interpretation—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. *ACC

That the recommendations be answered by the action taken on Item 05-07 of this report.

Vote: 35/30/0

Minority Report
Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry

(Please refer to Item 05-07, on page 3 of the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry.)

In place of Item 05-07, we move:

In response to Items 05-05, 05-06, 05-07, 05-08, and 05-09, that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approve the following statement:

We, the 216th General Assembly (2004), recognizing the church's commitment to a churchwide process of discernment with the leadership of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, call upon the church to pray for the task force and to engage faithfully in the processes of discernment as led by the task force.

Rationale

We Presbyterians are involved in a process of spiritual discernment regarding central theological concerns impacting the life and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church was created by the 213 General Assembly (2001)

to lead the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in spiritual discernment of our Christian identity, in and for the 21st century, using a process which includes conferring with synods, presbyteries, and congregations seeking the peace, unity, and purity of the church. This discernment shall include...issues of Christology, biblical authority and interpretation, ordination standards, and power. The task force is to develop a process and an instrument by which congregations and governing bodies throughout the church may reflect and discuss the matters that unite and divide us, praying that the Holy Spirit will promote the peace, unity, and purity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).

At its pre-assembly conference at the 216th General Assembly (2004), members of the task force bore witness to the empowering effect that trust, community building, and open dialogue have had in establishing a foundation for fruitful work in this discernment process.

We believe that the whole church, not just the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity, must be actively involved in this process. Central to the work given to the task force is leading the church in its discernment. Engagement in this process, especially regarding questions on ordination standards, demands our full attention in a climate of trust, community building, and open dialogue. We believe the removal of authoritative interpretation will divert time and energy from discernment to the production of overtures devoted to restoring language of the authoritative interpretation to the *Constitution*. We believe it will significantly disturb the peace of the church, undermining the trust of our members at the very time when it is needed.

Diane Curtis—Elizabeth Presbytery
Dave Pearce—Greater Atlanta Presbytery
Phyllis Spielmann—Los Ranchos Presbytery
Sungmann Park—Flint River Presbytery
William K. Lewis—Cincinnati Presbytery
John Blewitt—Donegal Presbytery

Megan Price—Mackinac Presbytery
Kyle Otterbein—East Iowa Presbytery
Brandon Rothey—Pittsburgh Presbytery
Susan R. Neilley—Lackawanna Presbytery
Katherine L. McAbee—The Peaks Presbytery
Creighton Bloyd—Mid-Kentucky Presbytery
Anthony Elfering—Twin Cities Area Presbytery
John E. Gillespie—Olympia Presbytery

In accordance with Standing Rule C.5.d., I affirm that the above positions expressed as recommendations for action by the assembly were presented to the whole committee during its consideration of the matter.