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Minutes – 7/1/04 - Business Mtg 8

Thursday, July 1, 2004, 7:30 P.M.

The 216th General Assembly reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with Moderator Ufford-Chase presiding. Hannah Nutt, Youth Advisory Delegate from the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley, led the assembly in prayer.

Speak-Out

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members were given an opportunity to speak-out on issues outside the deliberative mode of the assembly for fifteen minutes, with one-minute limits on individual speeches. Moderator Ufford-Chase recognized persons who spoke on various subjects. Jean-Marie Peacock led the assembly in prayer at the end of the speak-out period.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Ufford-Chase recognized John Bell, vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, who presented the committee's report. The assembly voted to limit speeches to two minutes.

Ecumenical Greeting

Moderator Ufford-Chase recognized Seung K. Choi who brought greetings to the assembly from the Korean Presbyterian Church in America.

MISSION INITIATIVE: JOINING HEARTS AND HANDS

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The Moderator recognized Bill Saul, co-chair, Mission Initiative, General Assembly Council, who presented a report concerning the Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts and Hands.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION (07)

The report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination was presented by its moderator, Catesby Woodford. The assembly approved the consent agenda (Items 07-01, 07-02, 07-03, 07-04, and 07-05). The assembly approved Item 07-13 with comment. The assembly approved Item 07-14. The committee approved Item 07-06. The Moderator recognized Rebecca Gibbs, vice moderator of the committee, to present the next part of the report. The assembly disapproved Item 07-10 and Item 07-11. The assembly voted to approve Item 07-12 with amendment. The Moderator recognized Catesby Woodford, moderator of the committee, to present the remainder of the report. The assembly approved Item 07-08, recommendations 1, 2, 3.g.-i., 3.k.-m., and 3.p. The assembly referred Item 07-08, recommendation 3.a. and voted to answer Item 07-08, recommendation 3.b. with the action taken on Item 07-08, recommendation 3.a. The assembly voted to take no action on Item 07-08, recommendation 3.c. The assembly approved Item 07-08, recommendation 3.d. with amendment. The assembly approved Item 07-08, recommendation 3.e. with amendment. The committee moved the approval of Item 07-08, recommendation 3.f. with amendment. The assembly voted to amend Item 07-08, recommendation 3.f. by striking the word “direct” and inserting the word “encourage.” The assembly approved Item 07-08, recommendation 3.j. with amendment.

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The assembly approved Item 07-08, recommendations 3.n.and 3.o. with amendment. The assembly approved Item 07-09. The assembly approved Item 07-07 with comment. This concluded the report of the committee and is as follows:

The 216h General Assembly (2004) approved the following recommendations:

Manual of Operations/Organization for Mission

***Item 07-01. Change in *Manual of Operations* Regarding COTE.**

That the recommendations are approved.

***Item 07-02. Changes to *Organization for Mission* Regarding Budget Cycle.**

That the recommendation is approved.

Budgetary Concerns

***Item 07-03. Mission and Program Budget.**

- 1. That Recommendation 1. is approved.**
- 2. That Recommendation 2. is approved.**

***Item 07-04. Reserved or Committed Funds and Contingent Liabilities**

That the recommendations are approved.

***Item 07-05. Support for General Assembly Mission.**

That the recommendations are approved.

Final Response to Referrals

Item 07-13. Congregational Ministries Division Final Response to Referral

That the response is approved with comment.

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Comment: The Congregational Ministries Division is encouraged to include resources sensitive to our ethnic diversity.

Item 07-14. Congregational Ministries Division Final Response to Referral

That the response is approved.

Special Offerings Task Force

Item 07-06. Report of the Special Offerings Review Task Force

That the recommendations are approved.

Commissioners' Resolutions

Item 07-10. On Creation of a Presbyterian Credit Card.

That the recommendation is disapproved.

Item 07-11. On Developing a “Conceptual Framework for a New Mission Funding System.”

That the recommendations are disapproved.

Item 07-12. On Strengthening Hispanic Latino Ministry.

That the recommendations are approved with amendment:

Strike the text in Recommendations 2. and 3. insert new text to read as follows:

~~[2. To make the hiring of Hispanic Latino staff a priority in filling staff positions until the racial ethnic percentages exceed those of the most immediate staff reduction.]~~

~~[3. To commit sufficient budget resources to assure the implementation of the Hispanic Strategy Report.]~~

“2. To urge the hiring of racial ethnic staff as a priority in filling exempt staff positions, recognizing the need to hire Spanish-speaking,

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culturally proficient staff, until the racial ethnic percentages exceed those prior to immediate staff reduction.]

“[3. To encourage GAC to commit additional resources to assure the implementation of the Hispanic Strategy Report and to make this a priority for the 2007–08 budget.]”

Climate for Change in PC(USA)

Item 07-08. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)

1. Recommendations 1., 2., 3.g.–i., k.–m., p.

That the recommendations are approved.

2. Recommendation 3.a.

That the recommendation is referred back to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns to determine a new term to replace “racial ethnic.”

3. Recommendation 3.b.

That the recommendation is answered by the action taken on “2. Recommendation 3.a.” above.

4. Recommendation 3.c.

Withdrawn by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

5. Recommendation 3.d.

That the recommendation is 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. Encourage all PC(USA) corporate agencies to adopt for utilization and implementation the tools of Cultural Proficiency or some other comparable approach throughout PC(USA), including its boards, agencies, and institutions, as a means to develop and sustain healthy corporate church cultures for addressing the issues that arise in a diverse environment[-] [: this

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utilization and implementation is to proceed in light of and according to the confessional and biblical witness of the PC(USA).]”

6. Recommendation 3.e.

That the recommendation is 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.]

“e. Inform all vendors and businesses with which it does business that PC(USA) agencies (or most PC(USA) agencies) subscribe to the principles and practices of ‘cultural proficiency’ (or a similar diversity initiative) and urge vendors and businesses with whom it does business to do likewise. [Said actions would be phased in over a one- to three-year period to minimize expenses to all PC(USA) corporate bodies.]”

7. Recommendation 3.f.

That the recommendation is 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.]

“f. ~~Direct~~ [Encourage] the General Assembly Council to adequately fund[;] [and] staff ~~[and rename]~~ the GAC Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) ~~[to the Office of Cultural Proficiency and Emerging Majority Concerns]~~ to implement PC(USA)’s commitment to becoming a culturally proficient organization by addressing issues of inclusiveness, representation, and systemic misuse of privilege and entitlement.”

8. Recommendation 3.j.

That the recommendation is 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.]

“j. Encourage GAC to expand the Foundation-managed Creative Investment Fund to encompass greater participation with Racial Ethnic Presbyterian Ministries and to gradually increase the Creative Investment Fund ~~[from \$8M to \$20M over a five-year period,]~~ for the purpose of investing in community economic projects, particularly in areas where there

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is an established Presbyterian [~~emerging majorities~~] [racial ethnic] presence.”

9. Recommendation 3.n.

That the recommendation is 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.]

“n. Encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions (BOP) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (PFN), beginning in fiscal year 2006, to invest a minimum of 10 percent of their respective portfolios with money managers who are women and/or representative of the [~~emerging majorities~~] [racial ethnic population] within the United States [to be reported to each agency’s respective General Assembly Committee.]”

10. Recommendation 3.o.

That the recommendation is 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.]

“o. Direct the Office of the Stated Clerk (Office of the General Assembly) to acknowledge the profound underrepresentation of [~~emerging majorities~~] [racial ethnic persons] and women in upper management positions of General Assembly (GA) corporate agencies and to recommend procedures to remedy this situation. This acknowledgment and the subsequent recommended corrective procedures, along with expression of the PC(USA)’s displeasure with the current situation, should be communicated by the Office of the Stated Clerk through written communication to all PC(USA) constituencies, including but not limited to: Advocacy Committee for [~~Emerging Majority Concerns (ACEMC)~~] [Racial Ethnic Concerns], Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), Presbyterian Women (PW), National Cross-Caucus, the sessions, middle governing bodies and their resource centers, the libraries of the theological seminaries, and PC(USA) congregations.”

Other

Item 07-09. Express Appreciation for Support of Mission Causes.

That the recommendation is approved.

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Consultations

Item 07-07. Presbytery and Synod Consultations.

That the recommendations are approved with comment.

Comment: The 216th General Assembly (2004) commends Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk; John Detterick, Executive Director of the General Assembly Council; and Gary Torrens, Coordinator of Governing Body Relations, for their efforts in undertaking these consultations.

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

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

Item 07-A. Minutes, General Assembly Council.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 07-B. Minutes, PC(USA), A Corporation.

That the minutes are approved.

Item 07-C. Audit.

That the audit is received for the years ending December 31, 2003, and December 31, 2002, with comment.

Comment: The assembly committee extends its appreciation to Nagy Tawfit, vice president of finance and corporate controller and his staff, the General Assembly Council Audit Committee, and the audit subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets.

Item 07-D. Minutes, Synod of Alaska-Northwest.

That the minutes are approved with the following exceptions:

1. That there is no report of the committee on representation.
2. There is no indication that the moderator solicited nominations from the floor.

Item 07-E. Minutes, Synod of the Covenant.

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That the minutes are approved with the following exception:

The treasurer's full annual review and a report of the results of the audit were not included.

Item 07-F. Minutes, Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

That the minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 07-G. Minutes, Synod of Lincoln Trails.

That the minutes are approved with the following exceptions and comment:

Exception:

1. There is no record of the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
2. The roster of former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission by classes was not alphabetized.

Comment: The time and type of governing body meeting was not indicated.

Item 07-H. Minutes, Synod of Living Waters.

That the minutes are approved with no exceptions and a comment.

Comment: The attestation that the minutes of meetings of the most recent previous session or sessions have been reviewed by the General Assembly did not give page references to action on exceptions noted.

Item 07-I. Minutes, Synod of Mid-America.

That the minutes are approved with the following exception:

The roster of former members of the permanent judicial commission by classes was not alphabetized.

Item 07-J. Minutes, Synod of Mid-Atlantic.

The synod meets biennially. There are no minutes to report.

Item 07-K. Minutes, Synod of the Northeast.

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That the minutes are approved with the following exception:

There was no review of property and liability insurance carried by the synod reflected in the minutes.

Item 07-L. Minutes, Synod of the Pacific.

That the minutes are approved with the following exception.

The roster of former members of the permanent judicial commission was not included.

Item 07-M. Minutes, Sinodo Presbiteriano Boriquen en Puerto Rico.

That the minutes are approved with the following exception.

The roster of former members of the permanent judicial commission by classes was not alphabetized.

Item 07-N. Minutes, Synod of the Rocky Mountains.

That the minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 07-O. Minutes, Synod of South Atlantic.

The synod meets biennially. There are no minutes to report.

Item 07-P. Minutes, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

That the minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 07-Q. Minutes, Synod of the Southwest.

That the minutes are approved with the following exceptions and comment.

Exceptions:

1. The order of the permanent judicial commission was included in the minutes, but not the full action in the appendix.

2. The roster of former members of the permanent judicial commission by classes was not alphabetized.

Comment:

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The attestation that the minutes of meetings of the most recent previous session or sessions have been reviewed by the General Assembly did not give page references to action on exceptions noted.

Item 07-R. Minutes, Synod of the Sun.

That the minutes are approved with no exceptions.

Item 07-S. Minutes, Synod of the Trinity.

That the minutes are approved with the following exceptions and comments.

Exceptions:

1. The type of meeting “stated,” “adjourned,” or “special,” was not indicated.
2. There was not report of the committee on representation.
3. The review of the records of presbyteries, including any exceptions taken was not indicated.
4. A report of property and liability insurance carried by the synod was not included.
5. The title page does not show attestation that the minutes of meetings of the most recent previous session or sessions were reviewed by the General Assembly and do not give page references to action on exceptions.
6. There was no signature and attestation by either the moderator or stated clerk of the synod; such signature should appear at the end of the journal before any appendix or supplement.
7. There was no indication that the meeting was opened or closed prayer.
8. The names of members of commissions, committees, and similar groups, including those groups that exist only during a synod meeting, were not indicated.
9. The treasurer’s full annual review and a report of the results of the audit were not included.
10. There is no indication that the minutes were read and approved by the synod or by its authorized committee.

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11. The commissioners' list did not indicate whether they were minister of elder commissioners.

Comments:

1. The index referencing the pages to which items appear is not included.
2. The time at which a governing body meeting convened should be included.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL ISSUES (10)

The report of the Assembly Committee on National Issues was presented by its moderator, James H.Y. Kim. The assembly approved Items 10-01 and 10-02. The committee moved the approval of Item 10-03 with amendment. The assembly voted to amend this item by inserting “as a resource” after the words “to the church” in section 4.a. and by inserting “bearing in mind that the Belhar Confession emerged from the context of racism in South Africa” at the end of existing text in section 4.a. The assembly approved Items 10-04 and 10-05. The committee moved the approval of Item 10-06 with amendments. The assembly voted to amend this item by striking the word “natural” and inserting the word “biological” in the second paragraph of section A.1. The committee moved the adoption of a response to Item 10-11. Donald Wade, commissioner from Greater Atlanta Presbytery, presented a minority report on Item 10-11. Margo Tomlinson, vice moderator of the committee, spoke briefly to the main motion. Moderator Ufford-Chase recognized Wade, who spoke briefly to the minority report. The main motion was declared perfected. The minority report was declared perfected. The merits of the main motion and the minority report were debated. Moderator Ufford-Chase placed before the

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assembly the question, shall the minority report be substituted for the main motion? The minority report was defeated. The assembly voted to approve the response to Item 10-11. The assembly voted to limit debate to 1 1/2 minutes for the remainder of this meeting. The assembly voted to approve Item 10-15. The assembly moved the response to Item 10-17. The assembly voted to amend the statement in the response by inserting a new second bullet to read: “Affirms the Presbyterian Church’s historic definition of the meaning of marriage as ‘a civil contract between a woman and a man’ (W-4.9001, as quoted in a resolution of the 208th General Assembly (1996), *Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p. 122).” After prayer, the assembly voted to approve the response to Item 10-17 as amended. The assembly voted to approve the response to Item 10-16. The assembly approved Item 10-12 with amendment. The assembly approved the response to Item 10-07. The assembly approved Item 10-09 with amendment. The assembly approved item 10-10. The assembly disapproved Item 10-14 with comment. The assembly disapproved Item 10-08. The assembly approved item 10-13. This concluded the report of the committee and is as follows:

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the following recommendations:

Item 10-01. Analysis of Church’s Effort to Combat Racism.

That the recommendations are approved.

Item 10-02. Task Force on Election Report.

That the recommendations are approved.

[Note: The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures points out that this item comes from the General Assembly Council and could be funded within its budget.]

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Item 10-03. Task Force to Study Reparations Report. +OGA

That the recommendations are approved with amendment.

Amend Recommendation 4. as follows: [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.]

~~“4. — Direct the Stated Clerk to initiate the process described in G-18.0201b by appointing a committee to consider designing a confessional statement repenting of the sin of racism and its various expressions, including slavery and genocide for inclusion in *The Book of Confessions* and to report to the 217th General Assembly (2006).”~~

“4. a. Commends the Belhar Confession to the church as a resource for reflection, study, and response, as a means of deepening the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to dealing with racism and a means of strengthening its unity; bearing in mind that the Belhar Confession emerged from the context of racism in South Africa;

“b. Requests the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, to prepare materials to facilitate churchwide reflection and study;

“c. Urges each presbytery and all congregations to undertake a study of the Belhar Confession before the 218th General Assembly (2008);

“d. Directs the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, to receive responses, prepare a summary, and report results to the 218th General Assembly (2008), together with possible recommendations for further engagement with the Belhar Confession.”

Item 10-05. Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the U.S. +COGA

That the recommendations are approved.

Item 10-04. Report on Limited Water Resources and Takings.

That the recommendations are approved.

Item 10-06. Transforming Families.

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That the recommendations are approved with the following amendments:

1. On page 5, Section “2. Marriage as Basic to Human Relationships,” amend the first paragraph as follows: [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.]

“2. Marriage as Basic to Human Relationships

“Affirmation of marriage’s significance in the Christian tradition is by no means a claim that marriage exhausts what the church means by family. The church upholds the meaning and significance of marriage between a man and a woman, but it does not denigrate other forms of family life [that demonstrate and nurture godly character]. The language of the Confession of 1967 is instructive. The marital-biological family that is basic to human relationships is just that: basic. The marital-biological family is neither exhaustive nor exclusive as a family form. Rather, as the Confession of 1967 affirms, the marital-biological family ‘exemplifies in a basic way God’s ordering of the interpersonal life for which [God] created humankind,’ but it is not the only form of interpersonal life; and it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life.”

2. On page 8, amend the second paragraph as follows: [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.]

“[Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility to care for their children, while [€] [c]hurches are called to be communities that support and complete the nurture of children. Teaching children who they are in Christ is an honorable and important duty for the entire community. We should strive to provide for them, to keep them safe, to ensure that they will not be hungry or homeless, to prepare them for life, and to encourage their participation in the mission of the Triune God. In this way, families, individuals, and the entire church learn to live lives of service and love for the whole world.”

3. On page 11, amend the fifth paragraph under “A Vision of Transforming Families” as follows: [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.]

“We envision a society in which the well-being of every child is nurtured and supported. In light of sociological data indicating that a loving, lasting marriage of the mother and father is the most successful (90 percent) context for children’s flourishing and that

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children who experience divorce flourish in a smaller, though significant, majority of cases (75–80 percent), the church urges both parents or guardians to be active in the nurture of children and recognizes the important assistance that congregations and other family support systems can offer. ¹ The church commits itself to give special attention to those families [~~both single parent and two parent,~~] where the well-being of children is most at risk. With support from church and other institutions, [~~stepfamilies, adoptive families, and single-parent~~] [even at risk] families can successfully move through difficult times and their children can grow into healthy adulthood.”

4. On page 14, insert a new item, “q.”:

“[q. That ACSWP report back to the 217th General Assembly (2006) on the progress it has made implementing these recommendations.]”

5. On page two, amend second paragraph as follows: strike “natural” and insert “biological” [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.]

“Jesus honored his family, but he also challenged deference to family authority with the shocking words: “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). Furthermore, he called people to new family ties that went beyond [~~natural~~] [biological] ones. When he was told that his mother and brothers were outside and wished to speak to him, Jesus replied, pointing to his disciples: “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother”(Matt. 12: 49–50).”

Item 10-11. On Endorsing “A Christian Declaration of Marriage—From the Presbytery of Santa Barbara. +GAC +ACSWP +ACWC

In response to this recommendation, that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the following:

That the 216th General Assembly (2004) ask all church members to join in a year of prayer for marriage renewal and reconciliation, and urge synods, presbyteries, and local congregations to seek ways of working with other Christian bodies in their areas toward these same purposes.

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Item 10-15. Denial of Civil Rights in Virginia.

That the recommendation is approved.

Item 10-17. Recognize Civil Marriage for Same-Gender Couples.

In response to this recommendation, that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the following resolution:

Recognize Civil Rights for Same-Gender Couples

That the 216th General Assembly (2004) affirm the following statement and request the Office of the General Assembly to communicate this action to all middle and lower governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as well as to the president of the United States of America and to all members of the Congress of the United States of America.

Statement

The 216th General Assembly (2004) does the following:

- Offers prayerful thanks for the Scriptures informing us that all persons are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27).
- [Affirms the Presbyterian Church's historic definition of marriage as a civil contract between a woman and a man (W-4.9001, as quoted in a resolution of 208th General Assembly (1996), Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 122).]
- Declares that all persons are entitled to equal treatment under the law (Constitution of the United States of America); therefore
- Urges state legislations to change state laws to include the right of same-gender persons to civil union and, thereby, to extend to them all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities of civil union, and urges all persons to support such changes in state laws.
- Urges the Congress of the United States of America to recognize those state laws that allow same-gender union and to change federal laws to recognize all civil unions licensed and solemnized under state law to apply in all federal laws that provide benefits, privileges, and/or responsibilities to married persons.

Item 10-16. On Supporting the Federal Marriage Amendment.

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In response to this recommendation, that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the following statement:

Nothing the 216th General Assembly (2004) has said or acted upon is to be construed to state or imply a position for or against the Federal Marriage Amendment. General Assembly entities shall not advocate for or against the Federal Marriage Amendment.

Item 10-12. Resolution on Allegations of Child Abuse Against Educators.

That the recommendations are approved with amendment:

1. Amend Recommendation “2.a.” as follows: [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.]

“a. adequate policies on child abuse that set forth the responsibilities and rights of both students [when they are abused] and educators [when they are falsely accused];”

2. Strike Recommendation 7. and re-number the following recommendation.

~~“[7.—Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to conduct a study of the future of contemporary public education in the context of the long history of Presbyterian support for public education. The study of the systemic issues confronting public education should focus on the individual’s role in supporting public education, and the appropriate citizenship for a multicultural and interfaith society and report to the 218th General Assembly (2008).]”~~

Item 10-07. On Setting Compensation Standards—From the Presbytery of New Hope. +ACSWP

In response to this recommendation, that the 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the following:

The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) commends the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) for raising the issue of corporate compensation standards through proxy voting recommendations, and instruct MRTI to develop a comprehensive plan for increased advocacy on compensation standards, including dialogues with corporations, filing of shareholder resolutions, and public education. The MRTI should proceed to increase advocacy as it can

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within its mandate, and report its actions, and any recommendations, to the 217th General Assembly (2006).

Item 10-09. On Preparing a Policy Statement on Usury in the United States—From the Presbytery of Utah. +ACSWP, ACREC, ACWC

That the recommendations are approved with amendment:

1. Amend the first paragraph as follows: [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 Presbytery of Utah overtures the 216th General Assembly (2004) to direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to investigate the question of usury in the United States and to prepare a [~~policy statement~~] [resolution] for the 217th General Assembly (2006) that would do the following:”

2. Add a Recommendation 4. to read as follows:

“4. Develop ethical criteria consistent with the Reformed Tradition for evaluating usury laws and other legislation to address various forms of lending such as payday loans, sub-prime loans, predatory lending, and cash-back tax preparation arrangements.”

Item 10-10. On Reaffirming the Importance of our Nation’s Social Insurance System (Social Security and Medicare)—From the Presbytery of Hudson River. +ACSWP, ACREC

That the recommendations are approved.

Item 10-14. On Appointing an Action Committee That Will Identify Media and Advertising That Has Excessive Sex, Violence, and Other Immoral Content for the Purpose of Influencing Producers and Sponsors.

That the recommendation is disapproved with comment:

Comment: Entities within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) sufficiently address the concern of Item 10-14:

- **Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) partners with Interfaith Centers on Corporate Responsibility to advocate for change in business entities that create and market violent video games;**

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- The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) includes on its Web page a link to “the Electronic Great Awakening” with the purpose of making Presbyterians more aware of the immoral content in much of the media that we consume, including music, movies, and television;
- The Child Advocacy Office, with its focus on The Decade of the Child, disseminates information concerning the detrimental effects of violent video games on children and youth;
- The Presbyterian Peacemaking Office emphasizes the World Council of Churches’ Decade to Overcome Violence.

Item 10-08. On Expressing the Desire that the Patriot Act be Repealed—From the Presbytery of Northern New York. +ACSWP, ACREC

That the recommendation is disapproved.

Item 10-13. On Seeking a Thorough, Calm, and Reasoned Review of the USA Patriot Act.

That the recommendations are approved.

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

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

Item 10-A. Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

That the minutes are approved with exception.

Exception: The minutes of the meeting of January 22, 2003, were not approved by the committee itself.

Item 10-B Recipients of Awards

The Assembly Committee on National Issues reports to the 216th General Assembly (2004) that the awards were acknowledged and will be presented to the recipients at meetings of their respective presbyteries.

1. *Women of Faith Awards*—Christine Mann Darden, Rogene F. Henderson, Ruth Rivera Lane.

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2. *Partners in Mission Awards*—The Trinity Restoring Creation House Church, Representative Bobby Scott.

2. *Sam and Helen R. Walton Awards*—Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, Synod of the Northeast, Presbytery of Monmouth; Oconee Presbyterian Church, Synod of South Atlantic, Presbytery of Northeast Georgia; Shelton Presbyterian Church, Synod of Alaska-Northwest, Presbytery of Olympia.

3. *Restorative Justice Award*—Presbyterian Interracial Dialogue of Winston-Salem, N.C.

Recess

Following prayer led by Tracy Johnson and Harold Armstrong, theological student advisory delegates, the assembly recessed at 11:00 p.m., to be reconvened at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, July 2, 2004.